

# Nelson Mandela - Humility

## EXPLANATION:

Nelson Mandela, the South African anti-apartheid revolutionary and Nobel Peace Prize winner was a staunch advocate of peace and applauded world wide for his humility. But what made him humble? In this activity students will research Nelson Mandela's legacy and why he was considered such a humble person.



**YEAR LEVELS:** Years 11 -12

**STUDENT GROUPING:** Group investigations

**ACTIVITY LENGTH:** 60mins approx.

## LINK TO CURRICULUM:

### Representation of General capabilities (English curriculum)

#### Personal and social capability

Students develop personal and social capability in English by enhancing their communication skills, teamwork and capacity to empathise with and appreciate the perspectives of others. Close study of texts assists students to understand different personal and social experiences, perspectives and challenges. Students identify and express their own opinions, beliefs and responses by interacting with a range of texts. English actively assists students in the development of communication skills needed for analysis, research and the expression of viewpoints and arguments. Students work collaboratively in teams and also independently as part of their learning and research endeavours.

## SCOPE OF TASK:

### Notes about humility:

- Humility supports self-awareness, continual learning and personal development
- Considered 'other-enhancing' compared to a 'self-enhancing' way of acting
- Includes ability to reflect upon acts and behaviours
- There are two aspects to humility:
  - Personal level: humble people have a secure identity that is neither conceited nor self-deprecating, and they are open-minded about new information

- Social level: humble people focus on others and see others as having the same value and inherent worth as themselves

1. Gather the students together in a group. Ask students if they know who is Nelson Mandela and why is he well known? Scribe student responses onto the whiteboard to record thinking. If required, students can do a quick Internet search to find out further information about Nelson Mandela.
2. If students have not identified Mandela as a humble person, inform students that he is known for this particular quality. Share the YouTube video in which Mandela discusses with Oprah the character trait of humility:



3. Inform the students about the activity task: In groups students are to research Nelson Mandela and the humble characteristics and acts that he espoused
  - Students to work in small groups of approx. 4 people
  - Students use a range of resources e.g. library books, internet to research Mandela (if using the internet remind students of safe internet usage)
  - Students are to choose a particular trait or event from Mandela's life that they can connect to humility
  - Provide a report to the class clearly indicating why they believe the act or trait embraces humility
  - Steps informing the report could include:
    - Identify something Mandela did that is considered humble or a trait that he has demonstrated that is considered humble
    - Describe it
    - Why do you think it embraces humility?
    - Why do you think people like Mandela are important to society?
    - What are every day ways that you can be humble?

Provide groups of students with 20-30mins approx. to conduct their research study.

Encourage students to think about how they will present their report to the group e.g. PPT, recorded video etc

4. When the research has been completed provide time for each group to present their report to the whole group. During this sharing time encourage students to critically discuss each other's ideas and identify similarities and difference in the reports
5. Complete the activity by asking students: What are the everyday things that they think they can do to demonstrate humility and act humbly?

In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of education... But internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one's development as a human being. Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others - qualities which are within easy reach of every soul - are the foundation of one's spiritual life.

~ Nelson Mandela

## RESOURCES:

- Computers and internet access