

# Card One: Mohandas Gandhi

## Section #1

Since the mid-1800s, the British Empire had been ruling over India. Under British rule, many upper-class Indians attended British schools and learned European views of nationalism and democracy and wished to apply these political ideas to their own country. Two groups had formed to rid India of foreign rule in India, the Hindu Indian National Congress in 1885 and the Muslim League in 1906. Indian support of the British during World War I did little to help them achieve their goal of self-government. Upon returning from the war, they are once again treated like second rate citizens. The Amritsar Massacre, in 1919, was a peaceful demonstration in Amritsar Square to protest oppressive British policies. The British suppressed the revolt with military force, killing 400 Indians and injuring about 1,200, allowing Gandhi to rise in power and to become the leader of the independence movements in India. This caused millions to become Indian nationalists, rather than loyal British subjects.



## Section #2

Gandhi was born in 1869, when Britain was in control of India. He would spend most of his life fighting for the independence of India. He went to law school in London and would open his first practice in South Africa working for the Muslim Indian Traders. This is where he first experienced discrimination. Gandhi's first experience with racism was when he was asked to remove his turban, but the most blatant discrimination he received was when he was asked to leave the stage coach train for which he had purchased a ticket. Gandhi would of course refuse, and would later be beaten by a driver. Gandhi first employed non-violent civil disobedience, which allowed for the peaceful protest of British rule. Soon his followers would begin to call him Mahatma, meaning "great soul".



## Section #3

Gandhi, aggravated by the lack of punishment for officers who killed innocent protestors at Amritsar Square, employed the Indian National Congress to follow the policy of noncooperation with the British government. In 1920, the National Congress endorsed civil disobedience, the deliberate and public refusal to obey an unjust law. Gandhi's methods of boycotts range from refusal to buy British goods, attend government schools, pay taxes or vote in elections. He also urged followers to only wear homespun fabrics, which proved to devastate the British economy. The most monumental of movements was the Salt March. Indians were unable to buy salt without bearing a tax burden because its production was monopolized by the British government, Gandhi and his followers walked 240 miles to the coast collecting seawater and letting it evaporate, allowing salt to be produced without the British government enforcing taxes. Gandhi's peaceful protest often led to riots and the arrest of 60,000 people, including Gandhi.

An eye for an eye makes  
the whole world blind



# Card Two: Nelson Mandela



## Section #1

*In South Africa, racial conflict was the result of colonial rule. While under Dutch and British control, South Africa was racially divided. A white minority ruled a black majority. In 1912, to resist control of the whites, the blacks formed the African National Congress to fight for their rights. In 1948, the National Party came to power in South Africa, promoting Afrikaner, or Dutch South African, nationalism. It instituted a policy of apartheid, a complete separation of the races, banning social contact between blacks and whites, segregating schools, hospitals and neighborhoods. In 1959, the minority government set up reserves, called homelands, for the country's majority black groups. Blacks were forbidden to live in white areas unless they worked as laborers for whites. 75% of the population was made of blacks, but there was only 13% of land saved for them, allowing the whites to keep the best land. While helping to support boycotts and strikes, Nelson Mandela was imprisoned.*

## Section #2

*Nelson Mandela became interested in politics as a young boy living in his town, listening to elders reminiscing about how freely they lived, prior to the rule of Whites. Inspired to help his people regain that freedom, Mandela trained as a lawyer and became a top official in the African National Congress (ANC). Convinced that apartheid would never end peacefully, he joined the armed struggle against white rule. For this, he was imprisoned for 27 years (until 1990). This was because of his primary role as a militant anti-apartheid activist and leader of the armed wing of the African National Congress. When he was released, he would go on to win South Africa's first free election in 1994 & become the first democratically elected president.*



## Section #3

*The African National Congress would fight for their rights in South Africa. They organized strikes and boycotts to protest racist policies. In 1948, after the Afrikaner dominated National Party came to power, Mandela began actively participating in politics. He led the ANC's 1952 Defiance Campaign and the 1955 Congress of the People, whose adoption of the Freedom Charter provided the fundamental basis of the anti-apartheid cause. Mandela opened and operated a law firm providing free or low cost legal counsel, to many blacks who lacked attorney representation. Initially committed to nonviolent resistance, Mandela and 150 others were arrested in December 1956 and charged with treason. Then in 1961, he became the leader of the ANC's armed forces, the Umkhonto we Sizwe or MK (Spear of the Nation), where he coordinated sabotage campaigns against military and governmental targets, making plans for a possible guerilla war to end apartheid, while raising funds for MK.*



