



In partnership with



VOTING: THEN AND NOW

VOCABULARY

Apartheid: a policy or a system of segregation or discrimination based on race.

Disenfranchise: to deprive of the right to vote.

Literacy test: an exam that measures a person's ability to read and write.

Under **apartheid**, many groups of people in South Africa were unable to express political opinions, to stand as a representative, or to vote. They were **disenfranchised**. In April 1994, millions of Black Africans were able to vote for the first time in their lives, and Nelson Mandela was elected President.

In the United States, the right to vote has not always been guaranteed for all Americans. In 1965, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. This legislation outlawed the discriminatory voting practices adopted in many southern states after the Civil War, including **literacy tests**. Even today, some Americans still meet obstacles when attempting to exercise their right to vote.

YOUR THOUGHTS ON VOTING AGE

In order to vote for President of the United States, a person must be at least 18 years old.

Do you agree with this limit? Why or why not?

Using the chart on the next page, compare the ideals for voting rights with the realities of it during three separate periods. Reference the *Mandela: The Official Exhibition* gallery videos, and resources from America's Black Holocaust Museum, to assist you in completing the chart.

VOTING REALITY IN...

VOTING IDEALS	SOUTH AFRICA UNDER APARTHEID	JIM CROW SOUTH - U.S.	VOTING TODAY - U.S.
<p>All people over a certain age and with enough mental capacity are classified as "citizens" and are able to vote. Factors such as skin color should not stop anyone from voting.</p>			
<p>All people, eligible to vote, are able to do so freely. Voting is free and does not require payment.</p>			
<p>All people are safe from violence or threat of harm when they take part in democratic activities.</p>			