

**Frontier in History: Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the  
Nation**

**Tushar Mehta**

**Senior Division**

**Individual Website**

## Process Paper

In studying American History, it has been fascinating to learn about the European colonization of Americas and struggle of native people for their independence. Being a second-generation Indian American, I had heard about the British empire ruling India for 150 years, subduing Indian rulers and freedom fighters with their military might. Then came the turning point in 1920, when Mahatma Gandhi gave away his wealthy lifestyle and influenced the leaders of the Indian National Congress and freedom fighters to move away from violence and adopt the approach of “Satyagraha: non-violent civil disobedience by firmly holding the position of truth”. With his simple message and transformational leadership, he was able to inspire the whole nation, win their trust and admiration to achieve common higher purpose of liberty, justice, and equality. Even in the face of humiliation and brutality, instead of relying on political insurrection, he pioneered new principle - displayed kindness for the enemy to gain India’s independence. In awe of his life and to understand influence of his teachings on the world, I chose my topic, “Frontier in History: Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation”.

I started my research by talking to my grandparents about their experiences. They are the best primary sources for my research because they lived through the independence movement. The Gandhi Heritage Portal and Mahatma Gandhi websites had plenty of primary and secondary sources as well as timelines, photos, and tributes. The Gandhi Heritage Portal led me to various books written by Gandhi such as ‘The Story of My Experiments with Truth’ and ‘Satyagraha’ in South Africa. This was extremely helpful for learning about Gandhi's leadership. I also explored various websites such as National Gandhi Museum and National Archive. To gain a comprehensive and balanced perspective of this global event, I gathered information from the sources with diverse perspectives.

I selected to do a website over all the other categories because it is interactive and allows me to present various events leading up to the Independence of India, such as the historical context, Civil Disobedience, Salt March, and the timeline in a structured way. I built my website by choosing a theme, main categories for chronological navigation, and subtopics for each category. I added information, visuals, documents, multimedia and conducted personal interviews to thoroughly support my views.

Mahatma Gandhi is the most influential leader of pre-independence India, who not only transformed the course of history during the Indian freedom struggle but also became the global symbol for social reform to achieve equal rights and justice for underprivileged in the society. Gandhi with his simple lifestyle and lead by example philosophy became a role-model and inspired future human rights movements around the world, including those of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States and Nelson Mandela in South Africa. His Satyagraha to end the British rule in India and influence on modern civil disobedience movements across the globe perfectly exemplify the National History Day theme of, "Frontiers in History."