

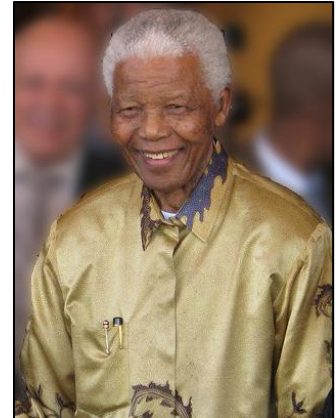


# NELSON MANDELA: ‘A TRUE HERO OF CONSCIENCE’

In celebration and memory of the life of Nelson Mandela, this special edition of *The Current Events Classroom* provides students the opportunity to learn, in several ways, more about Nelson Mandela and his extraordinary life.

## WHO IS NELSON MANDELA?

Nelson Mandela (1918–2013) is the former South African President and a courageous leader who dedicated his life to ending apartheid and building a free, multiracial and democratic South Africa and, by example, a more equal world. A leader in the fight against apartheid, he was imprisoned for 27 years before being released and eventually becoming South Africa’s President. Nelson Mandela will be long remembered as one of the greatest figures of his generation and one of the most inspirational and effective freedom-fighting figures in modern history.



South Africa The Good News  
[www.sagoodnews.co.za](http://www.sagoodnews.co.za)

## TIMELINES

Review timelines (below) about Mandela’s life and have students create their own timelines, highlighting the dates that they feel are the most important. The timelines should be illustrated and each point in time should include a few sentences of explanation.

- [Nelson Mandela Foundation timeline](#)
- [BBC News timeline](#)
- [New York Times timeline](#)
- [Dawn timeline](#)

## VIDEO

Watch this 12 minute video [The Life of Mandela: 1918–2013](#) and have a discussion using these discussion questions:

- At the beginning of the video, why does Mandela say he will “sleep to eternity?”
- What does apartheid mean?
- What did Mandela say in the courtroom during his trial?
- Why was Mandela such an important figure in history?
- What did you learn from the video that you did not already know?
- What happened when Mandela was released from prison?
- What did Mandela find in South Africa when he was released from prison?
- What was it like when Black people were finally allowed to vote? What happened?

- How did Mandela fall short as President?
- How do you think Mandela will be remembered?
- What more do you want to know about Nelson Mandela?

## QUOTES

Choose some of the important Mandela quotes at the following links and read a select few out loud. Give students a handout with all of the quotes and have each student choose one to analyze. Then have students write a short three-paragraph essay which explains (1) the meaning of the quote, (2) whether or not they agree with the quote and (3) how the quote relates to their life or something they have observed in the world.

[Quotes via Buzz Feed](#)

[Quotes via New York Times](#)

## PHOTOS

Look at the [photo gallery](#) of Mandela's life over time. Have students pretend they are curators for a photography exhibit about Mandela's life, using these photos to write the museum overview for the collection. Alternately, have students read the captions for the photos and then have them re-write the captions in their own words, thinking about using language for a younger audience like elementary students.

## OBITUARIES

Have students read a few obituaries (see below) for Nelson Mandela and have them write their obituaries about his life, or a eulogy that they would deliver at his funeral.

- [BBC News Obituary](#)
- [USA Today Obituary](#)
- [New York Times Obituary](#)
- [Chicago Tribune obituary](#)

## FILM

View [Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom](#), a film released in 2013, which is a chronicle of Nelson Mandela's life journey from his childhood in a rural village through to his inauguration as the first democratically elected president of South Africa. View the film as a class and have a discussion afterwards or have students see the film on their own and discuss it in class. Have students write their own short biography of Mandela after viewing the film.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS IN HISTORY

Brainstorm different social justice movements in the United States that students are familiar with (i.e., abolitionist movement, labor movement, civil rights movement, suffrage movement, LGBT movement). Have students share what they know about each and give a brief explanation. Discuss how leaders are important to these movements, but also social movements are organized and carried out by large groups of regular people who are critical to those movements. If time permits, have students choose one of the movements and work in small groups to study more about it and develop a culminating group project such as a video, art gallery, essay or timeline.