

## About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,017

### Book Summary

From humble beginnings to the presidency of a large country, Nelson Mandela is a fascinating man. This biographical text chronicles his early life, his civil rights activism, his prison years, and his tireless work to end apartheid (the racial segregation policy of South Africa). Like Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela will always be a symbol of freedom and equality for all.

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

### Objectives

- Summarize to understand text
- Identify elements of a biography
- Recognize and understand the use of a comma in a series
- Recognize and define multiple-meaning words

### Materials

Green text indicates resources are available on the website.

- Book—*Nelson Mandela* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Pictures of Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela
- Strips of butcher paper
- Summarize, elements of a biography, commas in a series worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

### Vocabulary

\*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

Story critical: *apartheid* (n.), *boycotted* (v.), *colonized* (v.), *dignity* (n.), *protesting* (v.), *reconciliation* (n.)

Enrichment: *censored* (v.), *conspiracy* (n.), *minority* (n.), *sabotage* (n.), *segregated* (adj.), *sentenced* (v.)

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Show students a picture of Martin Luther King Jr., and ask them if they know who he is and what he is famous for. Discuss with them the work Dr. King did to gain civil rights for black Americans.
- Next, show students a picture of Nelson Mandela and ask students if they know him and his work. Explain that Mandela led similar efforts in the country of South Africa and fought to end racial segregation there.

## Preview the Book

### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**

- Direct students to the table of contents. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to find out about in each section.
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at photographs, captions, and other text features. Show students the glossary and explain its purpose.
- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to write a summary, or a brief overview, of the most important information in a section. Point out that a summary often answers the questions who, what, when, where, and why.
- Create a chart on the board with the headings: *Who, What, When, Where, and Why*.  
*Think Aloud:* As I read this book, I am going to stop every now and then to remind myself about the information I have read so far about Nelson Mandela. Doing this helps me remember what I'm reading and makes me think about new information. I can use a chart like this one to help me keep track of the important details. When I finish reading the book, I will be able to tell, in my own words, some of the most important information from each section of the book.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Elements of a biography**

- Ask students to explain the difference between a *biography* and a *story* (*biography*: the story of a real person's life written by someone else; *story*: made up by the author, with characters who may or may not be real). Explain that this book is a biography. A biography includes information about the person's personality, accomplishments, and influence on the world.
- Write the words *Personality*, *Accomplishments*, and *Influence* in a three-column chart on the board. Discuss with students the meaning of each of these words (*personality*: the qualities that makes each person unique; *accomplishments*: success achieved through practice or training; *influence*: an effect on someone or something).
- *Think-aloud:* As I read through each section of this book, I am going to stop and think about what I've learned about Nelson Mandela. As I read, I can organize the information about Nelson Mandela into the categories: *Accomplishments, Influence, and Personality*. By categorizing the information this way, I know I will understand more about him and the events of his life.

### Introduce the Vocabulary

- As students preview the book, ask them to discuss what they see in the photographs. Reinforce vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Direct students to page 6. Have them find the boldface word *minority*. Model how to divide or "chunk" the word by syllables to read the word correctly. Model how they can use context clues to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word.
- Model how students can use the glossary, or a dictionary, to find a word's meaning. Have a volunteer read the definition for *minority* in the glossary to confirm the meaning of the word. Remind students that they should always check whether a word makes sense by rereading it in the sentence. As time allows, repeat the exercise with other words in the text (page 5: *censored*; page 12: *apartheid*).

## Lesson Plan *(continued)*

## Nelson Mandela


### Set the Purpose


- Have students read to learn about Nelson Mandela's personality, accomplishments, and influence on the world.

### During Reading

#### Student Reading

- Have students read pages 4 through 7. Model underlining important details to help summarize important information and identifying elements of a biography in the first two sections.  
*Think-aloud: I made sure to stop reading after these pages to summarize what I'd read so far. First, I thought about the information that answered the questions who, what, when, where, and why. Then, in my mind, I organized the important information into a few sentences. After reading pages 4 and 5, I decided that these pages are a snapshot of Nelson Mandela in prison. I think the author did this to grab my attention. The section titled "A Free-Roaming Life" begins to tell the story of Mandela's life. In this section, I learned that Nelson Mandela was born in 1918 in South Africa. At that time, a small minority of whites owned all the land and the riches. I also learned that Nelson was born into a royal family. He grew up close to his mother's family and was happy. But when he was nine, his father died. Nelson and his mother had to pack up and move. I will underline these words and phrases.*
- Invite students to assist you in filling in this information on the chart on the board. Have them decide which facts go in the various boxes of the chart. Point out that sometimes not all of the questions (who, what, when, where, and why) are answered in every section. Create a summary with students on the basis of the information in the chart. (Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa in 1918. He was born into a royal family, but white people had control of most of the land and riches. Nelson grew up happy in a village with his mother, but his father died when he was nine. He and his mother had to pack up and leave.)
- Return to the Elements of a Biography chart, and model how to record biographical details.  
*Think-aloud: After reading pages 6 and 7, I've learned some details about Nelson Mandela's personality as a young child. He was happy with his free-roaming life and was worried he wouldn't see his village again when he had to leave. I will write this on my chart under the heading Personality.*
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 11. When students have finished reading, have them work with a partner to identify the important information (*Who:* young Nelson Mandela; Chief Jongintaba; Chief's son, Justice. *What:* went to live with Chief Jongintaba, learned to listen and be a good leader; Chief sent him to college, but got kicked out for protesting; ran away with Justice; got a job and finished college; joined the ANC and fought for equal rights for blacks; *When:* 1935–1944; *Where:* Thembu village; Johannesburg. *Why:* wanted to fight for rights of blacks; did not want to marry girl Chief picked for him; excited by success of ANC's protests and boycotts).
- Have students work together on a separate piece of paper to create a summary of this section.
- Ask students to identify Mandela's personality, accomplishments, and influence from the discussion and their reading (*Personality:* smart, a bit defiant, believed in fairness; *Accomplishments:* went to college, protested unfair practices, moved to Johannesburg, studied for law degree, joined the ANC; *Influence:* founded the ANCYL, used the group to inform people and organize more protests and boycotts).
- Introduce and explain the [elements-of-a-biography worksheet](#). Write this information on the chart on the board, and have students write the information on their worksheet. Discuss with students the words from the book that support the information on the chart.
- Discuss how Mandela's personality might have influenced his accomplishments. Facilitate the discussion with questions such as: *How would you describe Nelson Mandela's personality? What characteristics of his personality might have influenced him to do the things he did in his early life?*


 Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to underline important details and to use the information learned to identify the elements of a biography (personality, accomplishments, and influence on others).

 Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

## After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

## Reflect on the Reading Strategy

 Divide students into pairs. Assign each pair one of the remaining sections from the book. Remind them to underline information that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why* while reading. Have each group discuss the information they underlined in their section. Have them use the information to rehearse an oral summary of the section. When students have finished, share and discuss their summaries aloud.

- **Think-aloud:** *I know summarizing keeps me actively involved in what I'm reading and helps me remember what I've read. I know I will remember more about Nelson Mandela because I summarized as I read the book.*
- Introduce and explain the [summarize worksheet](#). Have students fill in their underlined information, then write a summary for the section they worked on.


## Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- Discuss how much of Mandela's work and actions improved the quality of life for people living in south Africa, and how his passion for social justice helped create equality for blacks in that country.
- Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [elements-of-a-biography worksheet](#). When they have finished, discuss their answers.
- In this book, you read about a man who was willing to give up his life and spend years in prison for what he believed in. Now that you know this about Nelson Mandela, do you think it is important to stand up for what you believe in, even if it means great personal sacrifice? Would you do what Mandela did?

## Build Skills

### Grammar and Mechanics: Commas in a series


- Remind students there are many different ways commas can be used. One specific way is with words in a series, or list.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Josh Kristy and Sam were in my group.* Ask a volunteer to read it aloud as it is written, without pauses. Ask students to tell what is missing from the sentence to make it read more smoothly (*commas*). Explain that the names in this sentence represent a list, or a series of words, and that *commas are used to separate the words in a series*. Add commas to the sentence: *Josh, Kristy, and Sam were in my group.* Have the volunteer read the sentence using the proper pauses.
- Ask students to turn to page 4 and find the third sentence in the second paragraph (*They ate bad food, slept in tiny cells, and were treated poorly by the guards.*). Ask students to name the three things in this series that required a comma to separate them. Point out the use of the comma in the first sentence and the third sentence in the second paragraph, and discuss how these commas are used differently (first sentence: comma used to set off an appositive; third sentence: commas used to separate a dependent clause from an independent clause).

 **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 7. Have a volunteer read the first sentence aloud (*Nelson was happy playing with the other boys, herding sheep and cattle, and going to school.*). Instruct students to circle the commas. Ask them to determine how the commas are being used in this sentence (to separate words or phrases in a series). Ask students if commas are being used for the same purpose in the second sentence on page 7 (No; commas are being used to separate dependent and independent clauses).

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [commas-in-a-series worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss answers aloud after students finish.

## Word Work: Multiple-meaning words

- Have students turn to page 4 and read the following sentence in the second paragraph: *Mandela, forty-four years old, had been sentenced to life in prison on Robben Island, a small island off the coast of South Africa.* Write the word *sentenced* on the board.
- Ask students to explain the meaning of *sentenced* in this sentence. Have a volunteer read the definition from the glossary on page 24. Then write the following sentence on the board: *Every sentence has a punctuation mark at the end.* Ask students to explain the difference between the meanings of the word.
- Explain to students that words that sound and are spelled the same, but have different meanings, are called multiple-meaning words.
- Invite students to share other multiple-meaning words they know. Write the words on the board and discuss their meanings with students.

 **Independent practice:** Write the following words from the book and their corresponding page numbers on the board: *cells*, page 4; *cut (off)*, page 4; *land*, page 6; *bit*, page 9; *degree*, page 10; *races*, page 12; *train(ed)*, page 13; *charge(d)*, page 15; *slip(ped)*, page 17; *free*, page 21; *side*, page 23. Assign student pairs to find the word in context on its page, then write the definition in the margin of their book. Then ask them to write another meaning of the word in the margin also. Provide dictionaries if needed. If time allows, have pairs share their definitions.

## Build Fluency

### Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

### Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them discuss Mandela's important work in South Africa with someone at home.

## Extend the Reading

### Informational Writing and Art Connection

Provide students with long strips of butcher paper, approximately 12" wide. Have them fold the paper in half three times. Ask students to review the timeline across the bottom of pages 22 through 23. Explain that the timeline helps us to visually keep track of Mandela's accomplishments throughout his lifetime. Point out, however, that the timeline does not contain *all* the events of Mandela's life. Have students use the text, Internet sources, and the timeline to choose eight dates/events from Mandela's life to create their own timeline. Provide crayons, markers, and other materials so students can illustrate the events they choose.

Visit [WritingA-Z.com](http://WritingA-Z.com) for a lesson and leveled materials on informational writing.

### Social Studies Connection

Provide students with print and Internet resources to further research the country of South Africa, and the history of apartheid. As they read, encourage them to think about similarities and differences between the struggle for equal rights that Mandela led, and the civil rights movement in the United States.

### Skill Review

**Discussion cards** covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

### Assessment

**Monitor students to determine if they can:**

- consistently use the strategy of summarizing to understand text during discussion and on a worksheet
- identify elements of a biography; categorize information by element during reading and on a worksheet
- correctly understand and use commas in a series during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly understand and define multiple-meaning words in text

### Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**