

Famous People



Nelson Mandela

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Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa in 1918. Until about 1992, South Africa had a political system called apartheid. This meant that black people had to live apart from white people. For example, they could not go to the same schools as white people or eat in the same restaurants. Most blacks had no jobs, were very poor, and could not vote in elections.

Mandela grew up in a village. When he was a young man, he left his village to study law. He wanted to help free black people from apartheid. He became a lawyer in 1952 and worked in Johannesburg, South a large city in Africa.

Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1944. The ANC led many protests against the government's apartheid policy. From 1952 to 1960, Mandela was arrested and jailed twice for being a leader of the ANC. In 1960, the government killed many black people for protesting against apartheid. Mandela was a peaceful man, but after these killings, his protests became more violent.

In 1963, the government sent Mandela to prison for life because of his work against apartheid. But, even though he was in prison, he became a famous example of how black people suffered under apartheid. People from all over the world asked the South African government to release him from jail.

Mandela was released in 1990. He had spent 27 years in jail. In 1991, he became president of the ANC. He and the South African president then agreed that South Africa would end apartheid and become a democracy. They won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for this.

In 1994, an election was held. Black people were allowed to vote, and Mandela became the first black president of South Africa. When he was president, he worked to improve the economy, especially for black people. He also worked to bring peace to his country, after so many years of violence between blacks and whites.

In 1999, Mandela retired as president. He now helps other countries solve their problems.

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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

A. True or False. Read the statements below. If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence. If it is false, write F and write the correct answer.

1. Nelson Mandela is from South America. _____
2. Mandela grew up in Johannesburg. _____
3. When Mandela was a child, black and white children could not go to the same schools. _____
4. Mandela went to prison in 1990. _____
5. Mandela became the first president of South Africa. _____

B. Answer the following questions.

1. When and where was Nelson Mandela born? _____

2. What kind of political system did his country have until 1992? _____

3. Explain apartheid. _____

4. Why did Mandela decide to study law? _____

5. What group did Mandela join? What did this group do? _____

6. What happened in 1960? _____

7. Why did the government send Mandela to prison? _____

8. What did Mandela try to do for his country when he became president? _____

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VOCABULARY REVIEW

A. What are the meanings of the underlined words? Circle the correct answer.

1. In the apartheid system, black people and white people had to live apart.
a. together b. separately c. in a village
2. The ANC lead many protests against the government apartheid policy.
a. rule or principle b. police c. prison
3. Mandela was arrested for being leader of the ANC.
a. election b. stopped c. taken to jail
4. Mandela spent 27 years in prison.
a. jail b. government c. village
5. He was released in 1990.
a. suffered b. elected c. set free
6. Mandela worked to improve his country.
a. lead b. make better c. protest

B. Match the words on the left with the correct meaning on the right.

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| _____ 1. vote | a. a government chosen freely by the people |
| _____ 2. famous | b. a very small town |
| _____ 3. protest | c. express your choice in an election |
| _____ 4. suffer | d. stop working at a job, usually because of age |
| _____ 5. allow | e. very well known |
| _____ 6. democracy | f. have pain or great difficulty |
| _____ 7. retire | g. permit, let |
| _____ 8. village | h. show you do not support something |

