



South Africa Today

MAIN IDEA

South Africa is working to rebuild itself in the aftermath of apartheid.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Since the end of apartheid, South Africa has become a democracy.

TERMS & NAMES

veldt

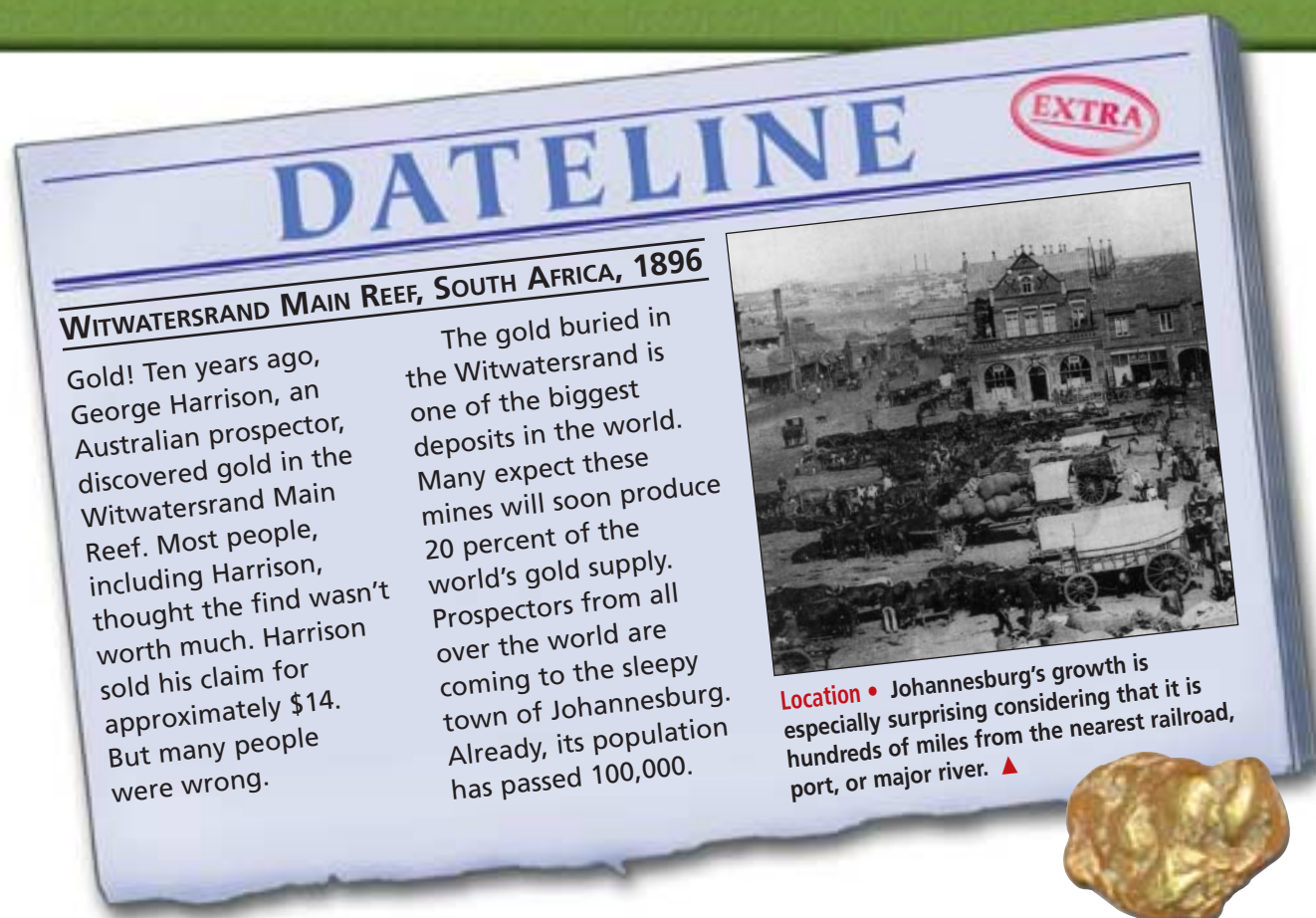
Afrikaner

Boer

African National Congress

Nelson Mandela
sanction

Willem de Klerk



Geography of South Africa

Mineral-rich South Africa is located at the southern tip of Africa. The Witwatersrand, also called the Rand, remains the world's largest and richest gold field. It also contains diamonds, uranium, and platinum. Since South Africa is south of the Equator, winter is in July and summer is in January. Most of South Africa is on a plateau. Much of it is flat grassland called the **veldt** (vehlt), where farmers raise cattle, corn, fruit, potatoes, and wheat.

Place •

The discovery of gold nuggets has drawn many people to South Africa. ▲



Place • The Dutch landed at Table Bay and later established Cape Town nearby. ◀

History of South Africa

South Africa was home to Khoisan and Bantu peoples for more than 1,500 years. The Khoisan were herders and hunters, and the Bantu were farmers.

European Settlers In 1652, the Dutch founded the Cape Town colony. Their descendents, called **Afrikaners**, make up more than half of modern South Africa's white population. Over time, Dutch settlers left Cape Town to become pastoral farmers. Known as **Boers**, they developed their own culture and fought with Africans over land.

German, French, and British settlers followed the Dutch during the 1700s and 1800s. The Cape Town colony came under British control in the early 1800s. Africans resisted British efforts to force them out of the region. Thousands of Boers established two independent states in the 1850s and followed a policy of apartheid.

Wealth and War The discovery of diamonds and gold in the second half of the 19th century renewed European interest in the area. It also attracted prospectors and settlers from Australia, the United States, and Eastern Europe. Between 1899 and 1902, the British and the Boers fought each other in the South African War. Africans supported the British in hopes of gaining some equal rights. The British won and the Boer states came under British rule. Black protest organizations were formed when their situation did not improve.

BACKGROUND

Cape Town later became the legislative capital of South Africa. The country also has an executive capital in Pretoria and a judicial capital in Bloemfontein.

Reading Social Studies

A. Analyzing Motives What drew Europeans to South Africa?

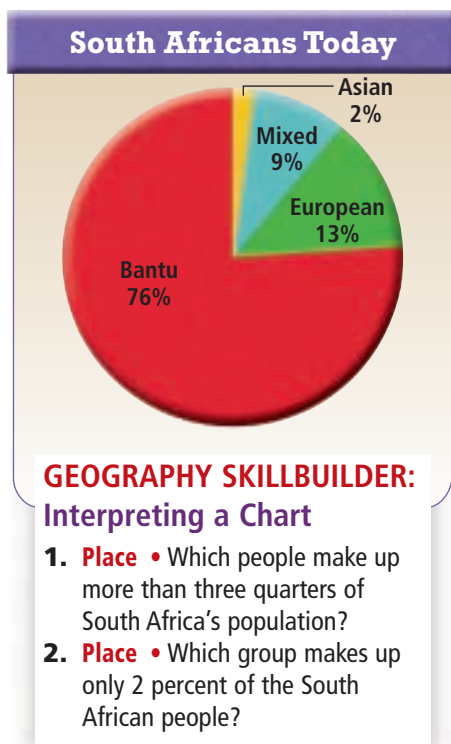
Biography

Nelson Mandela (1918–)

Nelson Mandela, below, led the fight against apartheid. He continued to inspire his followers during his 26 years in prison for protest activities. In 1990, South African President Willem de Klerk helped obtain Mandela's release. In 1991, Mandela became president of the African National Congress. Amid escalating violence, Mandela and de Klerk worked to end apartheid. In 1993, they shared the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts.

In 1994, Mandela became president of South Africa. His Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigated crimes committed under apartheid. He worked to improve the living standards of the black population and helped enact a new constitution.





A Nation of Apartheid

In 1910, the British colony became the Union of South Africa. Afrikaners retained a political voice in the new nation. Racial segregation or separation continued under several new laws. Nonwhites were discriminated against concerning where they could live and travel, what jobs they could hold, and whether they could attend school. Many were forced to leave their homes. Apartheid became the official policy of South Africa in 1948 under the rule of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party.

Reading Social Studies

B. Recognizing Important Details What were the main ways in which apartheid affected the lives of black South Africans?

The African National Congress The ANC, or **African National Congress**, was a group of black Africans that opposed apartheid.

When the government responded to their passive resistance during the 1950s with arrests and violence, the ANC became more aggressive in their protests. **Nelson Mandela** emerged as a leader of the ANC and the anti-apartheid movement. The fight continued for decades. Hundreds of demonstrators were killed, and thousands more were arrested.

Apartheid Ends Strikes had a negative impact on the economy and forced the government to change some of the apartheid laws in the 1970s and again in the 1980s. In 1985, the United States and Great Britain agreed to impose economic sanctions against South Africa. A **sanction** is a measure taken by nations against a country violating international law. **Willem de Klerk**,

a white South African who opposed apartheid, became president in 1989. He helped to repeal many apartheid laws and to release from jail those who had worked to eliminate the policy.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- Place** • Name South Africa's three national capitals.
- Region** • How many provinces are there in South Africa?



In 1993, a new constitution gave all adults the right to vote. Nelson Mandela was elected president, served one five-year term, and retired in 1999. Thabo Mbeki (em•BAY•kee) then became president.

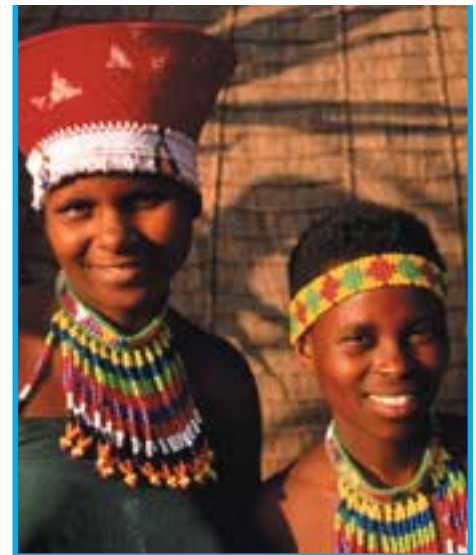
A New Era for South Africa

BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the 21st century, South Africa was conducting a new movement called "transformation." Transformation aimed at making every aspect of South African society available to every citizen.

Today, the constitution of South Africa guarantees the same rights to everyone in South Africa. However, most black South Africans remain very poor. The government is working to provide better housing and to bring electricity and water to communities without them. South Africa continues to have the strongest economy in Southern Africa.

Cultures of South Africa Like its people, the cultures of South Africa are very diverse. For example, South Africa has 11 official languages. Although there are many official languages, English is understood by almost every South African because it is the language used in schools and universities. South African art and music are other examples of the country's diverse culture. Jazz and jive have combined with Zulu and Sotho rhythms to make a new, vibrant musical style.



Culture • South Africa's diverse cultures create a wide range of music and art. Zulu beadwork is one example. ▲

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) veldt (b) Afrikaner (c) Boer (d) African National Congress
(e) Nelson Mandela (f) sanction (g) Willem de Klerk

Taking Notes

2. Use a chart like this one to list some of the reasons for conflicts between African and European groups during colonization.

European Group	Reason for Conflict

Main Ideas

3. (a) How have the veldt and the Witwatersrand contributed to South Africa's economy?
(b) How did Nelson Mandela and the ANC influence South Africa's history?
(c) How is apartheid related to South Africa's current political, social, and economic conditions?

Critical Thinking

4. Recognizing Effects

What actions did South Africa and other nations take to change the policy of apartheid?

Think About

- ♦ the ANC's efforts
- ♦ policies of the United States and Great Britain

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Create a **poster** urging South Africans to vote. List several reasons why voting is important.