

# The life of Nelson Mandela

A lesson plan inspired by the work of South African comic book company Umlando Wezithombe

## KS1 History

National Curriculum: Primary History.

This lesson plan supports the KS1 requirement: Pupils should be taught about: the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements.

## KS1 English

National Curriculum: English Key Stage 1 and 2 English. Years 1 to 6 – Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to:

- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating and hypothesising
- debates

## Learning Objectives

Pupils will gain knowledge and understanding of the apartheid era of South Africa's past and the importance of Nelson Mandela in the fight to make South Africa a multiracial democracy.

## Suggested Classroom Activity

We have chosen six key episodes from the life of Nelson Mandela as depicted by the South African comic book artists of Umlando Wezithombe.

Show the pupils the six videos featuring episodes from Mandela's life.

There are group discussion suggestions relating to each clip and additional facts and quotes that are downloadable from the bottom of this page.

### 1. The birth of Mandela in Umbezo and the move to Qunu.

Watch clip 1 and then ask the class:

- Where was Nelson Mandela born?
- Could his parents read and write?
- Why did they decide to send him to school?

#### Discussion topic.

- How do you think Mandela felt about being given a new name at school.
- How would you feel if you were given a new name by your teacher?

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## 2. Growing up in Qunu and running away to Johannesburg

Watch clip 2 and then ask the class:

- What sort of things did Mandela spend his time doing in the country?
- What did he learn from the Regent?

### Discussion topic.

What does being 'politically aware' mean? Are the group aware of any current political issue in the UK?

## 3. Living conditions for black people in South Africa under apartheid

Watch clip 3 and then ask the class:

- Why did black people have to travel long distances to work?
- Did white people have to carry a Pass Book?

### Discussion topic.

Get the group to discuss why the African Government of the time were controlling the free movement of black people.

## 4. The Pass Book burning protests and the Sharpsville massacre

Watch clip 4 and then ask the class:

- What was the black African response to the Sharpsville massacre?

### Discussion topic.

When Nelson Mandela burned his Pass Book he knew that by doing so he was breaking the law...get the group to discuss whether breaking the law is ever the right thing to do?

## 5. Arrest and trials

Watch clip 5 and then ask the class:

What does 'evading the authorities' mean?

### Discussion topic.

- Nelson Mandela defended himself in court wearing the traditional dress of an African chief...ask the group to discuss what messages Mandela was trying to send out with this action.

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## 6. Imprisonment on Robben Island

Watch clip 6 and then ask the class:

- How old will you be in 27 years and what do you think you might be doing?
- Can you imagine what it would be like to not see your family for 27 years?

### Discussion topic.

When Nelson Mandela was finally released from prison, how do you think he would have felt? Would the group be as forgiving as Mandela to the people who locked him away for such a long time.

Ask the group to find out and discuss how they might run a peaceful campaign to change the mind of a foreign government who were treating some of its people badly?

### Practical Activities

Here are some practical activities you might want to do with your class alongside the video clips.

#### Role Play:

Resources: prepare 2 boxes containing slips with african names - boys and girls

Ask the children to think about their own first day at school and the kinds of feelings they had. Line the class up and ask them to take a new name from the appropriate box, help them to read it out and give their reaction to it. Further discussion can take place around the meanings of the names - Mandela had no idea what his name represented.

#### Placards

Resources: card, felt tips, coloured paper, glue, scissors

In small groups, ask the class to identify an issue within the school that is important to them. Examples might include: school dinners, uniform, break times etc. Give each group a large piece of card on which to design a placard about this issue using a choice of materials - they could cut out or draw letters and decorate with appropriate images. Discussion can take place around how to run a peaceful campaign and why it is important to be heard

#### Pass Books

resources: exercise books

Individually, ask pupils to think about where they have been during the past week and to list these in their own 'pass book' page in their exercise book. Discuss whether they think that black South Africans would have been allowed to go to these places

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## Development Activity

Using the Culture street interactive activity **SuperActionComicMaker** ask pupils to develop their own story or to make suggestions for a whole class story involving themes of bullying and peaceful protest.

This activity can be linked to curriculum areas of IT and literacy.

## Resources, Notes and Links

**Terminology and other supporting facts and information are available as a separate download from the Life of Nelson Mandela teachers page**