

SOCIAL STUDIES · GRADES 3–6

Famous Leaders

Eight people who changed the world

What makes a leader?

Leaders aren't just kings, queens or presidents. They're people who saw something that needed to change — and worked to change it. Sometimes they led nations. Sometimes they led movements. Sometimes they led by example. All of them had courage, and all of them faced opposition.

Eight world-changing leaders

| Leader | Lived | What they're known for |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Abraham Lincoln | 1809–1865, USA | Led the USA through the Civil War. Ended slavery. |
| Sojourner Truth | c.1797–1883, USA | Born into slavery. Escaped. Spoke for women's rights and abolition. |
| Mahatma Gandhi | 1869–1948, India | Led India to independence using non-violent protest. |
| Marie Curie | 1867–1934, Poland/France | First woman to win a Nobel Prize. Discovered new elements. |
| Eleanor Roosevelt | 1884–1962, USA | Wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. |
| Martin Luther King Jr. | 1929–1968, USA | Led civil rights movement. 'I have a dream' speech. |



| Leader | Lived | What they're known for |
|------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nelson Mandela | 1918–2013, South Africa | Spent 27 years in prison. Then became president and ended apartheid. |
| Malala Yousafzai | 1997–present, Pakistan | Shot for going to school. Now world's youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner. |

What we can learn from them

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| <p>From Mandela — patience</p> <p>Twenty-seven years in prison did not break him. When he came out, he forgave his enemies and worked to unite the country. Long-term thinking and forgiveness change history.</p> | <p>From Gandhi — peace</p> <p>He proved that you can defeat injustice without fighting back. His non-violent resistance inspired civil rights movements all over the world.</p> |
| <p>From Curie — persistence</p> <p>She worked in a freezing shed for years, slowly purifying minute amounts of radioactive material. Her work changed medicine and physics forever.</p> | <p>From Malala — courage</p> <p>Even after being shot for speaking up, she kept speaking up. Aged just 17 when she won the Nobel Peace Prize. You don't have to be old to lead.</p> |

Why these leaders?

These eight come from different countries, backgrounds, and times. They include men and women, scientists and politicians, the famous and the once-forgotten. Real history isn't just about kings and battles — it's about people who saw something wrong and worked to make it right. Notice: Sojourner Truth was once enslaved. Marie Curie was a woman in a time when women were rarely allowed in science. Mandela was Black in a country that had laws to keep Black people powerless. Malala was a child. None of them had it easy. But all of them changed the world.



