

Apartheid in South Africa

What was apartheid?

Apartheid was a system in place in South Africa that separated people based on their race and skin color. There were laws that forced white people and black people to live and work apart from each other. Even though there were less white people than black people, apartheid laws allowed white people to rule the country and enforce the laws.

How did it start?

Apartheid became law after the National Party won the election in 1948. They declared certain areas as white only and other areas as black only. Many people protested apartheid from the start, but they were labeled communists and put into jail.

Living Under Apartheid

Living under apartheid was not fair to black people. They were forced to live in certain areas and were not allowed to vote or travel in "white" areas without papers. Black people and white people were not allowed to marry each other. Many blacks, Asians, and other people of color were forced out of their homes and into regulated areas called "homelands." The government also took over the schools and forced the segregation of white and black students. Signs were put up in many areas declaring these areas for "white persons only." Black people who broke the laws were punished or put into jail.

African National Congress (ANC)

In the 1950s many groups formed to protest against apartheid. The protests were called the Defiance Campaign. The most prominent of these groups was the African National Congress (ANC). Initially the ANC protests were non-violent. However, after 69 protesters were killed by police at the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, they began to take a more militaristic approach.

Racial Concentrations and Homelands

Racial concentrations of 30% or more by marginal district

NOTE: Homelands of Coloured, Indian, and Asian peoples may also have an equal or slightly larger percentage of white racial groups. These areas were to other racial groups as high as 30%. Homelands are territorial areas controlled by the South African government for specific black ethnic groups. African black population is around 60%. Bantu homelands, Transkei, and Venda homelands represent racial segregation by South Africa.



Nelson Mandela

One of the leaders of the ANC was a lawyer named Nelson Mandela. After the Sharpeville massacre, Nelson led a group called the Umkhonto we Sizwe. This group took military action against the government including bombing buildings. Nelson was arrested in 1962 and sent to prison. He spent the next 27 years in prison. During this time in prison he became a symbol of the people against apartheid.

Soweto Uprising

On June 16, 1976 thousands of high school students took to the streets in protest. The protests began as peaceful, but as the protesters and police clashed they turned violent. The police fired on the children. At least 176 people were killed and thousands more were injured. One of the first killed was a 13-year-old named Hector Pieterse. Hector has since become a major symbol of the uprising. Today, June 16th is remembered by a public holiday called Youth Day.

International Pressure

In the 1980s, governments around the world started to pressure the South African government to end apartheid. Many countries stopped doing business with South Africa by imposing economic sanctions against them. As the pressure and protests increased, the government began to relax some of the apartheid laws.

Ending Apartheid

Apartheid finally came to an end in the early 1990s. Nelson Mandela was released from prison in 1990 and a year later South African President Frederik Willem de Klerk repealed the remaining apartheid laws and called for a new constitution. In 1994, a new election was held in which people of all color could vote. The ANC won the election and Nelson Mandela became president of South Africa.

1. Why do you think that Apartheid was allowed to occur for so long?

2. What role did the poem " " play in Nelson Mandela's life (you will have to research/read this poem and his time in prison): <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/51642>

3. How do you think the citizens of South Africa can use a horrible event like Apartheid to heal their nation and grow together as a united people:

Civil Rights Movement - Apartheid

Test Quiz

Questions on this quiz are based on information from
Civil Rights Movement - Apartheid.

1. In what country was apartheid a part of the law?
 - a. Great Britain
 - b. Russia
 - c. China
 - d. South Africa
 - e. Mexico

2. What happened to people who protested apartheid?
 - a. They were given awards
 - b. They were put in jail
 - c. They were allowed to protest
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above

3. When did apartheid begin?
 - a. 1842
 - b. 1876
 - c. 1902
 - d. 1925
 - e. 1948

4. What were the lands called where non-whites were forced to live?
 - a. Concentration camps
 - b. Savannas
 - c. Homelands
 - d. Deserts
 - e. Townships

5. True or False: All races were treated equal under the rule of apartheid.
 - a. TRUE
 - b. FALSE
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

6. What was the name of the main group that fought against apartheid?
 - a. African National Congress
 - b. NAACP
 - c. Nation of Islam
 - d. Africans Against Apartheid
 - e.

7. What future president of South Africa spent 27 years in prison for protesting apartheid?

- a. Shaka Zulu
- b. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- c. Horatio Nelson
- d. Nelson Mandela
- e. Elon Musk

8. What event is remembered on Youth Day?

- a. Bishop Tutu's Death
- b. Start of apartheid
- c. Soweto Uprising
- d. Formation of the ANC
- e. End of the Boer Wars

9. True or False: Many people were forced out of their homes and into regulated areas.

- a. TRUE
- b. FALSE
- c.
- d.
- e.

10. What year did apartheid come to an end?

- a. 1964
- b. 1994
- c. 2002
- d. 2010
- e. 2016

About this quiz: All the questions on this quiz are based on information that can be found on the [Civil Rights Movement - Apartheid](#) page at /history/civil_rights/apartheid.php.

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