

Teacher Overview Objectives: *Mohandas Gandhi and the Indian Independence Movement*

NYS Social Studies Framework Alignment:

Key Idea	Conceptual Understanding	Content Specification	Objectives
<p>10.7 DECOLONIZATION AND NATIONALISM (1900–2000): Nationalism and decolonization movements employed a variety of methods, including nonviolent resistance and armed struggle. Tensions and conflicts often continued after independence as new challenges arose. (Standards: 2, 3, 4, 5; Themes: TCC, GEO, SOC, GOV, CIV,)</p>	<p>10.7a Independence movements in India and Indochina developed in response to European control.</p>	<p>Students will explore Gandhi’s nonviolent nationalist movement and nationalist efforts led by the Muslim League aimed at the masses that resulted in a British-partitioned subcontinent.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the political, social, and economic situation in the early 1900s in India. 2. Describe who Mohandas Gandhi was and what he believed, and identify what actions he took. 3. Explain how India gained its independence from Great Britain. 4. Explain the effects of the Partition of India on the people of India and Pakistan.

A Note About the Section on the Partition of India

Please make use of [the Stanford History Education Group’s materials on the India Partition](#) to engage students in an investigation of primary sources to answer the question: **Was the Partition of India a good plan given what people knew at the time?**

1

What was the historical context of the Indian Independence Movement?

Objective: Describe the political, social, and economic situation in the early 1900s in India.

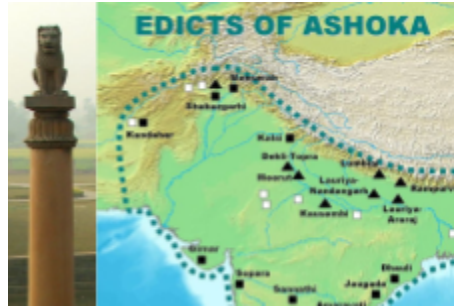
Introduction

Directions: Examine the images below and write down what you recall about each Indian history topic.



Statue of Krishna as Vishnu in his Vishwarupa (Universal form)

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic](#) license.



Edicts of Ashoka

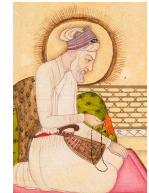
[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons

Ashoka pillar at Vaishali, Bihar, India

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons



1556-1605
Akbar the Great



1658-1707
Aurangzeb

1. What do you remember about the **religions** founded in India?

2. What do you remember about the **Maurya Dynasty** and the **Gupta Golden Age**?

3. What do you remember about the **Mughal Empire**?



British Raj: The life of a British Army officer during the early days of British rule in India

[Image](#) is courtesy of the dailymail



British Indian Army soldiers, 1895.

[Image](#) is courtesy of the dailymail

4. What do you remember about **imperialism** in India?

5. What do you remember about the **Sepoy Rebellion**?

Historical Context: India in the early 1900s

Directions: Read through the text below and answer the questions that follow.

The British East India Company

British involvement in India started in the 1600s with the **British East India Company**, a trading company that was supported by the British government. The British East India Company made an agreement with the **Mughal Empire** that ruled most of India and set up trading forts on the coast. Between the early 1600s and 1857, the British East India Company gained influence, power and territory in India. They took power through force and agreements with Indian rulers. The Company's power reached its height in 1857 when Indian soldiers employed by the British East India Company rebelled in what is known as the **Sepoy Rebellion**. The uprising lasted over a year. In the end, the British defeated the sepoys and took control over India once again.

British Rule

As a result of the British East India Company's inability to control India, the Company was replaced by the British government sometimes called the **British Raj**. India became an official British colony and was known as the "jewel in the crown" of the British Empire because it was the largest and most profitable colony in the empire. The British government continued to administer India as the Company had, with strict control. They also exiled the last Mughal ruler and executed his sons.

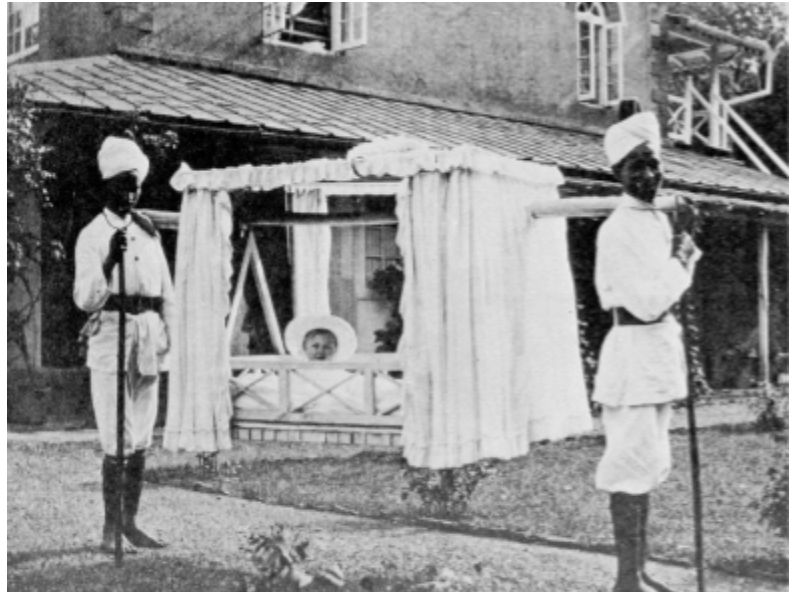
The Raj's policy has been described as one of "divide and rule." This partly refers to the way in which much territory was acquired, by playing one Indian ruler against another. The British also used the "divide and rule" concept to govern India's Muslim and Hindu populations. There is a long history of animosity between the Muslim and Hindu populations in South Asia that is often traced back to the founding of the Mughal Empire and specifically the practices of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. The British argued that it was necessary for them to control the Indians because

without their presence, the Muslims and Hindus would kill each other. For example, in 1905, the British divided the province of Bengal into East Bengal for Muslims, and West Bengal for Hindus. Both sides resented British involvement and accused them of favoring the other religion. The action led to more religious riots in Bengal. The British gave up on dividing Bengal and the area continued to experience religious violence.

Under the British Raj, after the Sepoy Rebellion, British attitudes toward Indians shifted from relative openness to insularity and racism. British families and their servants lived in military installations at a distance from Indian settlements. Private clubs where the British gathered for social interaction became symbols of exclusivity and snobbery.

Indian Economy During the British Raj

The British united India as one colony and set about modernizing and westernizing the region and its people. They built railway, transport, and communication systems that helped to knit the previously independent regions of India into a whole. This helped the British stay informed about activities in the colony, keep control of it, and transport raw materials from which they profited. Some of the modernization associated with the industrial revolution benefited India during this period. Foreign investors set up jute mills around Calcutta, and Indian merchants set up cotton textile factories in Gujrat and around Bombay. However, this was accompanied by



An English baby girl being carried on a palanquin by Indian bearers, on the road of Nainital. Photograph dated 1904.

[Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is in the public domain.](#)



Passenger train on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, a British-owned company in 1855.

[Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is in the public domain.](#)

the collapse of traditional industry, which faced ferocious competition from cheap British-made goods.

Post-1857, India also experienced a period of unprecedented calamity when the region was swept by a series of frequent and devastating famines, among the most catastrophic on record. Approximately 25 major famines spread through India in the latter half of the nineteenth century, killing 30–40 million Indians. Some modern scholars attributed the famines both to uneven rainfall and British economic and administrative policies. For example, the British seized local farmland and converted it to foreign-owned plantations that grew cash crops that were exported for profit rather than food that could have been used to feed the local population.

The British also instituted an education system in India that was based on their own. Upper class Indians learned to read and write in English, studied medicine, British government and law, and sometimes traveled to England for higher education.

Source: Adapted from New World Encyclopedia. “British Raj.” http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/British_Raj

1. Why was India considered the “jewel in the crown” of the British Empire?	4. What effects did British rule have on the Indian economy?
2. Historically, what has been the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in India? How did the British use this to gain, consolidate, and maintain their power?	
3. According to the text, how did most British people feel about Indians after the Sepoy Rebellion?	5. What effect did the British have on the Indian education system?

2

Who was Mohandas Gandhi and what did he believe?

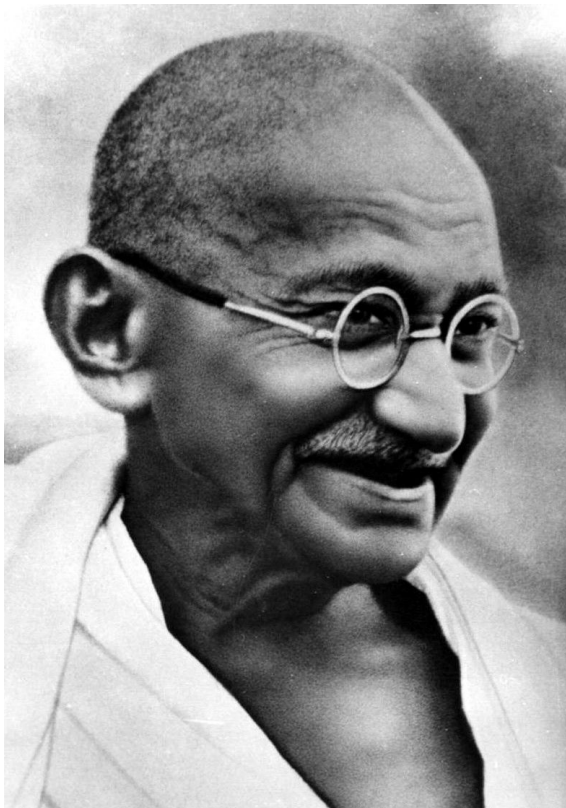
Objective: Describe who Mohandas Gandhi was and what he believed, and identify what actions he took.

Who was Mohandas Gandhi? What were his political beliefs?

▶ Watch the [Biography.com Mini Bio on Mohandas Gandhi](#), this [newsreel from 1931](#), and a section of this [First Television Interview with Gandhi from 1931](#) and answer the questions below.

Key Vocabulary In Mohandas Gandhi's Biography

nonviolence	the use of peaceful means, not force, to bring about political or social change
civil disobedience	the refusal to follow certain laws or pay taxes and fines to protest a government's actions and policies
Mahatma	"great soul;" a person regarded with loving respect; a holy person or sage



Mohandas Gandhi, 1946
[Image](#) is courtesy of the dailymail

1. What was Gandhi's profession? Where was he trained?

2. Describe Gandhi's experiences and actions in South Africa.

3. Identify and describe three actions Gandhi took to support Indian Independence from Great Britain.

How did India gain independence?

Objectives: Explain how India gained its independence from Great Britain.

Directions: Examine each event on the timeline below and answer the questions embedded.

Timeline of India's Independence Movement

- 1885

Indian National Congress Founded

A group of seventy-three mostly well-to-do and western-educated Indians who were lawyers, teachers, and journalists, met in Bombay to form the Indian National Congress in 1885. At first, this group supported the British Raj and met to discuss issues that were concerns for urban and elite Indians but were not controversial. They wrote papers suggesting changes to the British colonial government and submitted them for review but they had little success.

In the early 1900s, a sense of nationalism grew in the members of the Indian National Congress. Some Congressmen supported the British but wanted more say in the government and administration in India. Others advocated for Swaraj, or self-rule. In the early 1900s, those still loyal to the British won out.



THE FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 1885.

The delegates to the first meeting of the Indian National Congress in Bombay, 1885.

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain

1. Who was a part of the Indian National Congress?

2. What was the goal of the Indian National Congress in the early 1900s?

- 1906

Muslim League Formed

The Indian National Congress was dominated by Hindu Indians and their concerns. In response to Hindu nationalism, leading members of the upper class Muslim community formed the Muslim League in 1906. Like the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League petitioned the British for more say in the government for Indian Muslims and for laws and policies that would favor the people they represented.

3. How was the Muslim League different than the Indian National Congress?

4. What was the purpose of the Muslim League?

- 1915

Gandhi Returns to India

After gaining fame and some success as a defender of Indian rights in South Africa, Mohandas Gandhi returned to India in 1915. He was known for his nonviolent opposition of British policies in South Africa that included boycotts, protest marches, and fasts.

Gandhi became a member of the Indian National Congress and promoted his ideas of reacting to unjust British laws using civil disobedience. Unlike many of the members of the Congress, Gandhi was able to better connect with everyday Indians

Gandhi's first major protests targeted British landlords who forced Indian farmers to grow a cash crop called indigo and to sell it at a low price instead of more in demand crops that they wanted to grow and could make more money with. Gandhi also led protests against the British taxation of a region suffering from the effects of floods and famine. Gandhi and his supporters won more favorable agreements in both cases.



Mohandas Gandhi, 1918 when he led a protest against taxation.

[Source](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is in the public domain

5. What was Gandhi "known for" when he returned to India in 1915?

6. What actions did Gandhi take to fight injustice in his first years back in India?

- 1914-1918

World War I

During World War I, when Britain declared war on Germany, they brought India into the fight as well. Large number of Indian troops served overseas. In exchange, the British government declared that it would gradually increase Indian participation in the British Raj.

Instead, during World War I (1914–18) the British government of India enacted a series of repressive emergency powers that were intended to combat extreme political activities. By the war's end, expectations were high among Indians that those measures would be eased and that India would be given more political autonomy. Instead, however, the government of India passed what became known as the **Rowlatt Acts** in early 1919, which essentially extended the repressive wartime measures. The Rowlatt Acts stated that political cases could be tried without juries and that people suspected of acting against the government could be jailed without a trial.

Sources: Vinay Lal, "British India." <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/southasia/History/British/BrIndia.html>; "Massacre of Amritsar". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 29 Feb. 2016 <<http://www.britannica.com/event/Massacre-of-Amritsar>>; "Rowlatt Acts". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 01 Mar. 2016 <<http://www.britannica.com/event/Rowlatt-Acts>>.

7. What promises did the British make during WWI? Did they follow through on those promises? Explain.

- April 1919

Amritsar Massacre



Watch this [dramatization of the Massacre of Amritsar from the film Gandhi \(1982\)](#) and read the text below.

The Massacre of Amritsar, also called **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**, occurred on April 13, 1919. British troops fired on a large crowd of unarmed Indians in Amritsar in the Punjab region of India, killing several hundred people and wounding many hundreds more. It marked a turning point in India's modern history, in that it left a permanent scar on Indo-British relations and was the prelude to Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi's full commitment to the cause of Indian nationalism and independence from Britain.

The Rowlatt Acts, initiated in 1919, were met by widespread anger and discontent among Indians, notably in the Punjab region. In early April, Gandhi called for a one-day general strike throughout the country. In Amritsar, the news that prominent Indian leaders had been arrested and banished from the city sparked violent protests in which soldiers fired upon civilians, buildings were looted and burned, and angry mobs killed several foreign nationals and severely beat a Christian missionary. A force of several dozen troops commanded by Brigadier General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer was given the task of restoring order. Among the measures taken was a ban on public gatherings.

On the afternoon of April 13, a crowd of at least 10,000 men, women, and children gathered in an open space known as the Jallianwala Bagh, which was nearly completely enclosed by walls and had only one exit. It is not clear how many people there were protesters who were

defying the ban on public meetings and how many had come to the city from the surrounding region to celebrate Baisakhi, a spring festival. Dyer and his soldiers arrived and sealed off the exit. Without warning, the troops opened fire on the crowd, reportedly shooting hundreds of rounds until they ran out of ammunition. It is not certain how many died in the bloodbath, but, according to one official report, an estimated 379 people were killed, and about 1,200 more were wounded. After they ceased firing, the troops immediately withdrew from the place, leaving behind the dead and wounded.

Source: "Massacre of Amritsar". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 29 Feb. 2016 <<http://www.britannica.com/event/Massacre-of-Amritsar>>.

8. Why were people protesting in Amritsar? Why were there troops in Amritsar?

9. Why is the Massacre of Amritsar historically important?

- 1921

Gandhi Given Leadership of Indian National Congress

After the Amritsar Massacre, Gandhi dedicated himself to gaining self-rule for India. In 1921, he was given leadership of the Indian National Congress. He reorganized the group with the goal of *Swaraj* through the use of nonviolent forms of protest.

10. With Gandhi as its leader, what was the goal of the Indian National Congress after 1921?

- 1920s-
1940s

Homespun Movement

Great Britain's efforts to modernize the Indian economy brought industrial manufacturing to the colony through the building of textile factories. The move benefited British factory owners, but it greatly diminished India's traditional economy. People who once made a living by making cloth could not compete with inexpensive machine-made British goods.

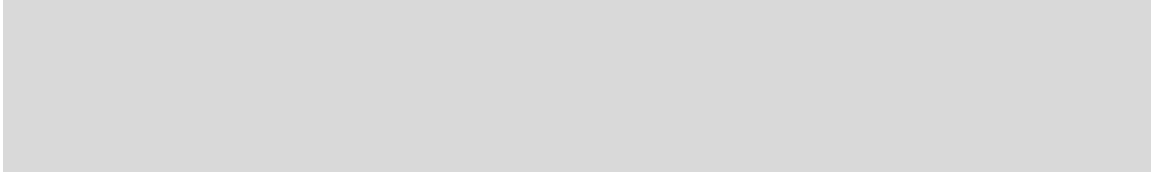
Gandhi argued that India needed to be self-sufficient and so they would not have to not rely on the British. One of way of doing this, he claimed was for Indians to make their own clothes. The push for Indians to



Gandhi spinning, late 1940s.

give up buying British textiles and to make their own clothes was called the Homespun Movement. Gandhi led the movement by example. He made all of his own clothing and carried a portable spinning wheel with him so he could continue the practice while traveling.

11. Why did Gandhi encourage Indians to spin their own cloth?



- 1930

The Salt March



Watch this [History Channel video on Gandhi's Salt March](#) and the transcript below, then watch this [dramatization of the Salt March from the film Gandhi \(1982\)](#).

Video Transcript:

Violence begets violence, but a rebellion need not rely on guns to be successful, as Gandhi proved during his Salt March, the most peaceful rebellion.

The sea: the abundant, free resource at land's end. Among its potential gifts: untold quantities of salt waiting to be distilled, but for the poor of India in the early 20th Century, even this basic necessity of life-- salt-- was not a given.

[Salt] was being heavily taxed by their British rulers. Indians could even be thrown in jail for just making or selling this vital preservative. In 1930, Mahatma Gandhi saw this injustice as the perfect opportunity to practice the kind of passive resistance he called "satyagraha." By satyagraha, Gandhi meant "truth force." He meant mobilizing the power of truth. So in other words, he had to find a way in which the people would free themselves, yet wasn't violent..

On March 12, the 61-year-old Gandhi set out with 78 followers on a 240-mile trek to the sea. For 23 days, they marched, thousands upon thousands of his countrymen joining along the way. Eventually, the throng of protesters reached over two miles.

GANZ: "Ultimately then, you reach the sea and, "What's he going to do? Is he going to break the law?" And sure enough, they go down and with this wonderful simplicity, they make salt. The law's been broken. Wait a second. You mean British law can be defied? Yes."

Soon, people all over India were making their own salt. The authorities responded by imprisoning over 60,000 Indians for this illegal activity, including Gandhi himself, but that, too, was part of his plan to make the world aware of British oppression.

India would not gain independence for another years, but Gandhi proved that nonviolent methods on a vast scale could be used to achieve that most basic of human rights: freedom.

The modern and free state of India, the world's largest democracy, is the lasting legacy of Gandhi's Salt March, history's most peaceful rebellion.

Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, but his ideals of peaceful rebellion were passed on to other leaders in the fight for human freedom, including Dr. Martin Luther King. Sadly, he, too, met with an assassin's bullet.

Additional Information:

Soon after the Salt March ended, Gandhi was arrested. The protest against the salt tax continued. Gandhi's followers nonviolently marching toward the British Salt Works in Gujarat where they were beaten by soldiers employed by the British army.

The Salt March and protests that followed it brought worldwide attention to the Indian Independence movement and British cruelty. The media attention turned public opinion in Great

Britain in Gandhi's favor and led to his release from prison, negotiations with the British government in India, and more support for Indian self-rule.

12. Why did Gandhi lead the Salt March?

13. What did Gandhi achieve through the Salt March?

- 1930s

Government Act of 1935 and Elections of 1937

After Gandhi's release from prison and the end of the salt tax protests, the Indian National Congress, led by Gandhi, entered into years of negotiations with the British Raj. The resulting law was the Government of India Act of 1935. The Government of India Act of 1935 was a new plan for ruling India that involved more Indian participation in the government and free elections to select representatives from each province.

In 1937, the first elections took place. The Indian National Congress candidates won a majority of the provinces, while the Muslim League did poorly in the election.

14. What benefits did Indians gain from the Government Act of 1935?

- 1940

Lahore Resolution

In 1940, the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah wrote the Lahore Resolution, a statement that demanded that India be separated into two states: one for Hindus and one for Muslims. Violence between Muslims and Hindus had been a continuous issue in India, and politicians like Jinnah feared that the Indian National Congress, which was dominated by Hindus, would not negotiate for the best interests of the Muslim population.



Photograph of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mohandas Gandhi, 1944. Though pictured here in good spirits, the two disagreed on whether and independent India should remain one country or be divided between Muslims and Hindus.

15. What was the Lahore Resolution? What effect might it have on India's independence?

- 1939-
1945

World War II, the Quit India Movement, and Indian National Army

At the outbreak of WWII, the British pulled India into the conflict without consulting the elected Indian representatives. In response, all of the elected Indian officials resigned from the government.

In 1942, Gandhi and the Indian National Congress launched the **Quit India Movement**, demanding immediate independence for India. In a speech entitled, "Do or Die," given on August 8, 1942, Gandhi urged the masses to act as an independent nation and not to follow the orders of the British. His call found support among a large number of Indians, including revolutionaries who were not necessarily party to Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. Almost the entire Congress leadership, both at the national and local levels, was put into confinement less than twenty-four hours after Gandhi's speech, and the greater number of the Congress leaders spent the rest of the war in jail. Despite lack of direct leadership, large-scale protests and demonstrations were held all over the country. The British responded with mass detentions, making over 100,000 arrests.

The Quit India Movement died down in a few months, but other groups of Indians started to rebel against the British. A group of Indian soldiers that once fought for the British, switched sides during WWII to fight with the Japanese in an attempt to invade India from the Southeast, defeat the British, and declare India independent. They were unsuccessful, but the attempt showed how deeply Indians disliked British rule. In addition, in 1946 sailors in the Royal Indian Navy revolted against the British, refusing to work, carrying on violent protests, and in some instances taking over ships.

The pressure from the Quit India Movement, recognition that the armed forces were opposed to British rule, and the drain on resources from WWII and the recovery from the that war, led the British to give up their control of India. Soon, they started negotiations with the Indian National Congress and Muslim League to transfer power to India.

16. Identify and explain three reasons the British gave up power in India.

- August,
14 1947

Independence, the Partition of India, and the death of Gandhi



Watch this [excerpt of this documentary on Gandhi \(31:52-end\)](#) and read the text below.

Despite Gandhi's desire to keep India together, the decision was made to divide the colony into two separate and independent nations: India and Pakistan (more on this in a later lesson). This separation of India and Pakistan is known as the **Partition of India**.

Pakistan gained its independence on August 14, 1947 and was led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah. India gained its independence on August 15, 1947 and was led by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.



Map showing the partitioned sections of what was the British colony of India.

17. Why was Gandhi unhappy with the result of India's Independence Movement?

18. How did Gandhi react to violence between Hindus and Muslims after Partition

19. How did Gandhi die? What reason was given for his death?

Summary Task

In the space below answer the question:

Why did British Rule of India end in 1947?

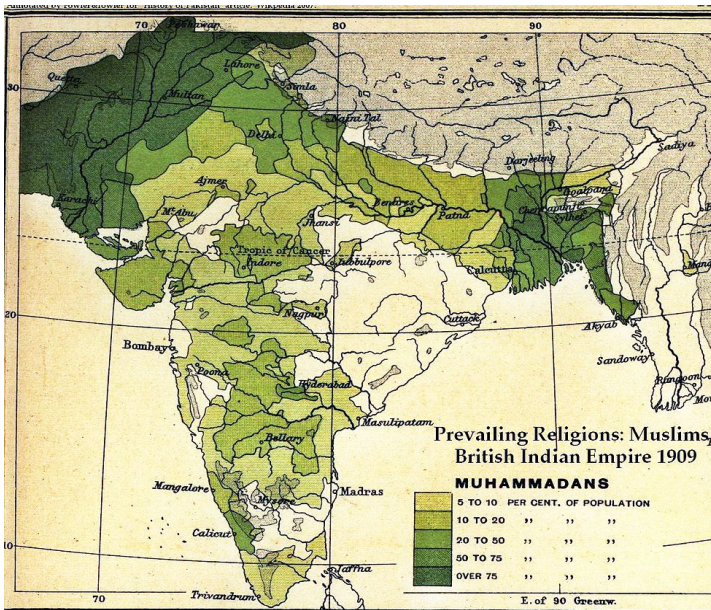
4

How did the Partition of India affect the people of India and Pakistan?

Objectives: Explain the effects of the Partition of India on the people of India and Pakistan.

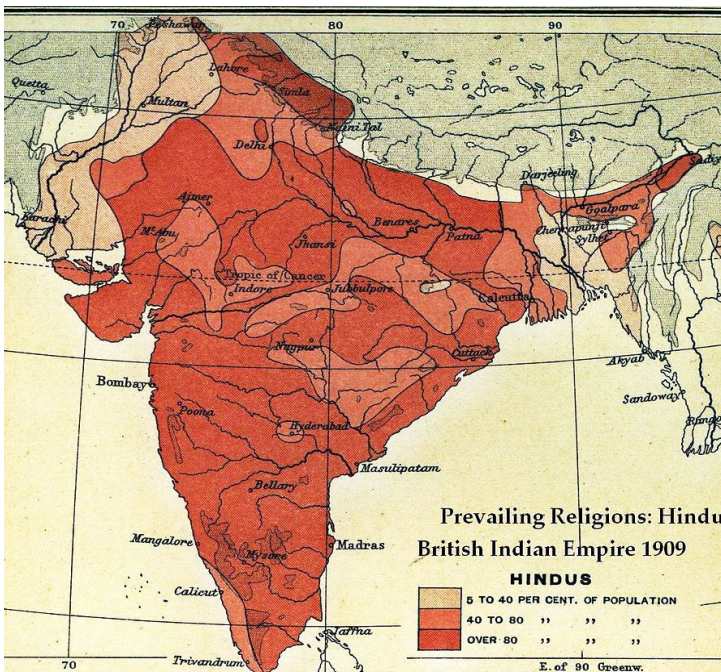
Introduction

Directions: Examine the maps below and answer the questions that follow.



Map A. Prevailing Religions of the British Indian Empire, 1909: Muslims from the Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford University Press, 1909.

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain



Map B. Prevailing Religions of the British Indian Empire, 1909:

1. Where did most Muslims live (provide relative directions like “in the southeast” or “in the western region of India)?

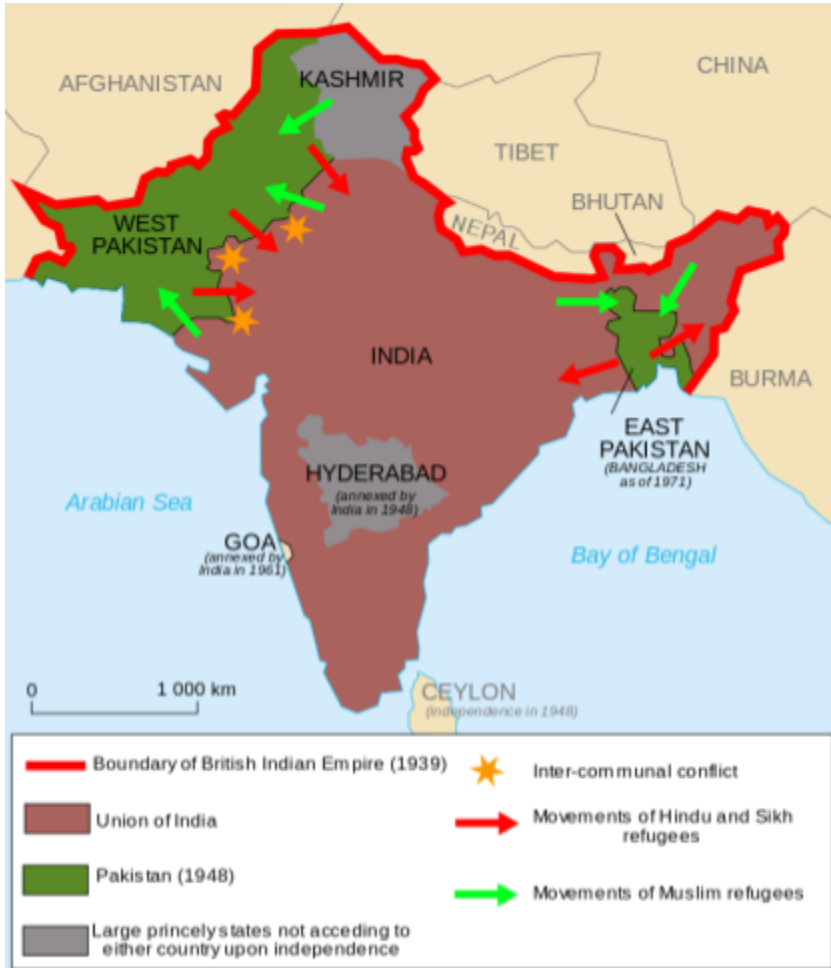
2. If you were to divide India up into a country that is predominantly Muslim and a country that is predominantly Hindu, draw on the map below where you would make the two countries.



3. Why did you draw the borders of these two countries where you did?

4. What issues might arise if you were to declare the creation of two different countries in this area, each based on a religion?

▶ Watch this [video on the Partition of India](#) and read [this article from BBC History](#), then answer the questions that follow.



The Partition of India, 1947.

1. Why was the colony of India divided into India and Pakistan in 1947?

2. What were the immediate effects of the Partition?

3. What have been the long term effects of the Partition on the relationship between Pakistan and India?



Regents Multiple Choice Check for Understanding

1. The purpose of Mohandas Gandhi's actions such as the Salt March and the textile boycott was to

- (1) begin a cycle of armed revolution
- (2) draw attention to critical issues
- (3) increase the strength of the military
- (4) resist the power of religious leaders

4. 82. One reason India gained its independence from Great Britain in 1947 was that

- (1) Great Britain was defeated in World War II
- (2) the Treaty of Versailles required Great Britain to give up its colonies
- (3) Great Britain did not have the resources to maintain an empire after World War II
- (4) India had supported the Axis Powers during World War II

2. In the 1940s, the leadership of the Indian National Congress and the leadership of the Muslim League supported the goal of

- (1) helping the British fight World War II
- (2) removing British control from the subcontinent
- (3) abolishing caste distinctions and discrimination
- (4) establishing a unified government based on religious teachings

5. Why did large numbers of Hindus and Muslims migrate immediately after India gained its independence?

- (1) Many jobs were being outsourced overseas.
- (2) The government offered housing incentives in newly developed areas.
- (3) Religious pilgrimages to neighboring countries were required based on their beliefs.
- (4) The subcontinent was divided into countries based primarily on the location of religious majorities.

3. Base your answer to the following question on the passage below and on your knowledge of social studies.

...Indeed whilst on the one hand civil disobedience authorizes disobedience of unjust laws or unmoral laws of a state which one seeks to overthrow, it requires meek and willing submission to the penalty of disobedience and therefore cheerful acceptance of the jail discipline and its attendant hardships....

Which individual is the author of this passage?

- (1) Otto von Bismarck
- (2) Mohandas Gandhi
- (3) Ho Chi Minh

"Struggle Continues for Control of Kashmir"

"Many Hurt in Border Clashes Between Hindus and Muslims"

6. Which nations have been most closely associated with the conflicts in these headlines?

- (1) China and India
- (2) India and Pakistan
- (3) Vietnam and Cambodia (Kampuchea)
- (4) Sri Lanka and Thailand

(4) Fidel Castro