

Swami Vivekanand



Swami Vivekanand was born in a Bengali family of Kolkata in January 12, 1863. His childhood name was Narendra Nath. His father Vishwanath Dutta was an Attorney of Kolkata High Court. His mother Bhuvaneshwari Devi was *pious* and prayed to Vireshwar Shiva of Varanasi to give her a son.

Narendra Nath had varied interests and a wide range of scholarships in the philosophy, history, social sciences, arts, literature and other subjects. Since childhood, he took an active interest in physical exercise, sports, and other organizational activities. Even when he was young, he questioned the *validity* of *superstitious customs* and discrimination based on castism and refused to accept anything without rational proof and sensible test.

In 1881, he passed the Fine Arts examination and in 1884, he passed the Bachelor of Arts.

From an early age, he began to have spiritual experiences and at the age of 18 he felt an overwhelming desire to “See God”. With a directness that was typical of Vivekanand he asked those around whether they had seen God.

Although none could satisfy his question, he came to hear of the name Ramakrishna Paramhansa who was reputed to be a great Spiritual Personality and had realized God. Ramakrishna was an illiterate and a simple villager who had taken a post at a local Kali temple. However his simple exterior hid a personality of extraordinary spirituality.

Narendra would not accept Ramakrishna as his guru without a test. Ramakrishna used to say that, in order to realize God, one should give up the desire for money and woman. One day Narendra hid a rupee under his pillow. Sri Ramakrishna,

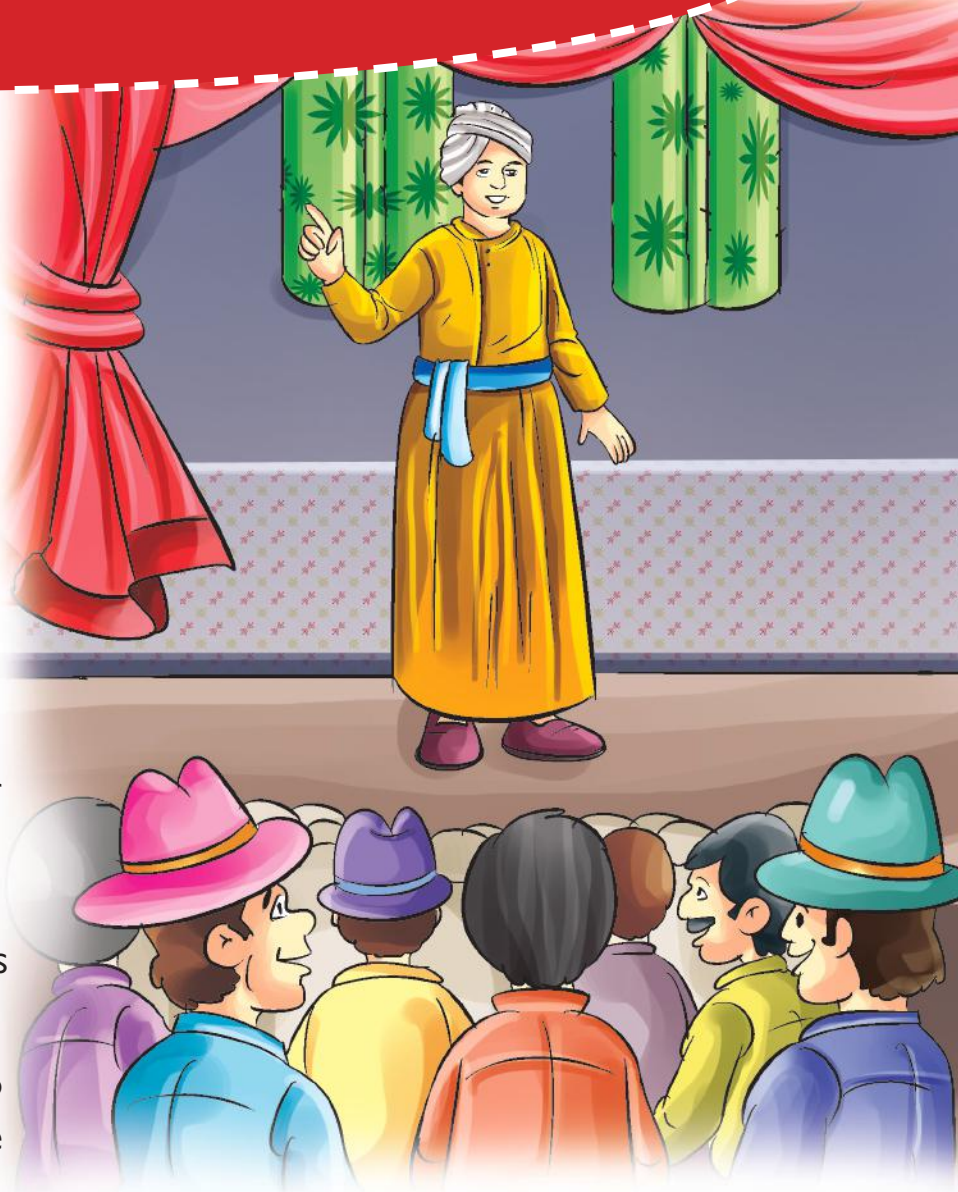
who had gone out, came into the room and **stretched** himself on the cot. At once he jumped up as if bitten by a scorpion. When he shook the bed sheet, the rupee coin fell down. Later he came to know that it was the act of Narendra. Narendra accepted Sri Ramakrishna as his guru and took training under him for five years in the Advaita Vedanta, the philosophy of non-dualism. He became the chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886 and **nominated** Narendra as his successor.

In 1893, Vivekanand went to America to attend the Conference of World Religions in Chicago.

At the opening ceremony, Vivekanand was one of the last speakers to speak. The previous speakers had talked about the **merits** of their own religion but his opening words began with- "Sisters and Brothers of America." ... Spontaneously the audience rose to his feet to **applaud**, perhaps appreciating the visionary sentiments Vivekanand offered. In that conference, Vivekanand was chosen to represent Hinduism. However, Vivekanand did not try in any way to prove the superiority of his religion.

Vivekanand returned to India in 1897 after four years of touring in the West. He started diffusing the message of spiritual development among Indians. He realized that social service was possible only through the concerted efforts on an organized mission. To achieve this objective, Vivekanand started Sri Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 and formulated its ideology and goal.

Swami Vivekanand died on July 4, 1902 at Belur Matth near Kolkata. Vivekanand is considered to be a major force in the revival of Hinduism in modern India.



Word Treasure

pious : holy

superstitious : adicted to superstition

nominate : appoint

applaud : clap

validity : authority

stretched : alongate

merits : qualities



EXERCISE TIME

Comprehension Skills

A. Tick (✓) the correct option :

- Swami Vivekanand was born in a _____ family.
a. Bengali b. Punjabi c. Marathi
- His childhood name was _____ Nath.
a. Vishwa b. Narendra c. Ram
- He became the chief _____ of Sri Ramakrishna.
a. disciple b. master c. person
- Sri Ram Krishna passed away in :
a. 1884 b. 1885 c. 1886
- Swami Vivekanand died on July 4, :
a. 1900 b. 1902 c. 1904

B. Fill in the blanks with the correct option :

successor, Hinduism, Attorney, Ramakrishna, diffusing

- Vivekanand's father Vishwanath Dutta was an _____ of Kolkata High Court.
- Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886 and nominated Narendra as his _____.
- Vivekanand started _____ the message of spiritual development among Indians.
- Narendra Nath would not accept _____ as his guru without a test.
- Vivekanand is considered to be a major force in the revival of _____ in modern India.

C. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements :

1. Swami Vivekanand was born in Sharma's family.
2. Swami Vivekanand's childhood name was Narendra.
3. Swami Vivekanand's mother was a pious lady.
4. Swami Vivekanand's father was a great doctor.
5. Narendra accepted Ramakrishna as his guru.



D. Answer the following questions :

1. In which family, Vivekanand was born? What was his childhood name ?
2. What interests had Narendra Nath have ?
3. What did Ramakrishna use to say in order to realize God ?
4. How did Vivekanand test Ramakrishna's statement ?
5. What were his opening words in the Conference of World Religions in Chicago? Why did the audience applaud at his speech ?

Fun with Words

E. Write the antonyms of the following :

- | | | | |
|----------|-------|---------------|-------|
| 1. born | _____ | 2. pious | _____ |
| 3. wide | _____ | 4. illiterate | _____ |
| 5. major | _____ | | |

Essential Grammar

F. Rewrite the following sentences using singular forms :

1. You have a lot of books in your library.

2. The children are shouting in the class.

3. The police ran after the thieves.

4. There are many knives on the table.

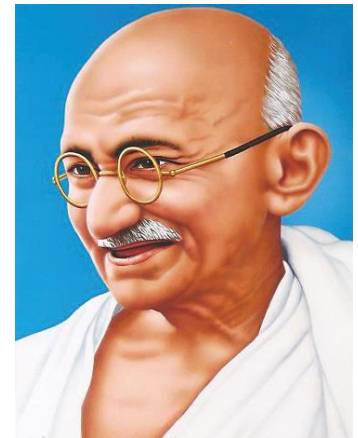
5. Junaid has black teeth.

G. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions :

1. Ravi is playing _____ her sister.
2. Tom is standing _____ the curtain.
3. There are many toys _____ the bed.
4. The horse lives _____ the stable.
5. Rabindra is drawing his money _____ ATM machine.

Essential Writing

H. Write few lines on the famous personality shown in picture :



Essential Speaking

I. Here is given a picture of some people. Discuss about them and share your knowledge in the class :

