

# 15

## Some People Never Die

### Lesson Plan

#### Contents

- ▶ What makes people really great?
- ▶ Some great people from across the world:
- ▶ Socrates
- ▶ Abraham Lincoln
- ▶ Mahatma Gandhi
- ▶ Karl Marx
- ▶ Martin Luther King

#### Objectives

- ▶ Learning what is greatness – its lasting nature.
- ▶ Are fame and fortune connected to greatness?
- ▶ Is greatness limited to political power only?
- ▶ Greatness in every field: politics, economy, philosophy, science, sport, arts, literature, journalism, language, education, etc.

#### Teacher's Aids

- ▶ Use photographs and the internet to relate the background and history of these people. For example, the death of Socrates is recorded by someone who was present at the time. The speech of Martin Luther King 'I have a Dream' is available on the internet. Old recordings of Mahatma Gandhi and his works are available on the internet.

#### Tips for Teacher

- ▶ Make this a very interesting lesson by showing that great people exist in all walks of life.
- ▶ Encourage the students to talk about the greatness seen in day-to-day life in their own family members, neighbours and friends.
- ▶ Make students understand that greatness does not lie in acquiring power or wealth but in the work that we do to make the world a better place.

#### Gear Up and Background

- ▶ The two persons are:
  1. Nelson Mandela, who fought apartheid [colour bias] in South Africa and was imprisoned

for 27 years. He later, on being released, became President of South Africa. Discuss racial and colour bias.

2. Mother Teresa of Kolkata, canonised by the Catholic church is now known as Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Explain her work with the poor, the sick, the old, the neglected and the destitute around the world, starting with Kolkata.

▶ Read the lesson aloud and explain what is meant by true 'greatness'.

### /// Socrates

- ▶ A philosopher and thinker of Greece, who lived and died for his strong beliefs.
- ▶ His most famous disciple was Plato.
- ▶ His greatness lies in his courage to stand up for what he believed was true and just.

### /// Abraham Lincoln

- ▶ Born poor in 1809, had very little formal education; Lincoln saw a lot of hardship and failure.
- ▶ Became the 16th President of the USA in 1860.
- ▶ He was against the practice of slavery. In southern USA, the rich plantations employed black people brought from Africa as slaves. The southern states did not wish to follow his ideas and wanted a separate state. Civil War ensued.
- ▶ Lincoln won the war, the USA was held together, and slavery was formally ended.
- ▶ But the southern states were unhappy and Lincoln was assassinated, shot dead by John Wilkes Booth, who supported the southern states.
- ▶ Lincoln's greatness lay in overcoming his poverty and failures and rising to fight for what was just and right, fighting for the freedom of thousands of people who were enslaved.

### /// Mahatma Gandhi

- ▶ Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi – born into a prosperous Gujarati family at Porbandar, studied law in England, became a lawyer in South Africa which was, like India, under British rule.
- ▶ Bad treatment of blacks by the whites – Gandhiji began to protest against it, adopting non-violent methods.
- ▶ Returned to India – joined the freedom movement – began to follow the path of Satyagraha, which was now his philosophy.
- ▶ Non-Cooperation Movement, 1920 – arrested.
- ▶ Quit India Movement – 1942 – with the slogan 'Do or Die'.
- ▶ British forced to give India its freedom – Independence on 15th August 1947.
- ▶ Worked for unity of Hindus and Muslims, and against untouchability.
- ▶ Not everyone liked his ideas and views, so he was shot dead on 30th January 1948.
- ▶ Remembered as the Father of the Nation.

## /// Karl Marx

- ▶ Karl Marx born 1818 in Germany. Studied history, politics, law and philosophy.
- ▶ Saw impact of Industrial Revolution around him – exploitation of workers by owners of factories – poor wages, long working hours, bad conditions. Owners rich and luxurious. A middle income group developed. The rich owners and industrialists were called ‘capitalists’.
- ▶ Karl Marx supported the workers and wanted that society should own everything, not just the capitalists.
- ▶ Wrote *Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital*.
- ▶ Supported revolt of workers against the capitalists, was crushed, fled to London.
- ▶ After his death, his ideas carried out by Lenin who formed the Soviet Union. [USSR – since dismantled]
- ▶ Karl Marx greatness lies in his belief that all men should be treated equal.

## /// Martin Luther King

- ▶ Black American born 1929.
- ▶ Slavery banned, but black Americans still ill-treated by white Americans and humiliated. [separate schools, seats in buses, restaurants, etc.]
- ▶ Martin Luther King fought against injustice to blacks – became a leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA.
- ▶ Came to India in 1959 to learn about the Satyagraha movement, which was basically a non-violent movement. Came to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi, [many have followed Gandhiji’s way of thinking – Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Aung San Suu Kyi, etc.]
- ▶ His methods supported by his followers in the USA. 28th August 1964 – marched to Washington with about 2 lakh people joining him.
- ▶ The USA had to pass a law giving equality to blacks.
- ▶ Received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.
- ▶ But many whites still unjust to blacks. In Alabama, they prevented the blacks from voting in elections. Luther continued his fight.
- ▶ Some people did not like his ideas and views – shot dead in 1968.
- ▶ His greatness lies in the way he stood up for the rights of the blacks and used non-violent methods in his fight against injustice.
- ▶ Many people have stood up for the rights of people, and fought injustice. Some of them may be right next to us, in small and big ways.