

Gandhiji was a busy man. He thought of the problems of the whole nation. But he always found time to laugh. He had a fine sense of humour. He never made fun of anybody. His laughter was mixed with love.

Many children stayed with Gandhiji at the Sabarmati Ashram. They often asked him questions and Gandhiji answered them. His replies were always brief. However, the children wished to have a long conversation with him.

One day a child said to Gandhiji, "Bapu, you sometimes talk to us about the Gita. Arjun asks Shri Krishna a short question and Shri Krishna gives a very long answer to it." The child complained that the children of the Ashram asked Bapu a long question and he answered it in a sentence or two. He said that it was not proper.

Gandhiji smiled and said, "Shri Krishna was fortunate. There was only one Arjun to ask him questions, but I have a number of Arjuns!"

The children had a hearty laugh.

Gandhiji believed in doing everything on time. He was very punctual.

Once he and another leader were to speak at a meeting. The other leader came nearly forty-five minutes late. Everyone present at the meeting had to wait for him. Gandhiji did not like this. In his speech he said, "Our leader has come forty-five minutes late. So I think we'll get independence forty-five minutes late."

Gandhiji thus told the truth without using any harsh words.

Once King George invited Gandhiji to his palace. Gandhiji went there in his usual dress. It was only one short dhoti. No one ever met the king in such a dress. So a reporter went to Gandhiji. He said, "Would you please answer a question? Didn't you feel uncomfortable in the royal palace dressed in such a way?"

Gandhiji laughed. He said that he was not at all uncomfortable. He added, "The king had put on enough dress to cover us both."

Exercise

Strike out the incorrect part

- 1) Gandhiji always found time to laugh/sing.
- 2) Gandhiji always replied long/short answers.
- 3) Gandhiji was very punctual/irregular.
- 4) Gandhiji told the truth with/without using any harsh words.
- 5) Gandhiji visited king George wearing a suit/dhoti.