

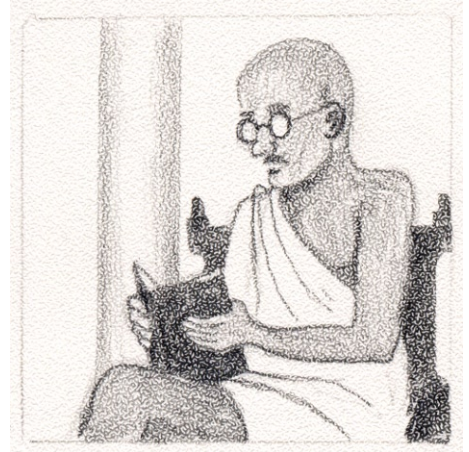
TO TELL THE TRUTH: MOHANDAS GANDHI

Three class members will be chosen to pretend they are Mohandas Gandhi. They will stand next to each other in the front of the room facing the class. During the game, the three will be asked questions by other students in class. The questions will be about Gandhi's life.

Ten students will now be chosen to ask one question each during the game. They will be assigned a number from 1 to 10. This is the number of the question they will ask when the game begins.

After every question, each Mohandas Gandhi will give an answer. "Number 1" will answer first, "Number 2" second, and "Number 3" third. Only one of the three is really Gandhi. The real one will always tell the truth when answering questions. The other two will only tell the truth once in awhile. After all questions have been asked, class members will vote for the person they think is the real Mohandas Gandhi.

This game will be played like a television game show. The teacher will be the "MC," or Master of Ceremonies. The people who ask questions are the "panelists."



MC: Now let us meet Mohandas Gandhi. Number 1, what is your name please?

Number 1: My name is Mohandas Gandhi.

MC: Number 2?

Number 2: My name is Mohandas Gandhi.

MC: Number 3?

Number 3: My name is Mohandas Gandhi.

MC: And here is Mohandas Gandhi's story. He says, "I, Mohandas K. Gandhi, was an Indian whose life spanned the last seventy-eight years of Great Britain's control over India. My people called me "Mahatma," which means "Great Soul." My whole life was spent in a search for Truth. My search led me to support the cause of the poor and unfortunate among my countrymen. I helped to improve living conditions for the Untouchables — those people outside the caste system who were considered unclean and who were denied many rights. I also helped win more rights for Indian women. But I am most famous for helping India gain its freedom from the British in 1947. Signed, "Mohandas K. Gandhi." We will start the questioning with Panelist 1.

Panelist 1: You were born in India in 1869. Please tell us something about the early years of your life.

Number 1: I was born in Allahabad, India. My parents were respected members of the Brahman caste, the highest caste in India. I was raised in luxury and became rather spoiled as a boy. Unfortunately, my father died when I was in my early teens and left us with little money. My life became a struggle to earn enough money for my education and to help support my family. I developed strong feelings for all poor people struggling to survive. I vowed to help these people in any way I could.

Number 2: I was born in Porbandar, India, into the Vaishya, or merchant, caste. My mother influenced me as a boy with her religious attitudes. As was the custom in my country, I got married at an early age. I was 13 and so was my bride Kasturba. We were married for over sixty years and had four sons.

Number 3: I was born in Delhi, the son of a government official who worked in the British civil service. My father greatly influenced my life. He helped organize the National Congress Party because he wanted to see Indians given more power in the British-dominated government. I decided to pursue a career that would let me help the Indian people gain political and social rights long denied to us by our British rulers.

Panelist 2: At the age of 19, you arrived in London to study law. You got your degree three years later and returned to India. But soon you left your law practice to work as a lawyer in South Africa. Can you explain your reasons for this move?

Number 1: The answer is simple. I left for more money. I was engaged to be married and the South African law firm offered me a chance to earn enough money to be able to set a wedding date.

Number 2: At the time I started practicing law in India, I was very shy. When I defended my first case in court, I became so nervous that I could not speak. When offered a job representing a Muslim company in South Africa, I accepted. I thought I could use some time away from family and friends in order to develop independence and self-confidence.

Number 3: Actually, I had to leave India or be jailed for contempt of court. I was defending an Indian farmer who was in danger of losing his land for not paying taxes to the British. The judge sentenced me to a year in jail because I refused to sit quietly and allow my client to lose his land. Some friends had a law firm in South Africa, so I decided to leave India rather than sit in prison for a year.

Panelist 3: Almost immediately upon arriving in South Africa, you became involved in helping Indians living there to get the same rights given to other British citizens. What caused you to become a civil rights leader?

Number 1: My law firm was very slow to attract clients. I became worried that I would go bankrupt. By leading demonstrations for more Indian privileges, I hoped to gain publicity that would bring clients to my firm.

Number 2: I had some bad experiences in South Africa. I was removed from a train because I was an Indian sitting in a first class section reserved for white Europeans. When forced to carry a registration pass which identified me as a non-white, I became angry and burned my pass. After encouraging other Indians to burn their passes, I was beaten and thrown in jail.

Number 3: On my first day in South Africa, I saw an Indian child run ahead of its mother and take a drink from a well reserved for "Europeans only." A British policeman started beating the youngster with his stick. I tried to save the child, but was arrested for "obstructing justice." I vowed to do all I could to get back at the British for their cruel ways.

Panelist 4: In South Africa, your efforts won more rights for Indians living there. You established the Natal Indian Congress to teach Indians how to organize themselves and present their demands to the authorities. You set up a newspaper to spread ideas and unite Indians. You encouraged Indian women to join the fight for equal rights. These methods were later used in India during the struggle for independence from the British. The most important form of protest was called "satyagraha." Please explain its purpose to us.

Number 1: Satyagraha is another word for bribery. My experience taught me that the best way to get rights for my people was to buy off the lawmakers and judges.

Number 2: Satyagraha means "soul force." It includes a variety of tactics such as deliberately breaking an unfair law, noncooperation with British authorities, peaceful demonstrations,

and the use of non-violence rather than force to defeat the enemy.

Number 3: Satyagraha is the name of the trade union I set up to help Indians get better working conditions from the British.

Panelist 5: You returned to India in 1915. Great Britain was then fighting for its survival in World War I, and you decided to delay the campaign for Indian rights. After the war, Britain passed the Rowlatt Acts. These laws allowed the British to arrest and jail without trial any Indian suspected of working against the British in India. What was your response to the Rowlatt Acts?

Number 1: Because these acts took away rights guaranteed by British law, we hired lobbyists to pressure British lawmakers into repealing these acts.

Number 2: I called for a nationwide strike to close all businesses, factories, and schools. I hoped to put pressure on Great Britain by causing British businessmen to lose money.

Number 3: I wrote a letter to King George begging him to ask the lawmaking Parliament to repeal these acts.

Panelist 6: In April of 1919, several hundred Indians gathered in a park in the town of Amritsar to listen to anti-British speeches. This action broke the Rowlatt Acts. British troops were sent in and fired on the unarmed crowd. Nearly 400 men, women, and children were killed and over a thousand were wounded. This event became known as the Amritsar Massacre. Your outrage and strong protests resulted in you having to spend several years in jail. Your health was seriously affected. What were your thoughts at that time?

Number 1: I finally realized that the Indian people were too poor and too weak to stand up to the British alone. My people needed outside help. I sent appeals to the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union asking for money and military aid.

Number 2: Before this event, I had faith that Great Britain would eventually give Indians all the rights and privileges guaranteed to all British subjects. The massacre was a turning point for me. I realized that the British would use any savage or lawless means to keep control of India. After Amritsar, I vowed to use all my energy to gain complete independence for my country.

Number 3: The cruelty of the Amritsar Massacre simply confirmed what I had suspected all along — that Britain was not to be trusted under any circumstances. For the first time in my life, I thought that violent confrontation might be necessary in order for my country to win its independence.

Panelist 7: Before you became involved in India's struggle for independence, the freedom movement was limited to a small group of Western-educated Indians. One of your major achievements was to bring the desire for freedom to the attention of millions of poor and uneducated peasants. Why were you so interested in these people in particular?

Number 1: I do not like to see poverty and suffering. The poor peasant who has little to eat or wear is not much better off than the animals he raises. One goal of my work has been to introduce Western ways to India, like industry, indoor plumbing, and the ability to read and write.

Number 2: I believe that the simple peasant way of life leads to true happiness. Rich Indians living in the cities should abandon their Western ways and live and eat like the peasants. I encouraged all Indians to follow the peasant example of making cloth by spinning thread at home instead of buying British cloth.

Number 3: I saw the millions of peasants as an untapped source of military power which could be used against the British if necessary.

Panelist 8: During these years, you expressed concern for the Untouchables. Because of your efforts, Untouchables were finally given the right to use all Hindu temples and schools. You called these people “Harijans.” What does this term mean?

Number 1: God’s Chosen People.

Number 2: Children of God.

Number 3: The People God Forgot.

Panelist 9: In 1930, Britain set up the Simon Commission to discuss the possibility of allowing India more self-government. However, your people were angered because no Indians were asked to serve on the Commission. During the 1930s, what major action did you take to show your impatience with Britain?

Number 1: Some of my followers and I staged a sit-in at the Viceroy’s Palace in New Delhi. The Viceroy was the top British official in India. We refused to leave the palace until Great Britain met our demands for more self-government. We were carried off to jail.

Number 2: I organized a Salt March to protest the British monopoly on the sale of our salt and the tax we had to pay on the salt. Hundreds of Indians walked over 200 miles to the sea to boil salt from the water. We were beaten and put in jail.

Number 3: I urged Indians to support Britain’s enemies during World War II. I spent the war years in prison because of my views.

Panelist 10: Great Britain finally gave India its freedom on August 15, 1947. But even with the winning of independence, you were crushed and heartbroken. What did you regard as a personal failure at this time?

Number 1: My biggest disappointment was not being chosen the first Prime Minister of India.

Number 2: My failure was not being able to prevent the division of India into the two nations of Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan. I wanted a united India.

Number 3: My wife died on the day of independence and could not share in the joy of a free India.

MC: It’s time now to vote for NUMBER 1, NUMBER 2, or NUMBER 3. All those who think NUMBER 1 is the real Mohandas Gandhi, please raise your hand. All those who think NUMBER 2 is the real Mohandas Gandhi, please raise your hand. All those who think NUMBER 3 is the real Gandhi, raise your hand.

The votes are all in. Will the real Mohandas Gandhi please step forward?

Questions Now that you know who the real Mohandas Gandhi is, look back at the answers given by this person. All information in these answers is correct. Use the information to answer the following true-false questions. Also, use facts given in the MC’s introduction on page 1 and in the questions asked by the panelists during the game.

(1) _____ Mohandas Gandhi was nicknamed “Mahatma,” which means “Great Spirit.”

(2) _____ “Satyagraha” was the non-violent method used by Gandhi to win freedom for India.

(3) _____ Mohandas Gandhi was born into the group of Indians known as the Untouchables.

- (4) _____ Gandhi was in favor of the establishment of Pakistan as a homeland for the Muslims in India.
- (5) _____ After the Amritsar Massacre, his goal was complete independence for India.
- (6) _____ He wanted to bring the benefits of industrialization to the peasants of India.
- (7) _____ Indians were angered by the Rowlatt Acts, which jailed anyone who protested against the British.
- (8) _____ Before Gandhi became involved in India's struggle for freedom, he served as a lawyer in South America.
- (9) _____ "Harijans" was the name given by Gandhi to the Untouchables.
- (10) _____ Gandhi organized the Salt March in order to protest Great Britain's monopoly and tax on salt.