

READING

1 Read the passage and label each paragraph with an appropriate title. Choose from the following:

The great land robbery, A long road to freedom, The end of an era, The roots of apartheid, A divided society

A South African drama

A.

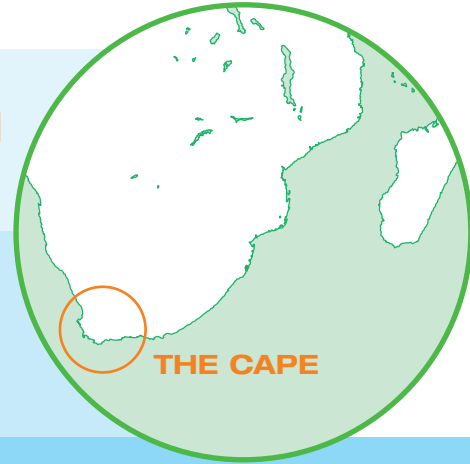
Race prejudice started early in the history of South Africa. The Dutch, who settled in the area of the Cape in 1652, and the British, who followed them a century later, made use of slaves as **workforce**. The first slaves were brought to the Cape from other parts of Africa, from India and the Indonesian islands, and together with the indigenous black population, were **deprived** of their rights. Even after the abolition of slavery in 1834, black people were confined to the rank of servants and **labourers**. The European colonists were convinced that they were a superior race, chosen by God to create a race-based social order. This was the beginning of a South African drama that would span the next three and a half centuries.

B.

In 1909 the Union of South Africa, a British overseas territory, was formed and in 1913 the Natives' Land Act prohibited black people from owning land. Whites, who constituted 20% of the population, had 90% of the land. In the following years, laws became more oppressive: black people were forced to live in poor reserves or *townships*, as the urban areas inhabited by blacks were called.

C.

In 1948 the National party won the elections and it extended racial segregation to create the legal system of *apartheid*, a word which in Afrikaans, the language spoken by the descendants of the Dutch, means *separation*. Apartheid legislation classified inhabitants into four racial groups: white, black, coloured (people of mixed race) and Indians. Sexual relations and marriage between different groups were prohibited. There were separate schools, buses, trains, hospitals. People could not use the same restaurants, swimming pools, beaches or toilets.



D.

Resistance to racial segregation began at the beginning of the 20th century. Gandhi, who at the time was working in South Africa as a lawyer, organized campaigns of passive resistance, but other forms of protest included strikes and violent demonstrations. The police reacted brutally, often killing people. Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress (ANC), an organization which fought for civil rights, was arrested and spent 27 years in prison.

E.

From the 1960s the United Nations condemned the system of apartheid and international economic sanctions against South Africa were adopted. The fight against apartheid became very violent in the 1980s, when the country almost risked a civil war. The government realized that it was necessary to reform the country and in the 1990s the system of apartheid was abolished. Mandela was freed from prison and in 1994 the ANC won the first democratic elections, with universal suffrage. Mandela became the first president of the *new* South Africa.

Nelson Mandela ►



GLOSSARY

to deprive	privare
labourer	lavoratore manuale
workforce	manodopera

READING

2 Read some stories from the years of apartheid. These are stories which appeared in the newspapers of those years.

The absurdities of apartheid

Colour confusion

Members of the same family are classified in different race groups, after being examined by different offices of the Population Registration Act. (1949)

Separating the milk

It is proposed that the milk sent to dairies by natives should not be mixed with that of European farmers. But it was pointed out that the milking is done by natives on all farms. (1955)

Clean difference

In the city of Port Elizabeth one dry-cleaning shop has a white bag for the clothes of European customers and a grey bag for that of non-whites. (1958)



Wrong husband

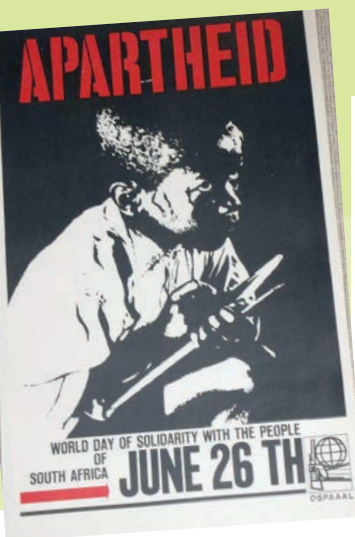
A young white woman tells the judge that she found out that her husband was classified as *coloured* only 4 months after their marriage, when she saw the marriage certificate for the first time. (1960)

Mourners turned away

Eight black people were sent away by a white priest from attending a funeral service of a white man. (1969)

Painful wait

A woman lay injured after a car accident as the hospital refused to send an ambulance until her race had been established. (1970)



Misdirected love

The widow of the Prime Minister objects to the fact that white children are cared for by black nannies. Children could develop a dangerous love for their black mother. This could lead to social integration, mixed marriages and the disappearance of the white race. (1973)

WRITING

3 Write a passage explaining which of the stories you found most absurd and why.

SPEAKING EXAM practice

4 On the grounds of your historical knowledge, prepare a short oral report comparing apartheid in South Africa and other examples of racial segregation you have studied, listing similarities and differences.