Chapter 15: Learning About Hindu Beliefs
Use of Nonviolence as an Effective Strategy

The idea of ahimsa, or nonviolence, has become an important part of modern culture. In India, Gandhi protested violence through nonviolent means. In the United States, the 1960s civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. also protested inequality through nonviolent means.

Objective: You have read two sources and watch a video about Gandhi and nonviolence.

“Contributions of Mohandas Gandhi”
“Speech to All- India Congress”
“Salt March Video”

Write an essay focusing your response on how **nonviolence is an effective strategy to bring about change**. Focus on how Gandhi uses nonviolence successfully to show how nonviolence is an effective strategy.

Your response must include:

- an introduction that engages the reader's interest and states a clear opinion about how nonviolence is effective and 3 reasons why you believe it is effective.
- Body with supporting facts, details, and examples from your research. Include at least 2 sources with direct quotes that show Gandhi’s use of nonviolence, and explain how the quote shows how nonviolence is effective.
- Conclusion that restates the purpose of your report and summarizes your 3 main points on how nonviolence is effective.
- **Use RACER to help you successfully write your essay.**

1st Paragraph: Provide background information about Gandhi, show how nonviolence is an effective strategy to bring about change, and state 3 reasons why you believe it is based on Gandhi’s methods.

2nd, 3rd, and 4th Paragraphs: Explain 3 ways how Nonviolence was used effectively based on Gandhi’s experiences through your sources.

5th Paragraph: Restate how nonviolence works and 3 ways how nonviolence was used effectively by Gandhi.
**Breakdown of Gandhi Essay**

**1st Paragraph:** Create a topic sentence stating how nonviolence is an effective strategy and state 3 reasons why you believe nonviolence is effective based on Gandhi’s methods discussed in sources.

**Include:**
- Definition of nonviolence
- Its connection to Hinduism
- State opinion how nonviolence is an effective strategy
- 3 reasons to show nonviolence works based on research and sources

**Example:** “Nonviolence is the personal practice of being harmless to self and others under every condition. Nonviolence is important to Hindus because it is a basic value or part of dharma of all Hindus. I believe nonviolence is an effective strategy to solving problems in the world. 3 experiences of Gandhi that show nonviolence is effective is 1) Gandhi used nonviolence to convince the British to free India through his Salt March, 2), and 3).”

**2nd, 3rd, and 4th Paragraphs:** Explain 3 reasons that show Nonviolence is effective based on Gandhi’s experiences.

✓ Important to use a quote, provide the source you used and explain by saying “This shows/demonstrates/displays” and explain what the quote means.
✓ Same for 2nd and 3rd reasons in 3rd and 4th paragraphs

**Example:**

✓ 2nd Paragraph: “One reason I believe nonviolence is an effective strategy is Gandhi used nonviolence to convince the British to free India from their control. For example, Gandhi used nonviolence in his Salt March where he fought the British tax on salt. According to the video on the Salt March, “the movement succeeded in attracting world attention and began progress toward Indian independence”. This shows that Gandhi was successful in achieving his goal through his nonviolent march to Dandi.”

**5th Paragraph:** Summarize how nonviolence is an effective strategy and 3 reasons.

➢ Restate how nonviolence is an effective strategy
➢ Restate the experiences to show nonviolence is an effective strategy
➢ Conclusion Sentence to end Response
Mohandas K. Gandhi was born in India in 1869. This birth was the beginning of a life that would change the course of India and places as far away as The United States. Called Mahatma (meaning "Great Soul") by his followers, Gandhi fought for equality amongst all.

After receiving training as a lawyer in England, Gandhi went to South Africa to work for a law firm. It was his experience in South Africa and the policy of Apartheid (a policy or system of segregation or discrimination on grounds of race) that lead Gandhi to his principle of satyagraha (non violent resistance). According to Gandhi, this type of resistance requires more bravery and courage than violent resistance.

After returning to India in 1914, Gandhi became active in the Indian nationalist movement. Included in the goals of Gandhi's vision for India is cooperation between Hindus and Muslims. Gandhi encouraged them to work together for a stronger, independent India.

Gandhi's vision was for an independent India made up of peaceful and self sufficient villages. Gandhi encouraged inclusion of the untouchable class because he opposed the caste system and wanted to raise the lowest (untouchable) caste. He also worked to erase some of the disgrace associated with the lower castes in his efforts to uplift the people. He attempted to improve the living conditions in the peasant villages.

In order to stop the violence, for a period of time Gandhi staged several fasts (an act of willing stopping or reducing certain or all food, drink, or both). One fast lasted 21 days to protest the violence between Hindus and Muslims. In 1932, he fasted until "untouchables" were given seats in the Indian Congress. Gandhi again fasted until the new Indian government promised protection for the Muslim population. All three movements of fasting were successful in achieving Gandhi's goals.

Mohandas K. Gandhi was shot and killed on January 30 1948. This shot ended a life that was devoted to peace, acceptance, and harmony. Mahatma Gandhi was 79 years old. Even though his life has ended, he lives on in the principles he gave to the world.

Gandhi's "experiments in truth" that included uniting Hindus and Muslims in mutual respect and acceptance as well as non-violence inspired Martin Luther King Jr. King applied the principles of mutual respect and acceptance and non-violence to the Civil Rights movement in The United States.
Document 2: Script for Gandhi and his Salt March Video

- The Salt March was probably Gandhi’s single most famous action of non-violent resistance.

- The march protested the British Salt Tax which made it illegal for people to freely collect their own salt from the coasts of India, making them buy salt they couldn’t really afford and was a major part of many Hindus’ diet.

- On March 12, 1930 Gandhi and 78 followers began the 240 mile march for Dandi, Gujarat.

- They slept in the open each night and only asked villagers for food and water. Day by day more people joined until the procession was 2 miles long. By the time they reached Dandi on April 13th, over 50,000 were gathered.

- When they reached Dandi they began boiling salty mud and creating illegal salt. As millions began making and buying illegal salt, mass civil disobedience (the refusal to comply with certain laws or to pay taxes and fines, as a peaceful form of political protest) began to break out.

- Men and women both were a part of these protests, and British police were left confused on whether to jail Gandhi or not, as he used nonviolence to protest.

- The movement succeeded in attracting world attention and began progress toward Indian independence.

- The Salt March and other acts of civil disobedience in the early 1930’s led the British to give the Indian people more political power.
Inspired by the nonviolent principles, Mohandas Gandhi began the peaceful revolution that eventually led the Indian nation in its struggle for independence from Great Britain. The excerpt below is from a speech Gandhi made during World War II. In it he calls for non-violent action to obtain independence—a call for which he was imprisoned for two years. In 1947, three years after his release, India was granted independence.

“There are people who have hatred in their hearts for the British. I have heard of people saying that they are disgusted [filled with dislike] with them. I know full well that the British will have to give us our freedom when we have made sufficient [enough] sacrifices and proven our strength. We must remove the hatred for the British from our hearts. At least, in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was...

At the time when I am about to launch the biggest front in my life, there can be no hatred for the British in my heart. The thought that, because they are in difficulties, I should give them a push is totally absent from my mind. It has never been there. It may be that, in a moment of anger, they might do things that might provoke [cause anger in] you. Nevertheless, you should not resort to violence; that would put non-violence to shame. ...

Non-violence is a matchless weapon, which can help everyone. I know we have not done much by way of non-violence and therefore, if such changes come about, I will take it that it is the result of our labors during the last twenty-two years and that God has helped us to achieve it.

When I raised the slogan "Quit India" (asking the British to leave India) the people in India, who were then feeling despair [low in spirits], felt that I had placed before them a new thing. If you want real freedom, you will have to come together, and such a coming together will create true democracy—the like of which has not so far been witnessed or attempted [tried].

...I want you to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed [belief], but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it [completely], and stick to it when you join the struggle.”

By the end of the World War II, Britain’s place in the world had changed dramatically and the demand for independence could no longer be ignored.