**Title of Lesson:** Ahimsa in the Real World: Truth, Love, and Nonviolence.

**Lesson By:** Melissa Ardon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level/ Subject Areas:</th>
<th>Class Size:</th>
<th>Time/ Duration of Lesson:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3 days 45 minutes each day</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives of Lesson:**
- Students will learn to define ahimsa as love, truth, and nonviolence.
- Students will create an abstract painting to show their understanding of feelings of nonviolence by using “feeling colors.”
- Students will write and describe their painting and how it represents nonviolence.

**Lesson Abstract:**
Students in second grade will learn about Gandhi’s philosophy of ahimsa. Through a digital story, honesty story, abstract art, and writing, students will learn about Gandhi’s philosophy of ahimsa.

**Lesson Content:**

*Background on Mohandas K. Gandhi*

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in a small town of India, Porbandar. He was born to Karamchand and Putlibai Gandhi. His father served as prime minister of their town and his mother, Putlibai, was a devout illiterate hindu girl. Putlibai attended daily temple services and fasted frequently throughout the year. At the tender age of thirteen he married Kasturbai. By eighteen they were parents to a boy. They had four children. At nineteen Gandhi sailed to London to attend law school. Upon earning his law degree, he returned to India only to find no job opportunities and feeling like a failure. He was offered an attorney position in South Africa and it is where he first began to practice law.

When Gandhi arrived to South Africa he had two very shocking incidents that changed his perspective. First, he was kicked of the train because he was sitting in first class and Indians were not allowed to sit with the British. Then, when he took the transportation from the train to the town on a stage coach, he was once again discriminated when he was not allowed to sit in the inside of the stage coach. These two incidents were his first experiences with discrimination. He soon realized that all Indian people were mistreated and he began working towards the rights of Indian people. He became a successful lawyer in South Africa and stayed there for twenty-one years.

Upon returning to India, Gandhi continued to work for the equal rights of Indians. Mostly recognizable as the father of India as he worked towards the independence of India from Britain. However, attaining independence was a long journey but very strategically planned.

*Gandhi’s Philosophy of Satyagraha*
A founding principle of Gandhi’s philosophy is the idea of satyagraha. In Sanskrit, Satya means truth, the equivalent of love (both relate to the soul); and agraha is force or firmness. Thus, Satyagraha is Soul Force (Fischer, 35). It was also described by Gandhi as the love-force, this was his new movement: “the force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth” (Parel, 89). Soul force is what drives a person to do the right thing by all means necessary. Often time this requires a degree of personal suffering, the sacrifice of the self. Gandhi used this method of suffering through his fasting, marches, and numerous times he was incarcerated because he showed his personal strength of standing up for what he believed was right or truth and act accordingly. “Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others” (Parel, 91). Thus, when he disagreed with certain laws, he did not submit to the laws by disobeying and consequently was arrested. This truth force is what is also referred to as passive resistance. Nonetheless in my opinion, standing up for the truth at any cost is hardly passive.

“I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I posses, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

Nobody in this world possesses absolute truth. This is God's attribute alone. Relative truth is all we know. Therefore, we can only follow the truth as we see it. Such pursuit of truth cannot lead anyone astray.” (Harijan, 2-6-1946, p167)

**Gandhi’s philosophy of Ahimsa**

Ahimsa means love, nonviolence, and inevitably truth. Without ahimsa there can be no truth because if you have ahimsa you love and have energy for nonviolence. “One who follows the law of love must not be angry even with the perpetrator of the greatest imaginable wrong, but must love him ....although he must never submit to his wrong or injustice” (Gandhi, 4). When you are living the life of ahimsa you do not wish any harm on anyone, nor do any harm. Ahimsa is the means to attain the truth. “Truth and Love-ahimsa-is the only thing that counts. Where this is present, everything rights itself in the end. This is a law to which there is no exception.” (Young India, 18-8-1927)

Additionally, Gandhi is well known for his experiments with truth and nonviolence. Gandhi believed “truth alone is being God himself.” (Gandhi -character, 4) It is through this truth that Ahimsa can be accomplished. Without ahimsa, one can not seek and find truth. (Gandhi, 4)

Gandhi loved nonviolence and it was through his love of it that he was able to educate others about it, so that they too could see the importance in using ahimsa in their daily lives. “My love for nonviolence is superior to every other thing mundane or supramundane. It is equaled only by my love for truth which is to me synonymous with nonviolence through which and which alone I can see and reach truth” (MM, 44).
Gandhi stated that just as violence is needed for the protection of things, nonviolence is needed for the protection of the Atma (soul), for the protection of one’s honor. (Gandhi, www.mkgandhi SB, 16) Ahimsa; nonviolence, truth, and love, will cultivate the soul. By cultivating the soul it will protect what one believes and the person’s honor. In Gandhi’s book, All Men Are Brothers, he makes a comparison of how man was once violent, but now is moving towards peace. Just as man has evolved from a violent and cannibals way, man is moving towards ahimsa.

“Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is nonviolent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards ahimsa or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and avatars have taught the lesson of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc. all attributes of ahimsa” (SB, 23)

Our soul’s nature is to live in truth, love and nonviolence. It is our goal to work towards ahimsa. Often this requires the guidance of prophets or avatars as they have the lessons to attain ahimsa. However, one must truly believe and have faith that ahimsa is truth and not merely a way to accomplish ‘political’ nonviolence for one’s nation. Ahimsa goes beyond a movement as Gandhi’s movement towards liberation from the English. Nonetheless, he believed that if a person is practicing nonviolence, they will inevitably be involved against social injustice no matter where it occurred. (SB, 33) Just as Gandhi used nonviolence in his daily life, he used it as a way to attain social justice in South Africa and India. “Nonviolence to be a potent force must begin with the mind. Nonviolence of the mere body without the cooperation of the mind is nonviolence of the weak or the cowardly, and has therefore no potency” (SB, 154).

In further explaining ahimsa as more than just love and truth, Gandhi stressed the importance of loving even those who do not agree with you and might even be your enemy. Here comes the real test of ahimsa, when it becomes more difficult to show love because your first instinct is to show the same feeling to someone who does not care for you. Here is where you should show true ahimsa by loving even those who are your enemy.

“In its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa I must love my enemy. I must apply the same rules to the wrong doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong doing father or son. This active ahimsa necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. As a man cannot deceive the loved one, he does not fear or frighten him or her. Gift of life is the greatest of all gifts, a man who gives it in reality, disarms all hostility. And none who is himself subject to fear can bestow that gift. He must therefore be fearless. A man cannot practice ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of ahimsa calls forth the greatest courage” (SB, 151).

**Ahimsa and Satyagraha lead to Hind Swaraj**

It is through the soul force, satyagraha, the drive to do good because of the love you have, ahimsa, that he mobilized people in his Hind Swaraj. Swaraj is when people learn to rule themselves. It is the self-rule and can be accomplished by the individual. Nonetheless,
the person must experience it internally, have a moral transformation. Once the person has had this personal transformation, then they are responsible for persuading others to do likewise. He believed in educating the masses “to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.” (Pantham, 10) Real swaraj would occur when people had a moral transformation and were ready to resist authority when it is abused. Above all, this had to come from within, otherwise the person involved was not liberated but simply doing what their leader was telling them to do. By educating the masses about swaraj, satyagraha, and ahimsa, Gandhi was able to mobilize people to do what was right for themselves, declare independence through nonviolence means.

State Content Standards: California State Content Standards, Second Grade
Social Studies
2.5 Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others' lives

Language Arts
Reading: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development
Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language by using phonics, syllabication, and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading.

Reading Comprehension
Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed

Listening and Speaking Strategies- Comprehension
1.1 Determine the purpose or purposes of listening (e.g., to obtain information, to solve problems, for enjoyment).
1.2 Ask for clarification and explanation of stories and ideas.
1.3 Paraphrase information that has been shared orally by others.
1.4 Give and follow three-and four-step oral directions.

Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.0- Organization and Focus
1.1 Group related ideas and maintain a consistent focus.

Visual Arts: Creative Expression
Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts
2.0 Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.

Skills, Processes, Materials, and Tools
2.1 Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of basic tools and art-making processes, such as printing, crayon rubbings, collage, and stencils.
2.2 Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of art media, such as oil pastels, watercolors, and tempera.

Guiding Questions: (major questions your lesson will address)
What is ahimsa?
What is nonviolence?
What is love?
What is truth?
How does ahimsa relate to me?

**Materials Needed:** *(list any materials needed for this lesson- e.g., art supplies, LCD projector)*

**Day 1**
- Computer, with a table or stand
- Projector and screen
- Gandhi movie, by Melissa Ardon
- Dry erase board
- Poster of HONEST page 85
- 20 Copies of “The Honest Woodcutter” story.
- graphic organizer worksheets

**Day 2**
- Computer, with a table or stand
- Projector
- white screen
- Gandhi movie, by Melissa Ardon
- paints
- color wheel poster
- poster of Colors and feelings
- brushes for each student
- mocks
- white construction paper or canvases of each student
- cloth pins or clothes hangers to hang paints for them to dry.
- Abstract art slide show, by Melissa Ardon
- Peace jar, jar with color stones; red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple

**Lesson Context:**

Students at the beginning of the school year are getting to know each other. To create an atmosphere of a safe and loving place, students will have to learn to respect one another. Furthermore, there are still some children who have a problem with resolving conflicts in the classroom or playground independently. These lessons will help establish a feeling of unity and family in the classroom through the teachings of Gandhi’s philosophy of ahimsa. Ahimsa is truth, nonviolence, and unconditional love.

The goal is for students to have respect and validate and celebrate acts of nonviolence that children are constantly involved with. Students will have several outlets for expressing each other, through dialogue, writings, and art. Students will be able to write
throughout the year about acts of nonviolence they encounter at school.

### Instructional Plan:

#### TEACHER INPUT

**Day 1**

Students will first discuss what they already know about nonviolence. What is nonviolence? What is violence? Who is Mahatma Gandhi? Are Gandhi and the concepts of nonviolence related?

Read The First Step of Jainism page 84-85, about Deceit and honesty. Discuss honesty, what is it and learn acronym for Honest. **Having a conscience, Only say the truth, Never tell a lie, Even when no one is watching, Say what you think, Think about what is right.**

Have students close their eyes and think about: Teacher model an example

1. We should make sure our thoughts are good.
2. Say what you think, say it politely, remain quiet if your speech might hurt others.
3. Do what you say.

Then, the digital story will play.

Students then discuss any feelings they felt as they watched the movie. Were they able to relate to any of the images? What did they understand nonviolence (truth, love, and ahimsa) to be? How does it relate to their own lives? As students respond, responses are written on the board using the same graphic organizer in the worksheet.

**Day 2**

Students will watch the digital story again. They will discuss again any new feelings they felt as they watched the movie for the second time. Teacher completes bubble map of feelings students’ share.

Students will be instructed about the color wheel. Each color represents a certain feeling.

#### STUDENT OUTPUT

**Oral language development,** students express their opinions of nonviolence.

Mental exercises for being honest.

Students pair share an example of 1-3.

Students recite acronym for Honest.

Students share with the class examples of being honest.

Class sits in a circle and discuss any feelings they felt after watching the digital store.

Complete graphic organizer on nonviolence.

**Day 2**

Class discussion, oral language development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red- truth</th>
<th>Students sit in a circle. One student grabs a colored stone and does a pantomime of the color stone, e.g. red- student to tell a truth. Class tries to guess what color stone they got.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orange- do right</td>
<td>Students pair share and pick a color to demonstrate a feeling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow- peace</td>
<td>Students construct an abstract art piece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green- love</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue- joy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple- nonviolence</td>
<td>Students sit in a circle. One student grabs a colored stone and does a pantomime of the color stone, e.g. red- student to tell a truth. Class tries to guess what color stone they got.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Demonstrate what each color represents, give an example, and do a pantomime.

2. Ask a student to come to the front of the class and show a feeling. The class should shout what the feeling is.

3. Ask another student to come to the front. The class should shout a feeling and the student should show it on his/her face or make a comment.

4. Divide the class into pairs. One student should show a feeling on his/her face and the other students should say what it is. Then one student should say a feeling and the other student should show it on his/her face. The students should take turns showing and saying the feelings.

5. Walk around and help anyone who needs it.

Show slide show of abstract art. Explain that art often represents our feelings when we have no words for it. It is through the art that students will express how they feel about what they learned about nonviolence. Students will then paint an abstract painting that represents their idea of nonviolence. Students will use the colors from the “feeling chart” to create their abstract art. Students will use tempura paints to paint an abstract painting. Teacher models how to paint without getting paint of floors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Students construct an abstract art piece.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students to write at least 5 sentences describing their art piece. Does it represent nonviolence? How does it represent nonviolence?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day 3
Once children have completed their art work, they will write at least 5 sentences describing it or what inspired them. Once they have completed their painting, students will write at least five sentences of how their work of art is an example of nonviolence.
Assessment/ Evaluation:

The assessment is based on the worksheet provided and the grading system is in the following rubric. It is graded based on 4 being the highest grade and 1 the lowest.

Day 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students completed the worksheet by providing 4 examples of how Gandhi practiced nonviolence, 4 examples of nonviolence in school, and 4 examples of nonviolence in their personal life a total of 12 examples, four in each category on the worksheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students gave 9-11 examples of nonviolence on the worksheet, in any of the following categories; Gandhi’s life, at school, or personal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students gave 4-8 examples of nonviolence on the worksheet, in any of the following categories; Gandhi’s life, at school, or personal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students gave 1-3 examples of nonviolence on the worksheet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, using the feeling colors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting with only one feeling color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, but did not use the feeling colors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student did not do an abstract painting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, and wrote 5 sentences describing how it represents nonviolence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, and wrote 3-4 sentences describing how it represents nonviolence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, and wrote 1-2 sentences describing how it represents nonviolence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students created an abstract painting, but did not write a description of it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extension Activities/ Enrichment

During free time, students may continue to write about nonviolence. Students can interpret other students’ art work and give a description of how they view their art as an example of nonviolence.

Bibliography:

Ahimsa.  http://www.dlshq.org/teachings/ahimsa.htm#meaning

Ahimsa: A Path of Love. www.boloji.com/poetry/2500-2600/2501.htm
All Men are Brothers. http://www.mkgandhi.org/amabrothers/amabrothers.htm


**The Legacy of Bapu: Reminiscences of a Grandson.**
www.manushi-india.org/pdfs_issues/102/2.%20The%20Legacy%20of%20Bapu.pdf


*Notes on Newspapers*

*Harijan:* (1933-1956) English weekly journal founded by Gandhiji and published under the auspices of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Poona, and from 1942, by the Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad. The weekly suspended publication in 1940 during the "Individual Satyagraha"; resumed in January 1942, but stopped appearing during the Quit India Struggle. It reappeared in 1946.

*Young India:* (1919-1932) English weekly journal, published from Bombay as a bi-weekly, under Gandhiji's supervision from May 7, 1919, and as a weekly from Ahmedabad, with Gandhiji as editor from October 8, 1919.
**Directions:** In each of the spaces below, give 4 examples of nonviolence. Give 4 examples of nonviolence at school, in your life, and in Gandhi’s life.

**Nonviolence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At School</th>
<th>In my Life</th>
<th>Gandhi’s Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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