



# Key Vocabulary: Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context
Apartheid	A system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa	"I was not born with a hunger to be free. I was born free—free in every way that I could know. Free to run in the fields near my mother's hut, free to swim in the clear stream that ran through my village, free to roast mealies under the stars and ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls. As long as I obeyed my father and abided by the customs of my tribe, I was not troubled by the laws of man or God. But as I grew older, I began to realize that my freedom was more than just the freedom to run and play, it was the freedom to choose my own way of life, to make my own decisions, to walk the path of my own choosing."
Boer	A white Afrikaans-speaking South African of Dutch, German, or Huguenot descent	"I had been in Johannesburg for a year when I first heard of the Boer War."
Capitalism	An economic system in which private individuals or businesses own and operate the means of production and distribution	"As a young man, I began to study not only the ancient writers but also the modern economic system known as capitalism."
Communism	A political and economic system in which property and resources are collectively owned and controlled by the community as a whole	"I knew that communism could never be a solution for South Africa."
Democracy	A form of government in which power is held by the people, typically through elected representatives	"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities."
Discrimination	Prejudice or unjust treatment towards individuals or groups based on their perceived differences, such as race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation	"I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness."
Guerrilla warfare	A form of irregular warfare in which small groups of combatants use tactics such as ambushes, raids, and sabotage against a larger and less mobile traditional military	"The concept of guerrilla warfare had always appealed to me, and I had read a great deal about it."



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Imprisonment	The state of being confined to a place against one's will, often as a punishment for a crime or political dissent	"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended."
Nationalism	A strong sense of identity and loyalty to one's nation or ethnic group	"I was filled with a sense of nationalism, of unity, of love for this newly made country of ours."
Racism	Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized	"I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."
Resistance	The act of opposing or standing up against something, often against an oppressor or an unjust system	"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."
Segregation	The separation of people based on their race, ethnicity, or other factors	"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb."
Socialism	A political and economic system in which the means of production, distribution, and exchange are owned and controlled by the community as a whole, typically through the government	"I have always regarded myself, in the first place, as an African patriot. After all, I was born in Umtata, forty-six years ago. My guardian was my cousin, who was the acting paramount chief of Thembuland. Thembuland itself is part of the Transkei and the Transkei is a child of Cape Province, which is a province of the Union of South Africa. In short, I was born and raised in the atmosphere of politics."
Solidarity	Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support	"I am fundamentally an optimist. Whether that comes from nature or nurture, I cannot say. Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my



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		faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lays defeat and death."
Treason	The crime of betraying one's country or government, especially by attempting to overthrow it or harm it in some way	"I did not know then that in trying to break my spirit, the authorities had given me the strongest possible reason to live. For now I knew what my people had known since the beginning of time: that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity."
Xenophobia	Fear, distrust, or hatred of foreigners, strangers, or people from different cultures or backgrounds	"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

## Historical and political context of the book

"Long Walk to Freedom" is a memoir by Nelson Mandela, published in 1994, that recounts his life and struggles for racial equality in South Africa. To understand the historical and political context of the book, it's important to look at the history of South Africa leading up to and during Mandela's life.

South Africa was colonized by the Dutch and British in the 17th and 18th centuries, and apartheid policies, which institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination, were introduced in the early 20th century. Under apartheid, the white minority government established strict racial classifications and limited the rights and freedoms of non-white South Africans. Non-whites were restricted in where they could live, work, and attend school, and were denied the right to vote.

Mandela was born in 1918, and grew up in a country where racism and segregation were deeply entrenched. He became involved in anti-apartheid activism in the 1940s, joining the African National Congress (ANC) and advocating for nonviolent resistance to



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apartheid policies. However, as the government responded with increasing brutality and repression, Mandela became more militant in his tactics, eventually becoming the leader of the ANC's armed wing.

In 1964, Mandela was arrested and sentenced to life in prison for his activism and his opposition to apartheid. He spent 27 years in prison, much of it in harsh conditions, before he was finally released in 1990 as part of negotiations to end apartheid. Mandela continued to play a leading role in South African politics, and in 1994, he became the country's first black president in the first democratic elections held in South Africa.

"Long Walk to Freedom" is a first-hand account of Mandela's life, including his experiences with apartheid, his time in prison, and his political career. It offers insights into the struggle for racial equality in South Africa, and the challenges and triumphs of Mandela's personal journey as a leader and a symbol of resistance to injustice. The book is a testament to the power of perseverance, courage, and hope in the face of oppression, and it continues to inspire readers around the world to this day.