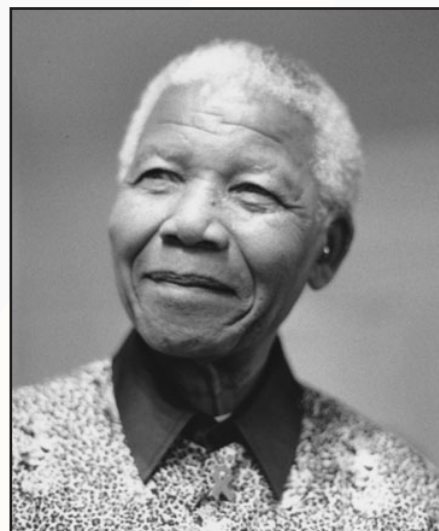


Nelson Mandela

Reading comprehension

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on July 18th 1918. In accordance with custom, he was given a 'European' name as well as his Xhosa name which means 'one who brings trouble on himself'. His father Henry Mphakanyiswa Gadla, was a chief - wealthy enough to own a horse and have enough cattle for four wives. He had twelve children. Nelson was the son of his third wife, Nosekeni; she also had three daughters.



Mandela was born in the Transkei region of South Africa, in the small village of Qunu - a collection of beehive-shaped huts with thatch roofs, known as rondavels. His mother had three huts and Mandela lived with her and his three immediate sisters. One hut was used for sleeping, another for cooking and the third for storing grain and other food. Everyone slept on mats on the ground, without pillows. His mother, as a married woman, had her own field to tend and her own cattle kraal - an enclosure for cattle made from thorn bushes.

It was a quiet, tranquil existence. Qunu was a long way from anywhere, especially in those days when any local roads were unsurfaced. Almost as soon as Nelson was old enough to walk properly, he had the job of helping to look after the family's precious cattle and goats. Relatives remember that he loved animals and, while herding, he would speak to each cow by its name, as if it was a friend.

His mother could not read or write, but Nelson had to be educated, and he started as a pupil at the local school. He was noted as a quiet, industrious boy who did not live up to his Xhosa name. The school had classes for only the early years and in any event, when Nelson was ten, his father died and there was no money for any further education. So his father's nephew, Chief Jongintaba, took over.

In Xhosa society, that was the natural thing to do. Jongintaba was the head of the Madiba clan. In terms of custom, all members of the clan were treated like people in the same family because they were all descended from the same ancestor. Mandela, or anyone else, could go to the home of any fellow Madiba member, whether in the same village or in a village miles away, and know that he would get food and shelter.

So in 1928, Nelson moved to the Great Place and shared a rondavel with his cousin, Justice. The school was a rough building, and two classes were held in one room at the same time. Nelson learnt English, Xhosa, Geography and History. He did not have writing books so wrote on slates.

Each day after school he and Justice went to the fields to look after the cattle, and to drive them back to the kraal in the evening for milking.

An extract from 'Nelson Mandela' by Benjamin Pogrund



Questions

Language analysis

Find and highlight these words in the text. Draw a line between the words from the text and their closest synonym.

custom

cattle

tranquil

precious

industrious

ancestor

tradition

peaceful

hardworking

forefather

cows

valuable

Structural analysis

1. What type of text is this? Circle one. (1 mark)

newspaper report

biography

autobiography

instructions

2. What do you notice about the way the information has been ordered? (1 mark)

3. What tense is it written in? Circle one. (1 mark)

past tense

present tense

future tense

4. What person is this written in? (1 mark)

first person

second person

third person

5. What information might come next? (1 mark)

Questions

Retrieval

For each box, use the text to help you write down one fact linked to the heading. (4 marks)

Nelson's father	Nelson's mother
Nelson's personality	Nelson's schools

True or False

Answer true or false to these statements.

Mandela's name meant 'one who brings trouble on himself'.

True

☐

False

☐

Mandela was born in a village called Transkei.

☐☐

Nelson helped to look after the families chickens.

☐☐

His mother was unable to read and write.

☐☐

His father died when he was ten.

☐☐

Fact or Opinion

Tick to show whether these statements are facts or opinions.

His father was wealthy enough to own a horse and have enough cattle for four wives.

Fact

☐

Opinion

☐

Everyone slept on mats on the ground, without pillows.

☐☐

His early childhood was a quiet, tranquil existence.

☐☐

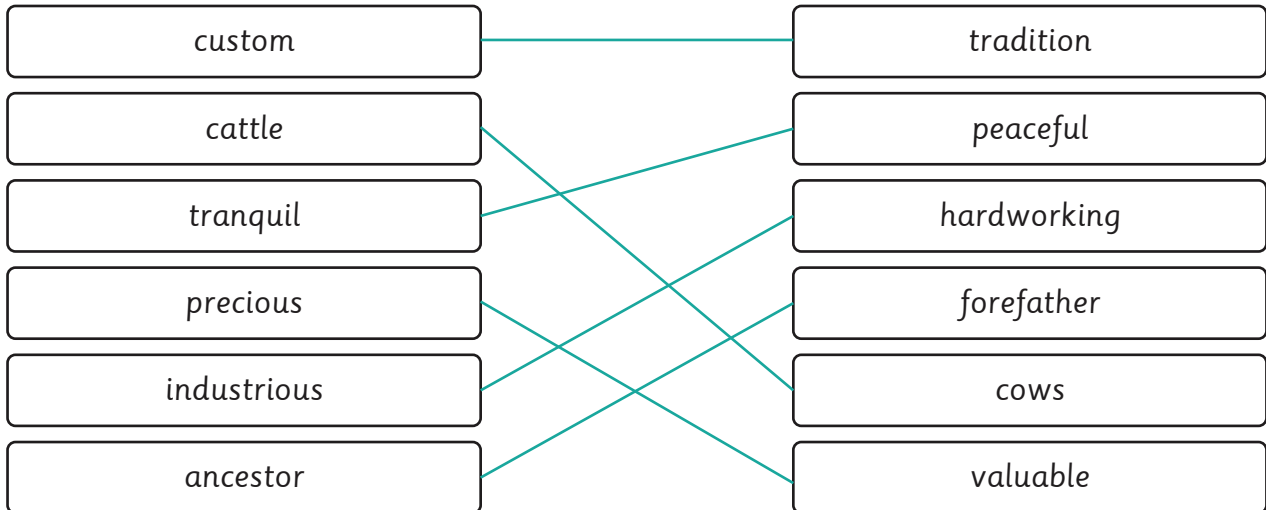
He was noted as a quiet, industrious boy.

☐☐

Answers

Language analysis

Find and highlight these words in the text. Draw a line between the words from the text and their closest synonym.



Structural analysis

1. What type of text is this? Circle one. (1 mark)

newspaper report

biography

autobiography

instructions

2. What do you notice about the way the information has been ordered? (1 mark)

It is written in chronological/ time order.

3. What tense is it written in? Circle one. (1 mark)

past tense

present tense

future tense

4. What person is this written in? (1 mark)

first person

second person

third person

5. What information might come next? (1 mark)

- *What other activities he enjoyed.*
- *His further schooling e.g. university*
- *His teenage years.*

Answers

Retrieval

For each box, use the text to help you write down one fact linked to the heading. (4 marks)

<p>Nelson's father</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His father Henry Mphakanyiswa Gadla, was a chief - wealthy enough to own a horse and have enough cattle for four wives • He had twelve children. Nelson was the son of his third wife, Nosekeni • his father died when Nelson was 10 	<p>Nelson's mother</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His mother had three huts • His mother had her own field to tend and her own cattle kraal - an enclosure for cattle made from thorn bushes • His mother could not read or write
<p>Nelson's personality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was noted as a quiet, industrious boy. 	<p>Nelson's schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had classes for only the early years • The school was a rough building, and two classes were held in one room at the same time.

True or False

Answer true or false to these statements.

Mandela's name meant 'one who brings trouble on himself'.

True



False



Mandela was born in a village called Transkei.



Nelson helped to look after the families chickens.



His mother was unable to read and write.



His father died when he was ten.



Fact or Opinion

Tick to show whether these statements are facts or opinions.

His father was wealthy enough to own a horse and have enough cattle for four wives.

Fact



Opinion



Everyone slept on mats on the ground, without pillows.



His early childhood was a quiet, tranquil existence.



He was noted as a quiet, industrious boy.

