

INDIGO (LOUIS FISCHER)

CLASS 12

STUDY MATERIAL

**1. Why did Rajkumar Shukla want to take Gandhiji to Champaran? Delhi 2008**

Ans. Rajkumar Shukla was a poor sharecropper from Champaran district. He had gone to annual convention session of the Indian National Congress party in Lucknow in December, 1916 to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Bihar. Someone had probably told him to speak to Gandhiji. So he wanted Gandhi to visit Champaran and help the poor sharecroppers.

**2. Why did Gandhiji decide to go to Muzaffarpur before going to Champaran? How did it prove helpful? Foreign 2011**

Ans. Muzaffarpur was en route to CHamparan. Gandhiji decided to go to Champaran first because he wanted to secure complete information about the plight of sharecroppers in Champaran than Shukla was capable of imparting.

It did prove helpful as Gandhiji met the lawyers in Muzaffarpur, who frequently represented the peasant groups in the courts. They briefed Gandhi about their cases.

**3. Why did Gandhiji chide the lawyers? How did Gandhiji justify himself?**

Ans. Gandhiji chided the lawyers for collecting big fee from the sharecroppers.

He justified his words by stating the main purpose of the law courts should be to relief the sharecroppers from fear. But this purpose got defeated as the fee was huge and the peasants got crushed. Law courts proved useless.

**4. How did Gandhiji react to the Commissioner's advice and where did he go? Foreign 2012**

Ans. Gandhiji called on the British Official Commissioner of the Tirhut division in which Champaran lay. The Commissioner bullied Gandhi and advised him to leave Champaran immediately.

Gandhiji did not leave. He proceeded to Motihari, the capital of Champaran . Several lawyers accompanied him. A vast crowd greeted him at the station. He went to a house and, using it as headquarters, continued his investigation.

**5. Why was Gandhiji summoned to appear in court?**

Ans. A report came in that a peasant had been ill treated in a nearby village. Gandhiji decided to go and see. He had not proceeded far when the police superintendent's messenger stopped him and served him with an official notice to quit Champaran

immediately. Gandhiji signed a receipt for the notice and wrote on it that he would disobey the order. As a result, Gandhi was summoned to appear in court.

**6. Why did Gandhiji tell the court that he was involved in a 'conflict of duties'? Foreign 2015**

Ans. Gandhiji had been ordered by the court to leave Champaran. Gandhiji disobeyed the order. Gandhiji explained to the court that he was involved in a conflict of duties, that is he must not set a bad example by breaking the law ( by refusing to obey the eviction order), but at that same time he had come for a bigger cause to Champaran. He had come to render humanitarian and national service. He could not ignore and disregard the voice of his conscience.

**7. 'The battle of Champaran is won.' What prompted Gandhiji to make this statement?**

Ans. Gandhiji asked the lawyers what they would do if he was arrested. The lawyers first replied that they would return home. So Gandhiji asked them what would happen to the injustice to the sharecroppers. They realised their mistake.

They thought when a total stranger like Gandhiji was ready to go to jail for the sake of poor sharecroppers, their going home would be utterly shameful.

They told him they were ready to follow him to the jail. So Gandhiji exclaimed that the battle of Champaran was won.

**8. How did Gandhiji show he cared for the cultural and social backwardness of Champaran villages? 2015, 2009**

Ans. Gandhiji freed them from exploitation by teaching them they had rights and also supporters for their cause. Primary schools were opened in six villages. He appealed for teachers. Mahadev Desai and Narhari Parikh, two young men who had recently joined Gandhi as disciples, and their wives volunteered for work. Gandhiji got a doctor to volunteer his services for six months. Three medicines were available to treat stomach problems, malaria and skin eruptions. Kasturbai, Gandhiji's wife taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community sanitation.

**9. Why did Gandhiji object to CF Andrews' stay in Champaran? 2009, 2014, 2016.**

Ans. He wanted the lawyers to be self-reliant and have faith in their strength and potential. He told them their cause was just and they must rely upon themselves to win the battle. He did not want the lawyers to seek prop in Mr. Andrews because he happened to be an Englishman.

**10. What was the reason for the delay in the trial? What was the outcome of Gandhiji's refusal to furnish bail?**

Ans. The Government was quite baffled at the way the crowds had reacted to Gandhiji's trial. So they wished to consult their superiors. This led to the delay in trial. The magistrate announced that he would pronounce sentence after a two –hour recess. Gandhiji was asked to furnish bail for those 120minutes which Gandhiji refused. Gandhiji was released without a bail.

**11. What made the British realise that the Indians could challenge their might, hitherto unquestioned?**

Ans. When the peasants learnt that Gandhiji was in trouble with the authorities, they came in huge number to support him. Their spontaneous demonstration around the court house made the British powerless to deal with it , without Gandhiji's assistance. This was a concrete proof to the British that their might so far unquestioned, could be challenged by Indians.

**12. How do you know Gandhiji was a meticulous planner?**

Ans. Gandhiji was summoned to the court the next day. All night Gandhiji remained awake. He telegraphed Rajendra Prasad to come from Bihar with his influential friends. He sent instructions to the ashram. He wired a full report to the Viceroy.

**13. How did Gandhiji manage the workings of the Ashram at Ahmedabad while he was at Champaran?**

Ans. While at Champaran, Gandhiji kept a distant watch on the working of the Ashram. He sent regular instructions by mail and asked for financial accounts. He even advised the resident to dig up new latrine trenches and fill in the old ones.

**14. What were the conditions of the sharecroppers at the time that Gandhiji arrived at Champaran?**

Ans. When the landlords learnt that Germany had developed synthetic indigo, they wanted to free the sharecroppers from the arrangement of cultivating indigo on 15 per cent of their holdings and surrender the entire indigo harvest as rent. The sharecroppers would have to pay huge compensation for this. Many agreed and signed the agreement. Many sharecroppers refused. The landlords hired thugs. Meanwhile the information about synthetic indigo reached the poor peasants and those who had signed the agreement wanted their money back. At this point Gandhiji arrived at Champaran.

**15. How did Professor Malkani prove to be different?**

Ans. Gandhiji stayed for two days in the home of Professor Malkani at Muzaffarpur. He was a teacher in a government school. It was an extraordinary thing in those days for a government teacher to house a man like Gandhiji. In small localities the Indians were too scared to show sympathy to those who advocated home rule.

**16. Who were the members of an official commission of inquiry into the indigo sharecropper's situation? What was the outcome?**

Ans. The commission consisted of landlords, government officials, and Gandhiji as the sole representative of the peasants.

The official inquiry assembled a crushing mountain of evidence against the big planters. The commission agreed, in principle, to make refunds to the peasants.

**17. How do we know that ordinary people too contributed to the freedom movement?**

Ans. At Motihari, common peasants flocked in thousands as they learnt that the man who had come to fight for their rights was in trouble with the authorities. Professor Malkani, as a teacher in government school defied all odds to house Gandhiji in his home for two days.

Professor J.B. Kriplani motivated a large number of students, and greeted Gandhiji at Muzaffarpur railway station at midnight, 15 April, 1917. The spontaneous demonstration outside the courthouse was also significant.