

Class X - English

Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

CBSE NOTES

Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom - Mastery Worksheet

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Mastery Questions

1. Compare and contrast the systems of government in South Africa during the first and final decades of the twentieth century as described by Mandela.

Hint: Focus on the changes in governance and societal structure over the century.

Solution: In the first decade, South Africa was under a system of racial domination established by the white-skinned peoples, creating one of the harshest societies. By the final decade, this system was overturned, replaced by a democratic government recognizing the rights and freedoms of all peoples. Mandela highlights the transition from oppression to democracy, emphasizing the resilience and sacrifices of his people.

2. Explain Mandela's understanding of freedom and how it evolved from his childhood to his role in the African National Congress.

Hint: Trace Mandela's personal journey and how his experiences shaped his views on freedom.

Solution: Initially, Mandela viewed freedom as personal liberties like running in fields or swimming. As he grew, he realized his freedom was an illusion, leading him to yearn for basic freedoms. Joining the ANC, his desire expanded to the freedom of his people, understanding freedom as indivisible and essential for dignity and self-respect.

3. Discuss the significance of the inauguration ceremony as described by Mandela. What did it symbolize for South Africa and the world?

Hint: Consider the historical context and the international response to the ceremony.

Solution: The inauguration symbolized the end of apartheid and the beginning of a democratic, non-racial government. It represented a victory for justice, peace, and human dignity, attended by international leaders, showcasing global support for South Africa's new era.

4. Analyze Mandela's statement, 'The oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed.' What does this reveal about his philosophy?

Hint: Reflect on the psychological and moral dimensions of oppression and liberation.

Solution: Mandela believed that both the oppressor and the oppressed are robbed of their humanity. Liberation is mutual, as hatred and prejudice imprison the oppressor, while the oppressed suffer physically and psychologically. This reflects his commitment to reconciliation and unity.

5. How does Mandela describe the role of courage in the struggle against apartheid? Provide examples from the text.

Hint: Identify instances where individuals demonstrated extraordinary bravery.

Solution: Mandela defines courage not as the absence of fear but the triumph over it. He cites comrades who risked their lives, showing resilience against torture and oppression, illustrating that true courage lies in overcoming fear for a greater cause.

6. What does Mandela mean by 'the depths of oppression create heights of character'? Discuss with reference to the text.

Hint: Consider how adversity can lead to personal and collective growth.

Solution: Mandela suggests that extreme oppression can foster remarkable qualities like courage, wisdom, and generosity. He mentions leaders like Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu, whose extraordinary character was shaped by their struggles against apartheid.

7. Examine the change in attitude of the South African military generals as described by Mandela. What does this change signify?

Hint: Focus on the symbolic meaning of the generals' actions in the context of South Africa's history.

Solution: The generals, who once would have arrested Mandela, saluted him and pledged loyalty to the new democracy. This signifies a transformative shift from enforcing apartheid to supporting a

government elected by all South Africans, reflecting the country's transition to democracy.

8. Discuss the importance of the two national anthems sung at the inauguration. What message did this convey?

Hint: Think about the symbolic acts of unity and their impact on national healing.

Solution: Singing both anthems symbolized unity and reconciliation between South Africa's racial groups. It represented a shared national identity, moving beyond the divisions of apartheid to embrace a collective future.

9. Mandela speaks of 'a twilight existence of secrecy and rebellion.' What does this phrase reveal about the life of a freedom fighter under apartheid?

Hint: Consider the personal costs of political activism under oppressive regimes.

Solution: This phrase depicts the clandestine and perilous life of those fighting apartheid, torn between their duty to their people and the personal sacrifices of family and safety. It highlights the isolation and constant threat faced by activists.

10. Reflect on Mandela's view that 'man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished.' How is this belief reflected in his narrative?

Hint: Look for instances where Mandela acknowledges acts of kindness or moral courage.

Solution: Despite the brutality of apartheid, Mandela observed moments of humanity, even among oppressors, reinforcing his belief in inherent goodness. This optimism underpinned his vision for reconciliation and a unified South Africa.

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