Title: Classroom Management: Values and Practices: Gandhi in our World Today
By Mary Cartier, James C Wright Middle School, Madison, Wi
Grade: 8th, modification could make possible for 6th-7th
Duration of Lessons: 4-5 days 50 minute sessions

Standards: American Council for Foreign Language Teachers Standards
- **Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied
- **Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting
- **Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

Lesson Abstract:
This lesson will start the year and help us create an environment of respect and nonviolence in how we interact with each other and how we build the rules, routines and structures for our daily interactions. Using Gandhi’s idea of self rule it will allow us to find a process and a way of thinking that shows value and respect for ourselves and others.

Guiding Questions:
- How does nonviolence enrich humanity?
- Is there a disconnect between what we value and our actions?
- How do we show our values through our actions?

Content Essay:
To create a civic space in which members of a community find themselves committed to justice, there must be a cultural norm that respects the individual yet also requires the individual to participate. Advancing justice and our sense of humanity became Gandhi’s mission through the concepts of swaraj, ahimsa and satyagraha. Gandhi’s life provides an example of upholding the values of reflection, truth, humanity and work. Lasting social change was created through many years of development of his values, refining them under new circumstances, and putting those values into practice.

Before action can be taken on a societal level, it must begin with the individual. Self reflection is important and the first step to enacting Gandhi’s philosophy. In his book *Hind Swaraj* (2009) or Indian self rule, Gandhi wrote “One drowning man will never save another” (p. 71). All too often, we do not practice self reflection and wish to change the structural problems of our societies first, and then change the people. Gandhi rejects this idea and says that the change **must** start with the individual. We must first look inward to help others do the same. Any changes in the societal level will not be lasting if they are not first accompanied by a change of heart. In the introduction to the 2009 English edition to Hind Swaraj, Anthony J Parel discusses Godfrey Blount’s ideas that influenced Gandhi’s philosophy, “The betterment of society begins with the betterment of the individual” (p. lv). Gandhi believed that when individuals change and have done moral work on themselves, then and only then can they be effective to help make lasting change.

Although Gandhi thought individual change must occur before broader change would last, it is not to say he did not continue to develop his own thoughts as he gained experience.
Part of this reflective work is understanding that change happens over time, through the development of life experiences and the exposure to new information. In Hind Swaraj, he said “In no part of the world, under no civilisation, have all men attained perfection” (Gandhi, 2009, p. 69). Gandhi's own journey of truth represents this work, as a continual practice. Gandhi made many mistakes through his life, but continues to search for the truth and to keep the truth scared. He experienced transformation when he asked his wife to clean the chamber pot of an “untouchable” in their household. His wife became angry and Gandhi responded with anger, threatening to kick his wife out of the house. It was after this incident that Gandhi understood that although he was justified in questioning Kasturba’s discrimination, the way in which he did it was not. Throughout his experiments, he continued to redefine his beliefs. He does not embody perfection, but insists that he continues to work on “walking the talk” of Swaraj.

After Gandhi better understood the idea of “walking the talk” of Swaraj, he redefined how to fight for social justice in a morally sound way. During the Zulu Rebellion and the Boer War, Gandhi recruited Indians to align with the British. After the Zulu Rebellion, he realized that this type of fighting had no end in sight. He saw that the British did not have a worthy goal, and that the means did certainly not justify the end. In the documentary, “Making of the Mahatma,” Gandhi’s transformation in thinking is easily understood when he is nursing a Zulu to health during the war. “This is just a man hunt,” he says, and cements the ideas of justified means for justified ends (Benegal, 1996). Gandhi understood that the way in which social change is brought about is just as important as the change itself. It was during this time that Gandhi continued to develop his value of humanity and love. He understood that social change not only required individual work, but a deeper value of love towards other to create lasting peace.

Both individual change and the value of human life continued to be vital in Gandhi’s approach to social change. In Hind Swaraj Gandhi (2009) said, “Your belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake” (p 79). Through his redefining moment during the Zulu Rebellion Gandhi understood that violence as means to stop violence was ineffective and morally wrong. Many in India and South Africa continued to seek social change through violent revolution. Gandhi knew this was not morally sound, and would not create lasting change but simple replace one violent power for another. Gandhi then refined his beliefs in social change through the morally sound practice of ahimsa and satyagraha.

The value of ahimsa (nonviolence) is essential to creating peace through social change. Ahimsa is the practice of nonviolence; but it is more than simply the absence of violence. It creates oneness and unity, where we see ourselves connected to other living things. Besides an active choice against dangerous warfare, ahimsa reflects the ideas that love and forgiveness serve to enrich all lives. “Gandhi articulated the power of love, nonviolence and truth as stronger forces than fear, hatred, and violence. The force of arms is powerless when matched against the force of love or the soul-force” (Sethia, 2012, p. 94). This does not mean that arms are unable to cause pain or do great damage; they certainly do. However, this type of interaction seeks to exploit and damage others. Brute force causes harm on both sides, not only to the victim, but to the person imposing violence as well. It creates a disconnect between humans and does not represent the values of love, cooperation, truth or compassion. It is rooted in fear and destruction. On the other hand, ahimsa is the basis on which we elevate our human connection to work towards justice. “Ahimsa seeks to transform hearts, to change minds and cultivate a sense of care and compassion, civility and trust” (Sethia, 2007). Because it is rooted in the very principles seeks to attain, it is a morally sound practice. This practice does what violence cannot do. Violence can only create more violence and hatred. It cannot transform and strengthen human connection.

The power of ahimsa is essential in transforming any society to become more just. The root of this transformation must begin at the individual level. When we embody ahimsa at a personal level we cannot lose touch with our emotions of love, compassion and trust. By
practicing ahimsa one must never forget ones humanity, or the humanity of others. While discussing the idea of swaraj Gandhi explains this importance. “Rising from sleep, we do not continue in a comatose state, but according to our ability, sooner or later, we are completely restored to our sense. So shall we be free from the present unrest which no one likes” (Gandhi, 2009, p. 23). Gandhi shows that a state of attaining swaraj is like awakening from a dream in which nothing was real. Without the principals of ahimsa, swaraj is impossible because apathy and inertia rule. Once we have recognized the violence within and around us, we can then free ourselves from violence and embody the values of ahimsa through action.

Putting our values into action restores justice because it asks those to be fearless enough to risk his/her own life in order to attempt to strengthen the human connection. Satyagraha, although often interpreted as passive resistance, is much more active. Satyagraha requires the practitioner (known as a satyagrahi) to seek truthfulness, love and a willingness to suffer for the cause of justice. It seeks to evoke empathy from the opponent of justice to restore humanity to both parties involved (Sethia 2012, p. 64). It seeks to awaken those that are experiencing violence or injustice to act. Satyagraha appears to the untrained eye to simply be cowardly. However, it requires such a commitment to the values of ahimsa and the power of the human connection, fearlessness is a byproduct of having such strong faith in humanity that justice and truth will prevail. Satyagraha demands that the practice what one believes, that one's values are held to such high esteem he/she is willing to risk everything to maintain the integrity to the values against injustice.

Gandhi’s practices throughout his life show his integrity to the values of reflection, truth and work. Throughout his life Gandhi was able to develop his ideas of swaraj, ahimsa and satyagraha due to his ability to self reflect, clarify his values and put them into practice. The values and practices Gandhi ignited in his followers are impossible to use without a true commitment to humanity. When wishing to use Gandhi’s philosophy we must understand it is not simply a platform for social change- it is a way of life. This way of life relies on our ability to redefine our values so that any action we take is one that seeks to deepen our human connection.

References:
Sethia, T. (2012). From The Director. Ahimsa Center Nonviolence in Thought and Action , 64.

Teaching Activities:
1. Students use a 1-5 scale to respond to statements about personal values.
2. Students create a personal portrait of themselves, and the things that they value.
3. Students participate in motivational interviews with teacher.
4. Students decide on actions they take in life that SHOW what they value.
5. Introduce the concept of Plan-Work-Reflect, in which a activity in planned, the work gets done, and then the student reflect upon what went well, and what could have been done better. Show that this is the idea behind Swaraj and how one achieves it through continual reflection.
6. Students work in small groups to come up with 3 over arching rules, guidelines for how our class will be run.
7. Compare the rules to what students said were their values.
8. When discussing consequences for behavior, we will use natural consequences as a guide, and discuss how the consequences are NOT punishment, but to help the student refocus. Students and teacher will derive consequences together and will be posted clearly for students.

Materials:
Materials correspond to activity numbered above:
Activity 1:
1. I do my best on everything I do.
2. I will help out a friend even if I don’t want to because I know they need me.
3. I know when my thoughts or actions have hurt someone else.
4. I can see when someone is being treated unfairly.
5. I defend someone who is being treated unfairly.
6. When I really want to do something (talk/eat in class, etc) but I can’t, I can control myself.
7. If I see candy, I’ll take an extra piece if no one is watching.
8. If I see money that doesn’t belong to me, I’ll keep it.
9. I would rather win a game even if I hurt someone than lose the game but not hurt anyone.
Activity 2:
Paper, crayons, markers. Perhaps computers if desired.
Activity 3: NA
Activity 4: Really stress the importance of an action, not passiveness.

I show ________ when:
I do this:
a) never    b) sometimes    c) almost always     d) always

I show ______ when:
I do this:
a) never    b) sometimes    c) almost always     d) always

I show ________ when:
I do this:
a) never    b) sometimes    c) almost always     d) always

I show ________ when:
I do this:
a) never    b) sometimes    c) almost always     d) always

Activity 5: T chart. Record steps students should take. Also record difficulties and solutions to rule making in a group setting.

Activity 6-8. Paper and chart paper/chalkboard

Teaching Resources:
http://www.originsonline.org/dd_index.php