

Apartheid

Apartheid is discrimination and segregation based on race that is enforced by a country's laws. The word comes from the Afrikaans language. It means "apartness." Legal segregation had already been implemented in many places in South Africa, but from 1948 to 1991, the South African government made apartheid the national law. Under apartheid, South Africans were classified racially as "White," "Bantu" (all Black South Africans), "Colored" (mixed race or Asian), or "Asian" (from the Indian subcontinent).

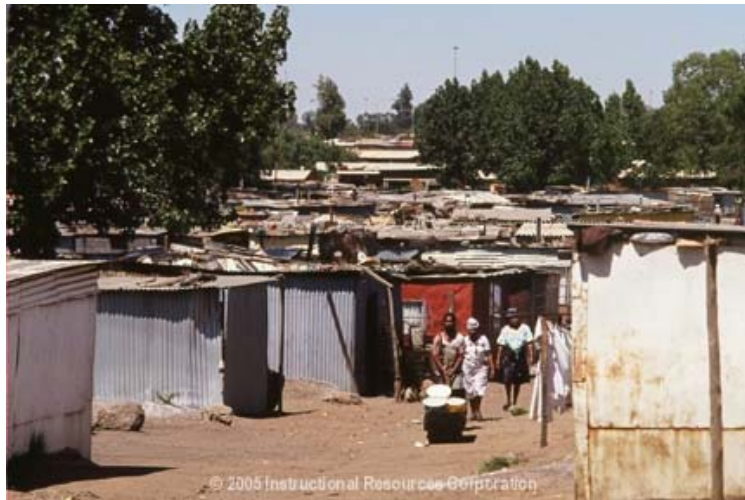
Although whites made up only 19 percent of South Africa's population, the government gave more than 80 percent of the country's land to whites. People who were colored or black could not live, work, or own property in white communities.

Instead, Black South Africans had to live in Bantustans—poor, rural communities – or "Townships" – unofficial shantytowns on the edges of major cities. Nonwhites had to carry passbooks with their name, address, and fingerprints at all times, even to travel within their own country. According to South African law, whites and nonwhites could not marry or use the same post offices, schools, buses, beaches, public toilets, or other public facilities.

The Anti-Apartheid Hero

As time went on, people fought against the injustice of apartheid. Nelson Mandela, a black man from a South African village, rose to become South Africa's anti-apartheid hero. Mandela's path from his roots as a young boy in a rural village to a beloved world leader was a long and winding journey.

On July 18, 2012, President Obama of the United States honored Mandela on Nelson Mandela International Day, saying:



After the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act became law in South Africa, many Black South Africans were forced to live in shantytowns just outside major cities

Nelson Mandela: Champion of Justice

Biography

Nelson Mandela's personal story is one of unbreakable will, unwavering integrity, and abiding humility. . . . By any measure, Nelson Mandela has changed the arc of history, transforming his country, continent, and the world.

Raised in a Royal Family

Nelson Mandela was born as Rolihlahla Mandela on July 18, 1918. His given first name, Rolihlahla, means “pulling the branch of a tree.” In the isiXhosa language, it also means “troublemaker.” When Mandela became a student at a nearby mission school, his teacher assigned everyone an English name, as was the custom. His teacher randomly gave him the name “Nelson,” and it stuck.



In June 2011, First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama met with Nelson Mandela in his home. Mr. Mandela showed her one of the books that he authored.

Mandela's father was a leader in his society and acted as a counselor to the chief and royal family. When Nelson Mandela was nine years old, his father died of tuberculosis. Mandela was then cared for by the chief and raised in the royal household. After finishing high school, Mandela attended the University College of Fort Hare in South Africa. He did not complete his degree there, however, because he was suspended for protesting university policies.

His royal family requested that he come home for an arranged marriage. Instead, Mandela finished his bachelor's degree in 1942 at the University of South Africa. He went on to study law at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. While studying law, Mandela's interest in national politics grew. It was in this area that he found his calling. In 1943, Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC)—a political party and national liberation movement formed to unite Black South Africans. Mandela was promoted through the ANC ranks, from volunteer to founder and president of the ANC's Youth League by 1951.

Career and Family Man

Although he refused the arranged marriage, Mandela found a wife on his own. He met and married Evelyn Mase in 1944. They had four children. In 1952,

while raising his young family, Nelson Mandela and his friend Oliver Tambo opened the first black law firm in South Africa.

In 1958, Mandela and Evelyn divorced, and he married Winnie Madikizela. They had two daughters. Though life was happy on a personal level, the Mandela family suffered under many bans, or restrictions, because of their skin color. Mandela and Tambo used the full capacity of their law firm to fight apartheid. For example, in a 1959 letter to a Johannesburg police chief, Mandela expressed a determination to keep fighting until democratic practices were the norm.



Nelson Mandela (left) and Walter Sisulu (right), both leaders of the ANC, were sentenced to prison for their anti-apartheid activities. Sisulu was released in 1989, and Mandela was released in 1990. Mandela served a total of 27 years in prison.

Nelson Mandela would soon be tested in his resolve to stand firm in his beliefs. South Africa's government declared the ANC illegal in 1960. Mandela then agreed with the ANC that violence might be the best way to end apartheid. In response, the government arrested him. An international audience watched Mandela's trial. Mandela spoke in his own defense and declared that he was willing to die for his beliefs about equality. Although he was originally sentenced to five years in prison with hard labor, later Mandela and other ANC leaders were sentenced to life in prison. Between the ages of 44 and 72 (the years 1962–1990), Mandela lived in a small prison cell.

International Protests

Nations and people around the world condemned Mandela's imprisonment as well as apartheid, and they used a variety of strategies to pressure South Africa's government. People, banks, and universities got rid of investments in South Africa. This means that foreign businesses that had invested in South African businesses removed their money from South Africa as a sign of protest. Governments imposed sanctions, or trade limits, on South Africa. South African athletes were excluded from the Olympics and other contests. An arms embargo prevented nations from selling weapons to South Africa. Nations refused to allow South African airlines to fly over their territory or land at their airports.

Internal resistance among Black South Africans continued throughout the years with bloody results—especially for Black South Africans.

Life After Prison

One might think that a 72-year-old man, newly freed from prison, would want a quiet, comfortable life. This was not the case for Nelson Mandela.

Throughout his prison term, Mandela was the name and face of black resistance to apartheid in South Africa. He was known worldwide. When he finally got his freedom, he was in the spotlight of the anti-apartheid movement.

On February 2, 1990, nine days before Mandela's release, the ANC was reinstated as an allowed political party.



Nelson Mandela (right) and F. W. de Klerk (left) worked together to create a new South African constitution.

On February 11, 1990, Mandela was released from prison. Less than one month later, on March 2, he was elected president of the ANC.

Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk (the president of South Africa at that time) worked together to dismantle apartheid. In 1993, they together won the Nobel Peace Prize for their work to end apartheid and support democracy in South Africa. In 1994, in the country's first fully represented democratic election, Nelson Mandela easily became the next president of South Africa. Ironically, it was the first election that Mandela was allowed to vote in himself.

The largest issue that Mandela faced as president of post-apartheid South Africa was the housing crisis. Slum areas, such as the old Bantustans, needed to be replaced with new housing. He worked to address the housing shortage and to build the country's image around the globe. After one five-year term as president, Nelson Mandela stepped down from public life. The life of Nelson Mandela serves as a powerful reminder of believing that change can happen with dedication and action.

After reading the passage, answer the following questions:

- 1.** What does *apartheid* mean in the Afrikaans language?
 - A.** togetherness
 - B.** greediness
 - C.** thankfulness
 - D.** apartness

- 2.** What was the meaning of Mandela's given first name, and what did he become to the South African people?
 - A.** villain, hero
 - B.** follower, leader
 - C.** troublemaker, peacemaker
 - D.** giver of hope, giver of truth

- 3.** Why did apartheid finally end in South Africa?
 - A.** Whites left South Africa.
 - B.** The ANC defeated whites in major battles.
 - C.** The international community applied pressure.
 - D.** F. W. de Klerk died.

- 4.** Mandela worked hard to make an impact in the lives of others. What actions did Mandela take, or not take, that made him an important leader? Provide evidence from the passage to support your answer.