PARK EAST HIGH SCHOOL
Purpose, Preparation, Pride

Name: _____ Date: _____ Per: ____

India's Struggle for Independence

1 What does a person who practices civil disobedience do?

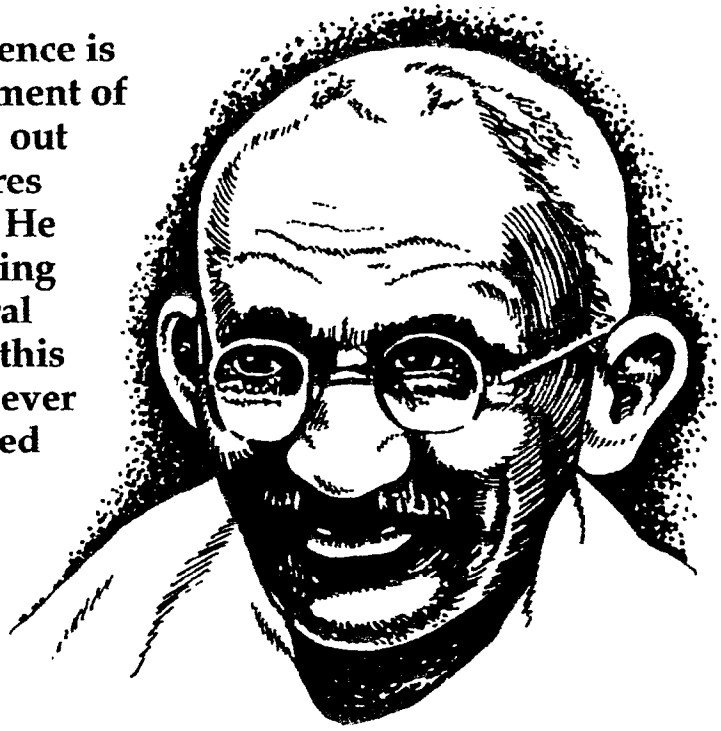
2 How does a civil resister react to force?

3 Why do you think a civil resister invites imprisonment and force?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Complete Civil Disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. . . . In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force.

—Mohandas Gandhi



GANDHI

VOCABULARY
1. **Disobey**
2. **Unjust**
3. **Assassinated**
4. **Ironic**

Mohandas Gandhi, more than any person, was responsible for the independence of India. He led the movement against the British, which resulted in Indian independence in 1947.

Gandhi's philosophy was based on civil disobedience and passive resistance. By civil disobedience, Gandhi believed that Indians should **DISOBEY** British laws and if necessary, go to jail. Passive resistance means that the fight against the British must always be peaceful. Violence had no place in Gandhi's program. A perfect example of how Gandhi's philosophy worked was the Great Salt March, which took place in 1930. Gandhi led a 24 day march to the sea where tens of thousands of Indians took salt from seawater. This was specifically against British law, which required Indians to purchase their salt from England. Gandhi purposely broke what he believed to be an **UNJUST** law. When British troops arrived on the scene and beat and arrested Indians, the native population never used violence. As a result, 60,000 people were jailed and worldwide reaction was very anti-British and pro-Indian.

When World War II broke out over two million Indian soldiers fought bravely in the British army. However, when the war ended, India was still a colony. This caused Gandhi to once again use passive resistance and civil disobedience against the British. Finally, in 1947 the British Government collapsed and India was given her independence. However, as we shall see, within India many problems existed between Hindus and Muslims that were just becoming worse.

Less than one year after India received its independence from England; Mahatma Gandhi was **ASSASSINATED** by a Hindu who believed that Gandhi (who was a Hindu) gave too much power to the Muslims. It is **IRONIC** that this man of peace died by violence.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question based on the reading and your knowledge of Social Studies. Use complete sentences.

1. Define “civil disobedience”

2. Define “passive resistance”

3. Why didn't Gandhi believe in the use of force to overthrow the British?

4. Why is the Great Salt March an example of both civil disobedience and passive resistance?

5. Great Britain was one of the most powerful countries in the world in 1947. Why did they give India its independence and lose a valuable colony?

6. Indian people call Gandhi "Mahatma" which means "Great Soul." Why do you believe they gave him this title?

7. Why is it ironic that Gandhi was assassinated?

Why Did England Grant India Independence?

The following scene is based upon the life of Mahatma Gandhi, a leader in India's struggle for independence from British rule. The scene begins in 1930 at Gandhi's "March to the Sea."
The British had a monopoly on India's salt industry and were able to charge whatever prices they wanted. Gandhi marched with thousands of followers to the ocean. They intended to take salt water and let it evaporate, leaving the salt behind. The British rulers did not want to allow Gandhi to do this. Here Gandhi faces off with a British Army officer, Major Owens.

- **Gandhi-** WE ARE INDIANS. ARE WE NOT ENTITLED TO USE OUR VERY OWN INDIAN NATURAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS SALT?

- *Major Owens-* YOU ARE UNDER BRITISH RULE AND THE LAW CLEARLY STATES THAT YOU MUST BUY SALT ONLY FROM BRITISH SALT SUPPLIERS.

- **Gandhi-** IS THIS A JUST AND MORAL LAW? TO REFUSE INDIANS ACCESS TO THEIR OWN NATURAL RESOURCES?

- *Major Owens-* THAT IS UNIMPORTANT. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT YOU OBEY THE LAW, NO MATTER WHAT.!!!!!

- **Gandhi**: IT IS AN IMMORAL AND UNJUST LAW AND MY FOLLOWERS AND I REFUSE TO OBEY UNJUST LAWS.

- *Major Owens-* THE LAW IS THE LAW. OBEY THE LAW OR YOU WILL BE PUNISHED!!!!!!

- **Gandhi-** MY FOLLOWERS AND I PRACTICE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. WE REFUSE TO FOLLOW UNJUST LAWS. WE WILL PEACEFULLY MARCH IN PROTEST. WE WILL GO ON HUNGER STRIKES. WE WILL HAVE SIT-INS. WE WELL REFUSE TO OBEY THIS LAW UNTIL. THE INJUSTICE OF BRITISH RULE IS REMOVED. INDIA MUST BE FREE. WE CAN NO LONGER REMAIN A COLONY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

- *Major Owens-* THEN YOU WILL SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.

- **Gandhi -** OUR PHILOSOPHY OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE REQUIRES US TO WILLINGLY ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF OUT ACTIONS. WE REFUSE TO OBEY UNJUST LAWS BUT WE WILL NOT RESORT TO VIOLENCE OF ANY KIND.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question on the conversation between Mahatma Gandhi and Major Owens. Use complete sentences.

1. Write a definition for the following terms using your OWN WORDS.

a) civil disobedience _____ _____
_____
_____

b) passive resistance _____
_____
_____

2. What was Gandhi's ultimate goal?

_____
_____
_____

3. According to Gandhi, why did Indian people have the right to break the law?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. What famous American followed the philosophy of Gandhi?

_____

5. If you were on the jury, would you find Gandhi innocent or guilty of breaking the law? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

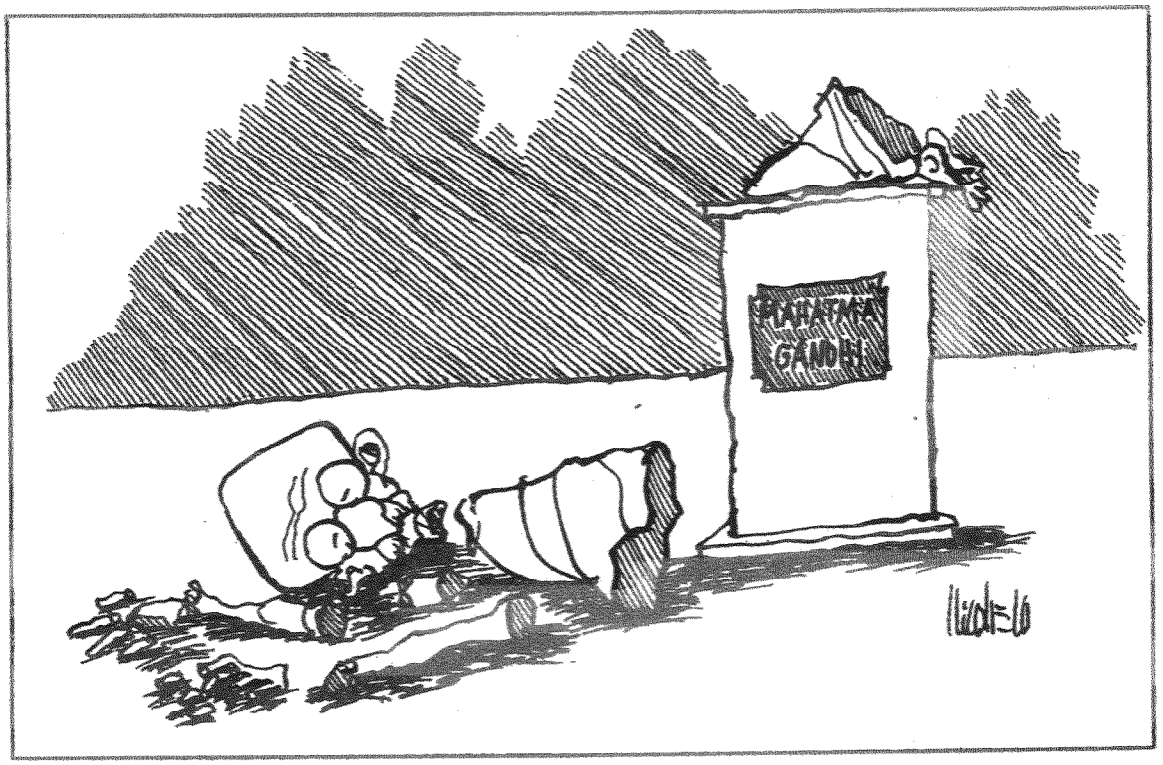
6. Was Gandhi a hero or a coward for using passive resistance?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Analyzing a Political Cartoon

SKILL PRACTICE

Political cartoons rely on pictures and a few words to convey an opinion about recent events. In the cartoon below, the artist uses only two words to make a point about recent events in India. The cartoon appeared in a Brazilian newspaper. Study the cartoon. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write the answers to the questions that follow.



Source: Nicolielo, 1992 Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

1. (a) Who is the person represented in the cartoon? (b) What was his importance to the people of India?

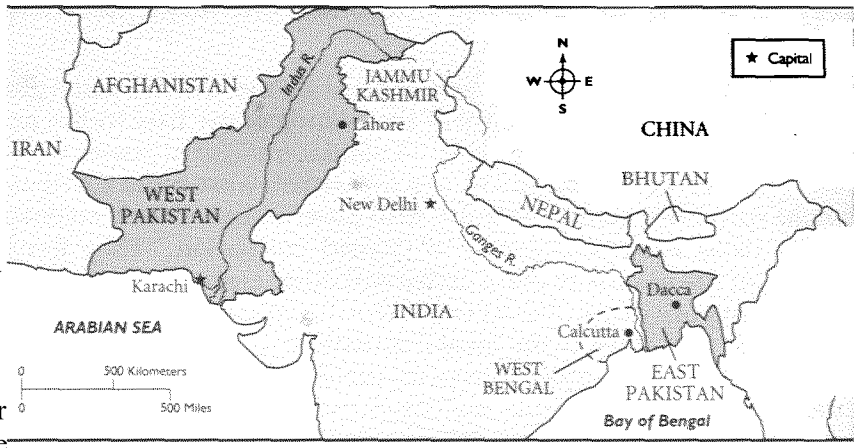
2. In political cartoons, a person can be used to symbolize an idea. What ideas did the person in the statue stand for?

3. (a) What has happened in the cartoon? (b) What do you think the artist meant by showing this?

4. (a) What events might have inspired the artist to draw this cartoon? (b) How do you think he felt about these events?

5. Suggest a title for this cartoon.

WHY DID INDEPENDENCE LEAD TO CIVIL WAR?



During World War II, the Indian people suffered from widespread hunger. Discontent and disorder increased. When the war ended, the British government decided to give India its independence. But a serious difficulty arose. The great majority of the Indian people followed the Hindu religion. However, a large minority of 100million people were Moslems. They objected strongly to being placed under Hindu rule. The Moslems lived in two sections of India, the east and the northwest. They demanded that these regions be made into a separate nation to nation to be named **PAKISTAN.**

Great Britain agreed to this change and set a date for independence. Fighting soon broke out, however, between the Hindus and the Moslems. The two mew nations were India and Pakistan. They were born amid bitter civil war and great bloodshed, as the following passage describes. Why was this conflict a bad sign for the future of India?

The two mew nations started off badly. In the capital cities, great crowds celebrated independence. In Karachi the slogan was "Long Live Pakistan," in Delhi, "Victory to India." This was only a tiny part of the total response, which was savage and shocking. The violence that now took place was beyond all that Indian, Pakistani, or British officials had feared.

In the West Punjab and the northwest frontier, Moslems murdered Sikhs (a religious group derived from Hinduism) and Hindus. In East Punjab and the Sikh states, Sikhs and Hindus murdered Moslems. In parts of the United Provinces, Hindus and Moslems murdered each other. In the border regions of Jammu and Kashmir, Sikhs who had escaped from West Pakistan spread violence. Peaceful villages suddenly became two hostile camps. One group was trying to wipe out the other. In the cities, especially in Lahore and Delhi, terrorism was in control. Houses were fired, looting went unchecked, and women were kidnapped. Massacres took place on the main highways. The leaders of neither side could control the situation.

The number of deaths by direct violence is unknown. Various Americans and British worked at relief in the affected areas. They have guessed that the deaths numbered more than 100,000, at the outside 200,000. Besides the deaths by violence, there were others from disease, hunger, and exposure, or floods came at this time, too. The total may have come close to half a million.

A result of the violence was mass migration. Fearful Hindus and Sikhs left the West Punjab. Moslems left the East Punjab and nearby regions of the United Provinces. There is probably not a Sikh left today in Western Pakistan, and few Hindus.
Many Moslems left India. The migration continued for months. The total number of migrants both ways is set down it 12 million. This is the greatest movement of population sown in history.

Questions:

1. The Hindus and the Moslems of India consider themselves as two different peoples. Why did they feel this strong difference?

2. Should the two Indian peoples have been divided into two separate nations, as the British agreed to? Why or why not?

3. Might anything have been done to prevent the rioting and migrations that followed the division? Explain.

4. In recent years, the disagreements between Indian and its neighbor Pakistan have erupted into several wars. Do you think the two nations will ever become friendly neighbors? Explain.



In the aftermath of independence in 1947, long smoldering hatred between Muslim and Hindu peoples broke out into massive violence. Train loads of Muslims headed north to Pakistan, while Hindus in Pakistan headed south into India.

INDEPENDENCE AND PARTITION

AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY. the great majority of members of the new Indian National Congress were Hindu. Moslems felt that the Congress did not fairly represent their own aspirations. Thus in 1906 they formed the Moslem League. One of its first leaders was the Aga Khan, ruler and spiritual head of the Ismaili sect of Moslems. Immensely wealthy, the Aga Khan was also strongly pro-British. Thus, the Moslem League tended to side with Britain, while the Indian National Congress for the most part opposed it

This opposition took the form of bombs and bullets in the early 1900's. One such riot occurred when the British government decided that the province of Bengal, with a population of 78 million, was too large. The eastern part of Bengal, which, had a Moslem majority, was split off and attached to the next-door province of Assam. The Moslems, a minority in Bengal as a whole, were now a majority in the new province of East Bengal and Assam.

To quiet the revolt-and give India a little of what it had been pleading for-the British Parliament passed the Indian Councils Act in 1909. Under it, most of the members of the Indian state legislative councils were to be elected Hindu voters would elect Hindu members and Moslem voters Moslem members both in proportion to the numbers in the general population.

India backed Britain wholeheartedly in World War I (1914-18). In an attempt to repay India for its help, Britain passed the Government of India Act in 1919. Its purpose, as the preamble declared, was to provide "for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions . . . ." But this was not enough to satisfy the Indians. With Mohandas K Gandhi as the new leader of the Indian National Congress, they began their campaign of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience. Gradually the Indians won more self-government.

Meanwhile the Moslems were busy. They knew that Indian National Congress power meant power for Hindus, who made up the majority of Indians-and the Moslems were determined not to become swallowed up in the fight for self-rule. In 1934 Mohammed Ali Jinnah'* became the Moslem League's head. He protested that his people were being pushed aside by the Hindus. In time he called for a separate Moslem country, to be cut out of Indian territory. The new country, called Pakistan, would consist of mostly Moslem regions in the northeast (now Bangladesh, see page 207) and northwest. The two regions would be separated by almost a thousand miles of India.

World War II (1939-45) intervened. Britain at first stood alone against the Nazi German air assault. When Britain promised it would grant independence to India if it won the war, thc Indian pcoplc supportcd Britain with soldicrs and supplies. Japan, Nazi Germany's Axis partner, conquered many of India's Southeast Asia neighbors, but India itself was not attacked.

In 1947 India was granted independence, and Pakistan was set up as a nation in its own right. Both joined the British Commonwealth of Nations.

As India and Pakistan claimed their freedom, the long smoldering hatred between Hindus and Moslems burst into flames. A mass slaughter occurred as many Moslems in India moved to Pakistan, and Hindus in Pakistan moved to India -perhaps 12 million people in all making the shift. Moslems and Hindus fought each other, with an explosive fury. Countless numbers on both sides were slain; estimates range from 100,000 to more than a million. The killing did not cease until the migration was over.

There has been little large-scale religious violence between Hindus and Moslems in recent years. But neither has there been any real friendship between the religious groups. Gandhi's dream of uniting the two peoples still remains just a dream.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the goals and ideas of Hindus and Muslims differ?

2. Why did the Muslim League demand a separate country for Muslims?