

Soweto Gospel Choir



VIRGINIA ARTS FESTIVAL

2025
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Soweto Gospel Choir was formed to celebrate the unique and inspirational power of African gospel music. The choir draws on the best talent from the many churches in and around Soweto, South Africa's famous township, mixing earthy rhythms with rich harmonies to uplift the soul and express the energy of their homeland. By blending elements of African gospel, traditional spirituals, and American popular music, the choir shares the joy of faith through music with audiences around the world.

Soweto Gospel Choir first performed at a historic 2003 concert for international hero and human rights activist Nelson Mandela; the group's 2018 album *Freedom* is a heartfelt tribute to Mandela, honoring the one-hundredth anniversary of his birth. Their albums *Blessed* and *African Spirit* won Grammy Awards for Best Traditional World Music Album in 2007 and 2008. They have toured the globe—appearing on popular TV shows, recording with famous musicians, and performing at festivals like the 2010 FIFA World Cup Kick-Off Concert with the Black Eyed Peas, Shakira, Angelique Kidjo, and John Legend. One of the group's songs was featured in the Disney Pixar film *WALL-E*.

Charitable giving is important to Soweto Gospel Choir; they have raised millions of dollars from all over the world for groups helping to deal with the medical condition AIDS, an urgent health concern on the African continent. In 2003, the choir created the Nkosi's Haven Vukani foundation to help AIDS orphans by supporting families and organizations that receive little to no government assistance.

Through vibrant vocals, percussion, movement, and costume, the colorful Soweto Gospel Choir joyously shares African traditions in which song, dance, and drumming are an integral part of life and faith.

Source: Adapted from Soweto Gospel Choir,
www.sowetogospelchoir.com

Good Gospel! What Is It?

The musical genre known as gospel encompasses a variety of cultures and traditions. Often, gospel is written and performed for religious or ceremonial purposes. It originates in Christian traditions like the singing of hymns and spirituals. But gospel can also be composed and sung simply for entertainment and pleasurable listening. Gospel music typically features strong, emotion-fueled vocals and rich harmonies, and is generally performed by choirs that are accompanied by piano, organ, percussion, or other instruments.

Rooted in the oral tradition—history and culture passed along by word of mouth, not written down—gospel music often uses a technique known as call and response. This is when a song leader sings a particular phrase, the “call,” which is answered or echoed by another phrase, the “response,” sung by fellow singers or even the listeners. No reading of lyrics is required, allowing everyone the opportunity to join in the song, even those who can’t read or don’t have hymnals (books of hymns).

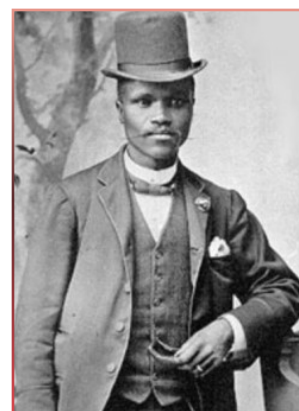
Other hallmarks of gospel music include musical and lyrical repetition, complex rhythms that come from layers of voices, clapping, or percussion, and lyrics that are often uplifting or inspirational.

While Soweto Gospel Choir focuses mainly on the South African gospel tradition, the group also draws on influences from African American gospel music that evolved in the United States. Let’s take a look at how gospel developed in both nations...

South African Gospel

South African peoples like the Zulu and the Xhosa have long had their own rich singing traditions. When English missionaries came to South Africa to spread their Christian faith, the unique style of South African gospel music was born. As South African people converted to Christianity, they blended European hymns and Christian ideas with their own styles of vocal music. As early as 1814, the charismatic Xhosa Christian prophet Ntsikana composed songs of worship for his Xhosa Christian congregation in a traditional Xhosa style, such as his “Great Hymn”, which used Xhosa forms of rhyme and rhythm. Passionately driven, Ntsikana played a key role in spreading Christianity among his fellow Xhosa people.

In 1897, the Xhosa teacher and choirmaster Enoch Sontonga composed the hymn “Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika (God Bless Africa)” for his school choir. The song was later adopted as a rallying cry for the anti-apartheid movement—those fighting oppression of the Black population by the white minority. Today, this hymn makes up one portion of South Africa’s hybrid national anthem.



Enoch Sontonga.
Durban History Museum.

The combination of Christian influences and local musical styles created a genre of vocal music that is still going strong in South Africa. Modern South African gospel

Ntsikana’s “Great Hymn” (“Ulo Tixo mkulu”)

You are the Great God who dwells in the heavens.
You are the true shield.
You are the true fortress.
You are the true forest [of refuge].
It is you who dwells in the highest.

You created life, you created on high.
You are the creator [who] creates the heavens.
You created the stars and the Pleiades.
A Star flashed forth, being us your message.
You created the blind – did you create them for a purpose?

The trumpet sounded, it has called for us.
You’re the hunter who hunts souls.
You gather together flocks rejecting each other.
You are the Great Blanket with which we are clothed.

Your hands are wounded.
Your feet are wounded.
Your blood – why is it streaming?
Your blood was poured out for us.
Are we worthy of such a ransom?
Are we worthy to enter your homestead?

(Translation by
David Dargie)

artists' sounds range from traditional to contemporary, pop-infused styles and interplay with gospel music from the United States, which became popular worldwide in the twentieth century. Gospel is one of the best-selling music genres in South Africa today.

African American Gospel

In the United States, gospel music can be traced back to the seventeenth century and the time of slavery. Enslaved African Americans used the musical elements of repetition and call and response when they sang spirituals—songs that blended slaveholders' European-based church hymns and the African musical traditions enslaved people brought with them to America. New as well as preexisting religious lyrics were imbued with rhythms that created a sense of momentum and were sung with a powerful expressiveness that gave voice to the struggles and hopes of enslaved people. Spirituals were songs of survival, uplift, and faith.

As African Americans established their own churches in the nineteenth century, their religious music continued to evolve into a rhythmic and highly emotional style that usually involved the entire congregation—singing, clapping, and stomping their feet. In the twentieth century, instruments such as tambourines and electric guitars were added to the sound, and gospel music spread as African Americans moved from the rural South to cities across the nation.



Mahalia Jackson in the 1960s.
Credit: Comet Photo AG (Zürich).

Cat-like Isicathamiya

One of South Africa's most famous musical genres is the isicathamiya form. This type of choral music is sung a cappella (without instruments) and has its origins in the Zulu people of South Africa. Its name comes from a Zulu word meaning "to walk softly" or "cat-like", reflected in the soft quality of the singing and the exact, tip-toed dance steps.



Ladysmith Black Mambazo
performing isicathamiya dance steps.

Isicathamiya developed along with the South African mining industry of the early 1900s. It draws on Zulu music and dance styles and traditions of playful social competition, as well as American vaudeville, minstrelsy, and ragtime which were popular in South Africa at the time. Mining workers packed together in hostels far away from home formed vocal ensembles, often named after their rural hometown, and competed with other ensembles in song to entertain each other and keep their links to home, family, and culture alive. Today, there are still weekly isicathamiya competitions every Saturday in South African cities, and groups sing through the entire night!

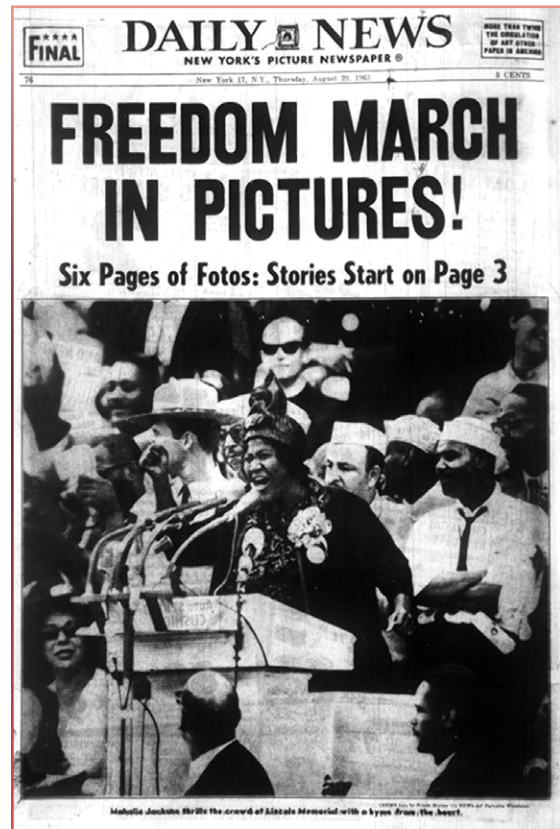
Like gospel music, isicathamiya songs are often inspirational, treating important topics and imbued with a sense of higher purpose.

The group Ladysmith Black Mambazo has made *isicathamiya* singing famous worldwide. Listen to them perform here: <https://youtu.be/kvELRD5Uc1s>

The advent of broadcast radio in the 1920s helped widen gospel music's audience, as did recordings of gospel artists. In 1938, Sister Rosetta Tharpe scored the first million-selling gospel record with her hit single "This Train." After World War II, gospel music moved to larger and larger venues, fueled by the soaring popularity of artists like Mahalia Jackson, The Caravans, the Swan Silvertones, and The Clara Ward Singers. Gospel songs like "We Shall Overcome" were a rallying cry during the Civil Rights Movement for racial equality in the 1950s and 1960s.

Today, with TV and internet, there is no geographic limit to the audiences gospel music can reach. Gospel remains a vital musical genre in the United States, with a variety of subgenres that include urban contemporary gospel, gospel blues, Southern gospel, progressive Southern gospel, Christian country music, bluegrass gospel, and Celtic gospel.

Gospel has also impacted more secular (non-religious) music genres like soul, blues, and pop music, and there is considerable overlap between these types of music. Aretha Franklin, the "Queen of Soul," began her career as a gospel singer. Gospel-style vocals, rhythms, and call and response are elements you can find in a great deal of music produced today.



Mahalia Jackson at the March on Washington.

What Do You Think?

- Consider how South African and African American gospel music developed. Do you see any similarities? Differences? How did the arrival of missionaries affect gospel music's development in South Africa? How did slavery affect gospel music's development in America?
- Why do you think gospel performed as a choir might be more powerful or meaningful than with solo artists?
- Write down your thoughts or discuss them in class.

Try This

- The technique of call and response is a key component of gospel music. It can be found in other types of music as well, from pop songs to sports-arena chants. Can you think of any examples of call and response? Try them in your classroom!

Sources: Soweto Gospel Choir Performance Guide for Teachers, Lied Center for Performing Arts; Brand South Africa, www.brandsouthafrica.com; Music in Africa, www.musicinafrica.net; Jonathan T. Knight, "Sing On, Ntsikana: The Story of Christian Music among the Xhosa People of South Africa," <https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/musicalofferings/vol1/iss1/3>; Ulwazi Programme, "Isicathamiya: A Brief History," <https://www.ulwaziprogramme.org/isicathamiya-a-brief-history>.

Gospel Glossary

A cappella

Italian for “in the style of the chapel,” this term means choral music that is unaccompanied by musical instruments—singing only.

Alto

Italian for “high,” this term was formerly used for the highest range of a male voice, but is now generally used to describe the lower vocal range for women. In a choir or chorus, alto is the second highest vocal part.

Bass

The lowest male voice part.

Call and response

A musical interaction in which the first and often solo phrase, the “call,” is answered or echoed by a second and often ensemble phrase, the “response.”

Choir

A group of singers. Generally, choir refers to such a group in a church or religious setting and chorus refers to a vocal group in a nonreligious setting. The terms are often used interchangeably.

Choral

Having to do with music made by a choir or chorus.

Chorus

A group of singers, also called a choir. In the typical chorus or choir, each voice part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) has more than one singer. The name comes from the Greek term *choros*, which in Greek theater was a group of actors onstage who commented on the action of a play with song, dance, and speech performed together. Choral singing is one of the most popular ways to make music; schools, churches, clubs, and other institutions often have their own chorus or choir.

Ensemble

The entire group that performs a piece. In choral music, all the sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses performing together make up the ensemble.



Falsetto

A high vocal range that a male sings, often used for special effect. It is above the singer’s normal range and enables the vocalist to reach higher notes.

Solo

A musical passage for one singer or instrumentalist only.

Soprano

The highest vocal part. Usually only females and young males can reach the notes required to sing soprano.

Tenor

The highest natural range of a male voice.

What Do You Think?

Does your school, club, or other organization have a chorus? What kind of music does that ensemble perform? Music and musical groups can serve different purposes—ceremonial, religious, as recreation, entertainment, or artistic expression. What purpose does the chorus or choir you know of serve—for its singers, its listeners, the community?

South Africa: Rainbow Nation

As its name suggests, South Africa is located at the southernmost point of the African continent, with the Atlantic Ocean to its west, the Southern Ocean to its south, and the Indian Ocean to its east. It's a nation of diverse cultures and traditions—both those of its indigenous, or native, peoples and of the different groups that settled there. South Africa has eleven official languages, reflecting its multicultural makeup. The country's diversity has earned it the nickname of "Rainbow Nation"!

The South African landscape is mostly made up of a central plateau—a high, flat area—covered with rolling grasslands and tree-dotted plains. To the north lie the red sands of the Kalahari Desert. Steep slopes dropping from the southern, eastern, and western edges of the interior plateau are known as the Great Escarpment. The eastern portion of the Great Escarpment is called the Drakensberg, meaning "Dragon Mountains," because of its appearance from below. Nestled high in the soaring, snow-capped peaks of this eastern range there is another, entirely different nation within South Africa's borders: Lesotho. Much of South Africa's water supply comes from this tiny, landlocked "Kingdom of the Sky."

South Africa's different habitats are incredibly biodiverse. Amazing sea creatures—over 13,000 marine species—live in the waters around South Africa. The country is home, in fact, to 10% of the world's known plant species and 7% of its mammal, bird, and reptile species—from aardvarks to hippos to turtles to zebras!

The South African government tries to preserve this abundant wildlife with numerous protected land and marine areas, like the famous Kruger National Park. Still, many animals are threatened by habitat loss and illegal hunting (poaching), such as elephants, prized by poachers for their ivory tusks. The cheetah, African wild dog, and blue crane—South Africa's national bird—are just a few species that are at risk of extinction.

People have been living in the territory of South Africa for a very long time. In a network of limestone caves in northern South Africa, archaeologists have unearthed some of the earliest fossils of human ancestors ever found—more than two million years old! This famous archaeological site is called the "Cradle of Humankind".

The earliest peoples to live in South Africa are the San and Khoikhoi. The San are sometimes also called "Bushmen". In South Africa, many San people still live in the Kalahari Desert, where they hunt and gather their food. San culture emphasizes equality, rest, and group decision-making. The Khoikhoi are traditionally a nomadic people,

OFFICIAL NAME:

Republic of South Africa

CAPITALS:

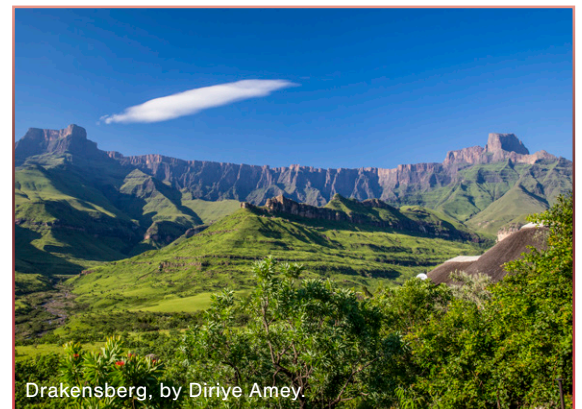
Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES:

Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga

MONEY: Rand

AREA: 466,832 square miles (1,219,090 square kilometers)



Drakensberg, by Dirive Amey.



Cape Town

which means they move their homes from place to place. Unlike the San, their livelihood typically came from herds of livestock—cattle, goats, and sheep. Moving seasonally allowed the Khoikhoi's herds to go to fresh grazing grounds without exhausting one patch of land. The two groups together are known as the Khoisan.

Later, Bantu peoples, notably the Xhosa and Zulu, entered the region from the north. Some archaeological evidence suggests that Xhosa-speaking people have lived in South Africa ever since the 700s. The Xhosa eventually established a powerful kingdom in the eastern region of South Africa.



Photos Top-bottom: Blue Crane, national bird. South African Tourism. Zulu dancing. Xhosa traditional attire.

In the late 1400s, European ships seeking rich spice ports in the Indian Ocean began traversing the South African coast. In 1652, Dutch settlers established the southern city of Cape Town as a trading post. The Dutch settlers' modern descendants in South Africa are called Afrikaners. In 1806, the British captured Cape Town. In response, many Afrikaners moved north and created new states further inland. Both British and Dutch colonists violently seized land and resources that South Africa's different indigenous peoples relied on for farming, raising livestock, hunting, and gathering. For one hundred years—one of the most prolonged struggles by African peoples against colonialism—the Xhosa fought first Dutch colonists, then British troops. These conflicts, which lasted from 1779-1879, are known as the Cape Frontier Wars.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa in the 1800s spurred wealth and immigration, and intensified the already poor treatment of South Africa's non-European inhabitants—indigenous South Africans as well as people from India, East Asia, and other parts of Africa who came to South Africa as enslaved people, indentured servants, and free workers. Diamond and gold mining remain important industries in South Africa today.

In the Second South African War (1899-1902), the British defeated the Afrikaners. In 1909, the British parliament officially united four British and Afrikaner colonies in the region into one, South Africa. The country officially remained a part of the British Empire, but was mostly independently governed by local British and Afrikaner people, as well as a few Black and mixed-race people who met the highly restrictive voting requirements.

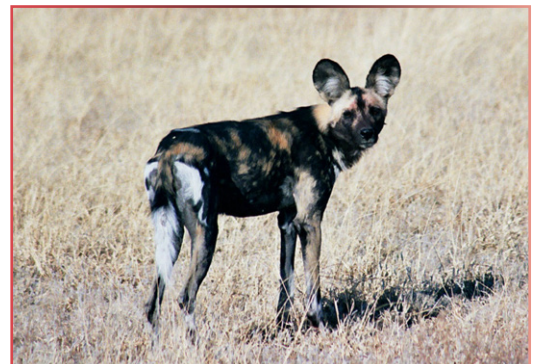
In 1948, the Afrikaner-dominated National Party was voted into power and instituted a policy called apartheid—the separation of the races—which favored the white British and Afrikaner minority at the expense of the Black majority, who were stripped of their South African citizenship and their already limited voting power. The African National Congress (ANC) led the opposition to apartheid. The white government tried to harshly suppress resistance, and several top ANC leaders, such as Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, spent decades in South Africa's prisons. After many turbulent years of intense protest and conflict, as well as international boycotts, the government finally ended apartheid and decreed fair representation for all.

South Africa has been a democratic republic since holding its first truly open election in 1994, which made Nelson Mandela the country's president. Ongoing problems with income inequality, unemployment, and the medical condition AIDS remain challenges for the government. But South Africa's plentiful natural resources, agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing have made it one of the largest economies on the African continent.

: What Do You Think?

Colonialism is when one country takes full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers and exploiting it economically. With colonialism in mind, how is South Africa's history similar to and different from the United States of America? What challenges facing South Africa today might be a legacy of colonialism and apartheid? Could South Africa's nickname of "Rainbow Nation" also apply to our country? Why or why not? Research online or in the library, then write down your thoughts or discuss or present them in class.

Sources: The World Factbook, Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>; ShowMe South Africa, www.showme.co.za; NatGeo Kids, <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/countries/south-africa>.



Photos Top-bottom: A Xhosa bride. African wild dog. Ian Sewell. Cheetah, by Mukul2u.

Apartheid: Separate and Not Equal

Imagine being told you couldn't hang out with your best friend because your skin was a different color than theirs. Imagine being forced to live in a different part of your city, to go to a different school, to play on a different playground, or to shop at a different grocery store because of the color of your skin. Unfair, right? This is called segregation, when people are kept apart, historically on the basis of their skin color, racial background, or other aspects of their identity like gender or religion. In the United States, white planters started to enforce policies of racial segregation during slavery. After Emancipation, Southern states reestablished segregation with the restrictive "Jim Crow" laws. The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s, led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other Black leaders, was a mass popular movement that fought for African Americans to gain equal rights under the law.

Like America, South African society was divided by segregation. There, it was called apartheid. Apartheid, meaning "apartness" in Afrikaans (the language of Afrikaners, the white descendants of the country's early Dutch settlers), was the legal system for racial separation in South Africa from 1948 until 1994.



Durban Sign 1989 by Guinnog.



Nelson Mandela "South Africa The Good News."

Though there were more Black people than white people living in South Africa, white people ruled the country, a situation known as minority rule. In the apartheid system the white minority imposed, South Africans of different races were forced to live separately from each other. Even before the apartheid laws of 1948, South African political, social, and economic life had long been divided along racial lines.

Apartheid laws classified people into four main groups: white, Black, Asian, and "Colored" (mixed-race). Every citizen had to be officially labelled with a racial category. The classifications were redone each year and could even change from year to year depending on pseudoscientific evaluations of people's appearances. This obsessive categorization was a means for white people to legally keep Black people out of white-only areas and suppress their economic and other opportunities. People with the Black classification were not allowed to vote in South African elections; in 1970 they were stripped of their South African citizenship altogether. They had to apply for permit passes to work, live, and travel in "white" areas—87% of South Africa's land, which legally could only be owned by white people; Black South Africans were decreed to be "citizens" of the remaining 13%, areas that the government ruled separately as "Black homelands". The government forcibly relocated people to separate mixed communities and made it illegal for people of different races to marry.

Black South Africans organized protests in response to the restrictions of apartheid. The nonviolent resistance of anti-apartheid demonstrators was often met with government brutality. At a protest in Sharpeville in 1960, government forces massacred ninety-one peaceful protestors. Some leading anti-apartheid activists were sent to prison, like Nelson Mandela, who was jailed from 1962 to 1990. In 1976, Black students in Soweto led protests because the government sought to impose Afrikaans (the language of the Afrikaners) as the language of instruction in Black schools. Police brutally suppressed the student demonstrations; at least 200 people, many of them children, were killed in the Soweto uprising, with some estimates in the several hundreds.

After decades of struggle as well as increasing pressure from the international community, the South African government began dismantling apartheid in the early 1990s, when President F.W. de Klerk legalized formerly banned opposition political parties like the African National Congress and released anti-apartheid political prisoners like Mandela. Despite lengthy negotiations and violent retaliation from some racist white South African groups, in 1994, a new South African constitution mandated equal rights for all, and Mandela was elected president in the country's first fair and open election.



Frederik de Klerk and Nelson Mandela shake hands at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in January 1992.

: What Do You Think?

- : Consider the situations and events that led to both the Civil
- : Rights Movement in the United States and the anti-apartheid
- : movement in South Africa. What are the similarities? What are
- : the differences? How could you relate these two human rights
- : movements to current movements against oppression in the
- : United States or around the world? Discuss these questions in
- : small groups, write down your answers, and share with
- : the class.

Sources: Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, Stanford University, Stanford University, www.kinginstitute.stanford.edu; Helen Suzman Foundation, "A Long Walk to Universal Franchise in South Africa," <https://hsf.org.za/publications/hsf-briefs/a-long-walk-to-universal-franchise-in-south-africa-1>.

Soweto: Heart of South Africa

From its beginnings as a creation of apartheid South Africa, the township of Soweto has become the vibrant, forward-looking heart of Johannesburg, the country's largest city. It is a cultural melting pot of over a million people, many of whom remain because of its heritage as the center of the struggle against apartheid. With its proximity to Johannesburg, the economic engine of South Africa, Soweto is the most metropolitan township in the country and sets the cultural and political trends.

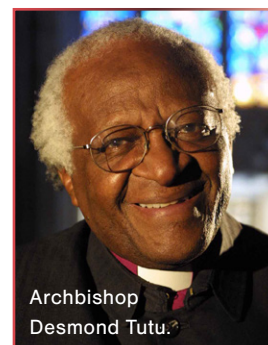
The name Soweto actually has its origins in the longer title South Western Townships. During the time of apartheid, the white government established "townships"—segregated housing areas for non-white workers, usually built on the outskirts of cities. In the late nineteenth century, working poor people of all races had settled around the booming city of Johannesburg, laboring in the new gold mining industry and as brickmakers. However, during the period of apartheid, the area to the southwest of the city of Johannesburg was officially divided into "townships" that would house Johannesburg's Black workforce. The population already there was racially segregated, and Black people were forcibly moved from Johannesburg to Soweto in an effort to keep the city of Johannesburg "white".

Over the years, though the apartheid regime continued to relocate Black people to Soweto from "white" Johannesburg, the government did little to improve infrastructure, so for much of its history Soweto struggled with overpopulation combined with very poor living conditions. Despite these difficult circumstances, the people of Soweto made the best of it and created a rich culture that is still vibrant and evolving today.

Soweto has become an international icon and symbol of South African resilience because of the key role it played in the resistance to apartheid. The student uprising of 1976, as well as the campaigns for peaceful civil disobedience in the 1980s, began in Soweto and spread from there throughout South Africa. Many world-famous sons and daughters of the struggle against apartheid once lived in Soweto—Nobel Peace Prize winners Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, as well as the activists Walter and Albertina



Sisulu and many others. Hector Pieterse, a child who was shot dead by police during the 1976 student uprising in Soweto, came to symbolize rebellion against the apartheid government as it spread throughout the country and changed the course of history in South Africa.



Since the end of apartheid in 1994, the Soweto landscape has changed a great deal from its humble origins. Electrical, road, and sanitation infrastructure has been upgraded. Parks have been created to beautify Soweto's neighborhoods. Mansions have been built by the rich and famous. Heritage sites honor the memory of the years of struggle. Restaurants, nightclubs, hotels, and recreational facilities have sprung up to cater to the growing tourist trade. The magnificent Soccer City stadium in Soweto hosted the opening and final matches of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, making South Africa the first African nation to host this international soccer championship. The modern-day Soweto is a metropolis of some 40 suburbs within the city limits of Johannesburg, with inhabitants of every socioeconomic class.

: Try This

- Soweto Gospel Choir's 2018 album *Freedom* is a tribute to Nelson Mandela. Research the life and work of this world-renowned anti-apartheid leader and human rights activist—or others who also once lived in Soweto, like Desmond Tutu or the Sisulus—and share what you discover with your class in a presentation.

Source: Adapted from ShowMe South Africa, www.showme.co.za.

RESOURCES

Books

Mama Africa!: How Miriam Makeba Spread Hope with Her Song by Kathryn Erskine (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017). Award-winning picture-book biography for grades 1-3 of the South African singer who raised her voice against apartheid.

The Soccer Fence: A Story of Friendship, Hope, and Apartheid in South Africa by Phil Bildner (Putnam, 2014). Story of friendship and sport set at the fall of apartheid, for grades 1-5.

Nelson Mandela by Nelson Kadir (Harper Collins/ Katherine Tegan, 2013). Award-winning picture-book biography for grades 1-3.

South Africa by Ettagale Blauer (Children's Press, 2013). Describes the nation's history, geography, population, wildlife, climate, economy, religion, and culture, for grades 4-6.

Hector: A Boy, A Protest, and the Photograph that Changed by Adrienne Wright (Page Street Kids, 2019). Picture book for grades 3-8 about the Soweto student uprising and Hector Pieterse, the child protestor who became a symbol of the anti-apartheid movement.

A History of South Africa, Fourth Edition by Leonard Thompson, revised and updated by Lynn Berat (Yale University Press, 2014). Comprehensive, engaging narrative history of South Africa which focuses on the agency of South Africa's Black inhabitants from the pre-colonial period through to the present, recommended for teachers and high school students.

Virginia Standards of Learning

Music: K.3-7, 9, 11; 1.3-7, 9; 2.3-7, 9, 11; 3.3, 5-7; 4.6-8; 5.6-8; 6.3-7, 10-11; 7.3-7, 11; 8.3-7; MCB.3-7, 11; MCI.3-7, 11; MCAD.3-7, 11; HM.3-7, 10-11; HMT.3-7, 10-11; HCB.3-7, 11; HCI.3-7, 11; HCAD.3-7, 11; HCAR.3-7, 11; **History and Social Science:** 3.2-3, WG.7, 14-15, WHII.6-7, 11



Internet

South African History Online (SAHO)

<https://sahistory.org.za>

The largest online resource on South African history and culture, with accessible research and storytelling for students to explore. Their classroom resources for teachers provide worksheets, activities, and videos for different grade levels: <https://sahistory.org.za/classroom>

BBC World Service, The Story of Africa

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

History resource for classrooms, with sections on early humans, religion, colonialism and independence, and different regions of the African continent as well as the country of South Africa and apartheid.

National Geographic Kids, "South Africa"

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/south-africa>

Overview of South African geography, people, and culture with fast facts for younger audiences.

South Africa Online: Discover the Beauty and Wonders of South Africa

<https://southafrica.co.za>
Resource for students and educators to explore South African natural environments, economy, culture, and art.

GOSPEL, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., PBS Learning Media

<https://thinktv.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/gospel>

Educational history series about gospel music with video and audio, designed for middle and high school students.

FEEDBACK FORM

We need your feedback to make our Education Programs even better! Please take a moment to complete this form and either return it to the Virginia Arts Festival office at 440 Bank Street, Norfolk, VA 23510, fax it to (757) 605-3080, or e-mail your answers to education@vafest.org.

Event: _____

How did your students respond to the performance?

How did you prepare your students for this performance? Did you use the Education Guide? If so, how?
Did students enjoy the materials?

How did this performance contribute to experiential learning in your classroom?

What role do the arts play in your school? In your classroom?

If you could change one thing about this experience, what would it be?

Please include quotes and comments from your students as well!

(Optional)

Name: _____

School: _____ City: _____

Would you like to be part of our database? ☐ Yes ☐ No