

Teacher notes on Apartheid

APARTHEID

I. History

- The first European settlers come to the Cape of Good Hope around 1600.
- 1652, Dutch, German and French come to Cape for religious and economic motives
- Dutch Boers (farmers) begin to move north and live with native Africans and a new culture develops: The Afrikaner or the white African tribe. Their language was a mix of Dutch and various African languages. They were devoutly Christian and very racist. (They believed they were the chosen people in a hostile world.)
- 1795 the British seize control of the Cape and surrounding area and more Boers are driven north.
- Many Afrikaners died in battles with "natives" while adapting to harsh land and climate. Hatred of the British and Blacks deepened Afrikaner solidarity.
- The Boer War 1899-1902: British want gold and diamonds discovered on Afrikaner land. A fierce war ensued with atrocities on both sides, Britain wins ultimate control and makes South Africa a commonwealth.
- Independence was granted in 1910. While the Afrikaners made up only 13% of population, they dominated the government.

II. Apartheid

- In 1948 the Afrikaner Nationalist Party gained control of the South African Parliament, and established the system known as apartheid.
- Apartheid means "separateness" or "apartness" and included 317 laws which reserved civil rights for 5 million whites and denied them to 25 million blacks.
- All citizens were classified by race
- Marriage and sexual relations across color lines were made illegal
- Separate residential areas; whites get all of the best, over 80% of the population was crowded into areas which covered less than 13% of the total land mass.
- Economic development was outlawed in black "homelands." Jobs were made available only in white areas.
- All non-whites must carry a passbook at all times
- All public places were segregated
- Black schools were intentionally underfunded.



III. Resistance

- Resistance began in the 1950's, the first outbreak of violence occurred in 1960 and was known as the Sharpsville Massacre, 69 people were killed and 180 wounded by South African police.
- Nelson Mandela rose to leadership of the African National Congress (ANC), but was arrested in 1964 and imprisoned for 26 years.
- In the early 1970's Steven Biko founded the "Black Consciousness" movement patterned after the "Black Power" movement in the United States. Biko was arrested, tortured, and then killed while in police custody in 1977.
- In 1976 thousands of students protested in a black township in Johannesburg, this became known as the Soweto Riot. The government killed 600 students and arrested thousands.
- In 1983 as protests continued the government declared a state of emergency and 30,000 more blacks were jailed.
- International pressure began to mount. South Africa was expelled from the UN in 1974. They were banned from the Olympic Games in 1976, in 1986 the U.S. Congress banned new investment by U.S. companies.

IV. Apartheid ends

- F.W. deKlerk becomes Prime Minister in 1989 and bowing to international as well as internal pressure negotiations begin.
- In 1990 Nelson Mandela is released from prison and the ANC works with the government to write a new constitution which would put an end to Apartheid.
- In 1994 Mandela is elected as the first Black President of South Africa

