

CLASS – X (ENGLISH) HANDOUT

FIRST FLIGHT.....LESSON-2 “NELSON MANDELA -LONG WALK TO FREEDOM”

MODULE ½

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CONCEPT AND BRIEF OF THE LESSON

Nelson Mandela was a South African political leader, revolutionary and philanthropist who played a key role in ending the apartheid regime of the 20th century. He served as the country’s first black president from 1994 to 1999, and is considered one of the most significant figures of the 20th century. He was the winner of the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in bringing the apartheid regime to a peaceful end and laying the foundations for a truly democratic South Africa.

“LONF WALK TO FREEDOM” is the autobiography of former South African president Nelson Mandela. First published in 1994, it covers Mandela’s life from his youth in Apartheid South Africa, his coming of age and education, his embrace of political activism and his role in the anti -apartheid movement and his 27 years in prison on the notorious Robben Island where he was imprisoned as a terrorist for his role as a leader of the then outlawed ‘African National Congress.’ The narrative also covers the period after his release and chronicles the fall of Apartheid and his ascension to the presidency.

In South Africa , a brutal practice named ‘apartheid’ existed in those days. It referred to the discrimination between people on the basis of their race and colour. It was one of the most brutal societies in which dark-skinned people were

deprived of their basic rights. 'A Long Walk to Freedom' by Nelson Mandela is all about the struggle for freedom of South Africa.

On May 10, 1994 Nelson Mandela had taken the oath as the first black president of South Africa. The ceremony took place in the campus of the Union Building of Pretoria, which was attended by dignitaries and leaders of many nations. Mandela mentions in his speech, 'an extraordinary human disaster' and ' a glorious human achievement '. Mandela felt very privileged to welcome the international leaders at the swearing-in ceremony because not so long ago, the South Africans were considered outlaws. This was a gesture of international recognition to a newly born free democratic nation. The highest military generals of South African defence force saluted Mandela and pledged their loyalty which was of great significance as during apartheid era they would have arrested him. The change in their attitude was because of the struggle and sacrifice put in by many heroes of South Africa.

Mandela recalled the sacrifices of thousands of people and their courage and suffering which can never be counted or repaid. He was pained that he couldn't thank them. The policy of apartheid created a lasting wound in his country and his people. This brutal system had produced great freedom fighters like Oliver Tambos, Walter Sisulus, Chief Luthulis etc. They were men of uncommon courage, wisdom and generosity. Mandela said that though his country was rich with minerals and gems, its greatest wealth was its people. (will be continued in M2)
