

English and Literacy: Nelson Mandela

Lesson plan 2: Long Walk to Freedom - fact, fiction and opinion

Age group: 10-11

Resources:

You will need:

- the class dictionary;
- the **Worksheet: Extract 1 from Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela** (below);
- the **Worksheet: Fact, fiction and opinion table** (below);
- the **Worksheet: Fact, fiction and opinion statements** (below).

Introduction and whole-class activity:

Show the selection of books again. Ask the pupils:

1. What is the difference between the books written about Nelson Mandela and the book written by Nelson Mandela?
2. Why would someone want to write about their own life for others to read?
3. What can you learn about a person by reading about his or her life?

Write the words 'biography' and 'autobiography' on the board. Ask a couple of pupils to look up and read out the dictionary definition of each word. Make a list for each with ideas from the pupils. For biography, you should expect suggestions such as these:

- tells us about the person's environment;
- what effect that person has had on others;
- shows that the author knows a lot about the person;
- telling facts about a real person's life;
- showing the truth, the person's strengths and weaknesses;
- tells us why this person is interesting;
- tells us how the writer feels about the person;
- is written in the third person.

For autobiography, as well as some of the above, you should also expect that it:

- is written by the central person in the book;
- shows the emotions and feelings of the writer;
- tells of the people who have had the biggest influence on the author's life;
- recounts the main significant events that have changed and influenced the author;
- is written in the first person.

Read **Extract 1 from *Long Walk to Freedom*** (below) by Nelson Mandela.

Group activity:

Show the pupils the **worksheet: Fact, fiction and opinion statements** (below).

Read out two statements about Nelson Mandela. The pupils need to decide which is fact and which is fiction.

- 'Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa.'
- 'Nelson Mandela was born in South America.'

Write each statement in the correct column.

Say, 'I think Nelson Mandela is a very courageous man'. Ask the pupils where they think that should go.

Give the pupils the fact, fiction and opinion statements. The pupils should cut them up and stick them in the correct column the fact, fiction and opinion table.

Once the pupils have completed the worksheet, they will need to think about their own opinion of Nelson Mandela. They may already have their own ideas for this section; if not, they will need to consider what they have learnt and what they now think about him from the information they have read.

Plenary:

Check through the statements. Did all the pupils put the statements in the correct column? Do they all understand the difference between fact, fiction and opinion?

Ask some of the pupils to share their opinions of Nelson Mandela. What made the pupils have these opinions? What influenced them?

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Worksheet: From Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom* (Extract 1)

My mother presided over three rondavels at Qunu which, as I remember, were always filled with the babies and children of my relations. In fact, I hardly recall any occasion as a child when I was alone. In African culture, the sons and daughters of one's aunts or uncles are considered brothers and sisters, not cousins. We do not make the same distinctions among relations practised by Europeans. We have no half-brothers or half-sisters. My mother's sister is my mother; my uncle's son is my brother. Of my mother's three huts, one was used for cooking, one for sleeping and one for storage. In the hut in which we slept, there was no furniture.

We slept on mats and sat on the ground. I did not discover pillows until I went away to school. The stove on which my mother cooked was a three-legged iron pot that rested on a grate over a hole in the ground. Everything we ate we grew and made ourselves. My mother planted and harvested her own mealies. After harvesting the mealies, the woman ground the kernels between two stones. A portion of this was made into bread, while the rest was dried and stored in pots. Unlike mealies, which were sometimes in short supply, milk from our cows and goats was always plentiful.

From an early age, I spent most of my free time in the veld playing and fighting with the other boys of the village. A boy who remained at home tied to his mother's apron strings was regarded as a sissy. At night, I shared my food and blanket with these same boys. I was no more than five when I became a herd-boy, looking after sheep and calves in the fields. I discovered the almost mystical attachment that the Xhosa have for cattle, not only as a source of food and wealth, but as a blessing from God and a source of happiness. It was in the fields that I learned how to knock birds out of the sky with a slingshot, to gather wild honey and fruits and edible roots, to drink warm, sweet milk straight from the udder of a cow, to swim in the clear, cold streams, and to catch fish with twine and sharpened bits of wire. I learned to stick-fight - essential knowledge to any rural African boy - and became adept at its various techniques, parrying blows, feinting in one direction, striking in another, breaking away from an opponent with quick footwork. From these days I date my love of the veld, of open spaces, the simple beauties of nature, the clean line of the horizon.

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Worksheet: Fact, fiction and opinion table

Fact	Fiction
Opinion	

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Worksheet: Fact, fiction and opinion statements

Nelson Mandela was born on the 18th July 1918.	Nelson Mandela was born on the 18th July 1998.
He had two names, Nelson and Rolihlahla.	He had three names, Nelson, Gadla and Rolihlahla.
Nelson Mandela's Xhosa name means, 'stirring up trouble'.	Nelson Mandela's Xhosa name means 'justice'.
It was fashionable to have a European name, preferably a heroic one.	Nelson was fascinated by tales told around the camp fire by the elders, and this led to him want to fight for his people's freedom.
His mother had three sons.	His mother had three daughters.
Nelson Mandela's father was a wealthy chief.	As a child, Nelson stole mealie cobs from the maize fields, when hungry.
As a child, Nelson Mandela only did jobs fit for a Chief's son.	As a child Nelson herded sheep and cattle.
Nelson's school textbooks were full of information about black heroes.	Nelson was shocked when history books described only white heroes.
Nelson Mandela wore his father's old clothes.	Nelson Mandela wore Chief's clothes from his early years at school.