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# Gandhi Questions And Answers Movie

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## Introduction

Few films have managed to capture the essence of a historical figure as profoundly as Richard Attenborough's 1982 epic "Gandhi." Starring Ben Kingsley in an Oscar-winning performance, the movie chronicles the life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, from his early days as a lawyer in South Africa to his leadership of India's nonviolent independence movement and his tragic assassination. Decades after its release, the film remains a touchstone for audiences seeking to understand the man behind the philosophy of *satyagraha*(truth-force). However, with such a sprawling narrative spanning more than three hours, viewers often have numerous questions about the historical events, creative choices, and deeper meanings presented on screen. This article serves as a comprehensive guide to the most common "Gandhi questions and answers movie" queries, providing clarity for both first-time viewers and longtime fans. Whether you are curious about historical accuracy, key scenes, or the film's enduring legacy, this resource will help you navigate the many layers of this cinematic masterpiece.

## What Is the "Gandhi Questions and Answers Movie" Concept?

The phrase "Gandhi questions and answers movie" can refer to any discussion, FAQ, or analysis that addresses the most frequently asked questions about the film. It is not a separate film title but rather a conceptual framework used by educators, film clubs, and history enthusiasts to explore the movie in depth. Many online forums, study guides, and even post-screening Q&A sessions with historians or filmmakers adopt this format to break down complex aspects of the biopic. In this article, we adopt that approach, structuring the content around the most pressing inquiries people have about "Gandhi." By answering these questions, we aim to enhance your appreciation of the film's artistry and its historical foundation.

## Top Questions About the Film Gandhi

Below, we address the most common questions that arise when discussing this iconic movie. Each answer is designed to be informative, accurate, and accessible.

### 1. How Historically Accurate Is the Movie Gandhi?

This is perhaps the most debated question. The film is widely praised for its commitment to authenticity, but like any biopic, it takes certain liberties for dramatic effect. For instance, the movie compresses timelines and combines several real-life figures into composite characters. The assassination scene, while faithful to the event, omits some details of the conspiracy. However, director Attenborough and screenwriter John Briley consulted extensively with Gandhi's disciples and historians. Many key events—such as the Salt March, the Amritsar massacre, and Gandhi's fasts—are depicted with remarkable fidelity. Overall, the film is considered a reliable introduction to Gandhi's life, but viewers should supplement it with scholarly works for a complete picture.

2. Why Did Richard Attenborough Choose Ben Kingsley for the Role?

Attenborough famously insisted on casting an actor of Indian heritage for the title role. Ben Kingsley, whose father was Indian (Gujarati) and mother was British, fit the requirement perfectly. Beyond ethnicity, Kingsley's resemblance to the young Gandhi was striking, and his rigorous preparation—studying Gandhi's mannerisms, diet, and even learning to spin cotton—convinced Attenborough. Kingsley's transformative performance earned him the Academy Award for Best Actor, and his portrayal remains definitive.

### 3. Did the Film Face Any Controversies?

Yes. In India, some nationalists criticized the film for emphasizing Gandhi's close relationship with British Viceroy Lord Irwin and other colonial figures, arguing it softened the anti-imperialist struggle. Others felt that Gandhi's complex personal life—including his strained relationship with his eldest son, Harilal—was underrepresented. Additionally, the film's portrayal of Hindu-Muslim unity during the independence movement was seen as overly optimistic by some historians. Despite these criticisms, the film was a critical and commercial success worldwide.

## Historical Accuracy: Fact vs. Fiction

To help you distinguish between documented history and dramatized elements, here is a breakdown of specific scenes.

- The Amritsar Massacre (1919): The film's depiction of General Dyer ordering troops to fire on unarmed civilians is largely accurate. The death toll was officially 379, though the film's estimate of "over a thousand" reflects later historical assessments. The scene where Gandhi addresses a vast crowd afterward actually occurred, but with different timing.
- The Salt March (1930): The movie accurately shows Gandhi leading a 24-day, 240-mile march to the sea to produce salt illegally. The iconic shot of Gandhi picking up a handful of salt is real. However, the film condenses the reaction of the British government—arrests came later and were more widespread than shown.
- Gandhi's Fasts: The movie includes Gandhi's fasts to stop communal violence, notably the 1947 Calcutta fast. This event did happen, and Gandhi did break the fast only after Hindu and Muslim leaders pledged peace. The emotional intensity in the film mirrors eyewitness accounts.
- The Assassination: The assassination by Nathuram Godse on January 30, 1948, is depicted with restraint. Godse's motive—Hindu nationalism and opposition to Gandhi's tolerance toward Muslims—is briefly mentioned, though the film does not delve into Godse's background, which has been a point of criticism.

## Key Scenes and Their Significance

Certain scenes in "Gandhi" have become iconic because they crystallize the philosophy of nonviolence.

### The Train Incident in South Africa

One of the film's earliest scenes shows young Gandhi being thrown off a first-class train compartment because of his skin color. This event, based on a true incident in 1893, sparks Gandhi's political awakening. The film uses this moment to illustrate the injustice that fueled his activism.

### The March to the Sea

The Salt March sequence is a masterclass in visual storytelling. The camera lingers on the faces of ordinary Indians joining the march, emphasizing the mass mobilization behind Gandhi's leadership. The dialogue is sparse; instead, the power lies in the collective act of defiance. This scene reinforces the movie's central theme: moral courage can overcome brute force.

### The Prayer Meeting Before Assassination

The final scene, where Gandhi walks to his daily prayer meeting, is shot with a sense of foreboding. His last

words are a plea for Hindu-Muslim unity. The assassination itself is depicted in a quick, shocking burst, followed by a slow-motion sequence of Gandhi falling. The film then cuts to a worldwide reaction, including a eulogy by Albert Einstein. This ending leaves audiences with the tragic irony that the apostle of peace was killed by violence.

## The Cast and Performances

Beyond Ben Kingsley, the film boasts an ensemble cast of remarkable depth.

- Rohini Hattangadi as Kasturba Gandhi: She brings warmth and resilience to Gandhi's wife, capturing her role as both supporter and occasional critic.
- Roshan Seth as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: Seth's portrayal of the future prime minister is dignified and captures Nehru's intellectual kinship with Gandhi.
- Martin Sheen as a journalist (Vince Walker): Sheen's character is a composite of several American reporters, providing a Western audience's perspective. His narration helps contextualize events
- Candice Bergen as Margaret Bourke-White: The famous photographer appears in a brief but memorable role, snapping pictures during the final months of Gandhi's life.

## Impact and Legacy of the Movie

"Gandhi" won eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director, and it revitalized global interest in nonviolent resistance. The film's release coincided with the rise of Solidarity in Poland and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, inspiring activists worldwide. In India, it remains a staple in school curricula, albeit with some critical discussions about its British-centric narrative. The movie also boosted tourism to locations like Porbandar and the Sabarmati Ashram.

## Common Audience Questions

1. How long is the movie? The theatrical cut runs 191 minutes (3 hours, 11 minutes). Extended versions have been released but are not widely distributed.
2. Is the film suitable for children? Yes, but some scenes of violence (the massacre, street riots, assassination) may be intense for younger viewers. The MPAA rating is PG.
3. Where was the film shot? Primarily in India (including Delhi, Mumbai, and Gujarat) with some scenes in London and South Africa. The filmmakers recreated 1930s India with meticulous production design.
4. What is the soundtrack like? Ravi Shankar composed the score, blending Indian classical instruments with Western orchestration. The main theme, "Vaishnava Jana To," is a Gujarati bhajan (devotional song) often associated with Gandhi.
5. Are there any deleted scenes? Yes, several deleted scenes exist, including an extended sequence of Gandhi's early law career. Some are available on special edition DVDs.

## Conclusion

Richard Attenborough's "Gandhi" remains a towering achievement in biographical filmmaking, a work that invites endless questions and answers about the man, the movement, and the medium. Whether you are seeking historical verification, artistic analysis, or inspiration, the film offers a rich tapestry that rewards repeated viewings. By exploring these "Gandhi questions and answers movie" topics, you gain not only a deeper understanding of the film but also a greater appreciation for the enduring relevance of Gandhi's message of nonviolence. As you watch the movie again, or perhaps for the first time, let the answers provided here serve as your guide—but also allow yourself to feel the emotional and moral impact that has made this film a timeless classic. In a world still grappling with conflict, Gandhi's words from the movie ring true: "An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind."

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