5

Southern Africa

Main Ideas

- Great Zimbabwe and the Mutapa Empire thrived on the gold trade.
- The wealth of Southern Africa is tied to the land, and conflicts over land and resources often result.

Places & Terms

Great Zimbabwe

Mutapa Empire

apartheid

Nelson Mandela

Connect to the Issues

HEALTH CARE AIDS threatens Southern Africa's youth and could significantly reduce the region's population.

A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE In April 2000 in Zimbabwe, armed men attacked the farmhouse of a white farmer whose family has lived in Zimbabwe for generations. A political crisis that goes back to Britain's colonial rule caught white farmers in a violent crossfire. British colonial rule ended in 1980, but more than 4,000 white farmers in Zimbabwe still own one-third of the best land in a country of about 10 million blacks. The British and the white farmers have made attempts to equalize land ownership, but Zimbabwe's leaders have not taken advantage of these opportunities. Instead, they have targeted individual white farmers who own that land. This conflict illustrates a critical issue in all of Southern Africa—that blacks far outnumber whites but still own little of the land.

Gold Trade Builds Empires

Southern Africa includes Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The history of Southern Africa involves a blending of colonialism with African cultures and the development of gold-trading empires.

GOLD TRADE SPAWNS GREAT ZIMBABWE The majority of the people in Southern Africa are Bantu-speaking peoples, including the Shona people. Around 1000, the Shona established a city called **Great Zimbabwe** in what is now the country of Zimbabwe.

From the 1200s to the 1400s, Great Zimbabwe became the capital of a thriving gold-trading area. But for unknown reasons, around 1450 the Shona abandoned Great Zimbabwe. One theory is that cattle grazing had exhausted the nearby grasslands, and overfarming had ruined the soil.

MUTAPA EMPIRE According to local legend, a man named Mutota left Great Zimbabwe around 1440 and settled in a fertile valley to the north. He founded a new state to replace Great Zimbabwe. By the time Mutota died, the **Mutapa Empire** extended throughout all of present-day Zimbabwe except the eastern part.

PLACE Pictured below are the walls of Great Zimbabwe. **What do the materials used to build the walls reveal about the local physical geography?**

The Mutapa Empire thrived on the gold trade. In the 1500s, however, the Portuguese arrived and began interfering with the politics there. Soon, the Mutapa Empire began to decline. This event showed the increasing role Europeans would play in Southern Africa.

ETHNIC CLASH FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA As Europeans migrated to Southern Africa in the 1700s and 1800s, their presence led to conflicts with Africans. As the map below shows, many different ethnic groups were already living in Southern Africa. They competed with each other and with the Europeans for control of the land. In the early 19th century, the Zulu controlled a large area in Southern Africa. However, the British defeated the Zulu and by the late 19th century had taken over their land. A

In the 1890s, the British battled the Dutch farmers, or Boers, in the Boer War for control of the region. The Boers had arrived in Southern Africa in the mid-1600s. The British won the war and formed the Union of South Africa in 1902. South Africa is currently a country in the region of Southern Africa.

Geographic Thinking

Seeing Patterns

A What led to the conflicts between Europeans and groups of people already living in Southern Africa?

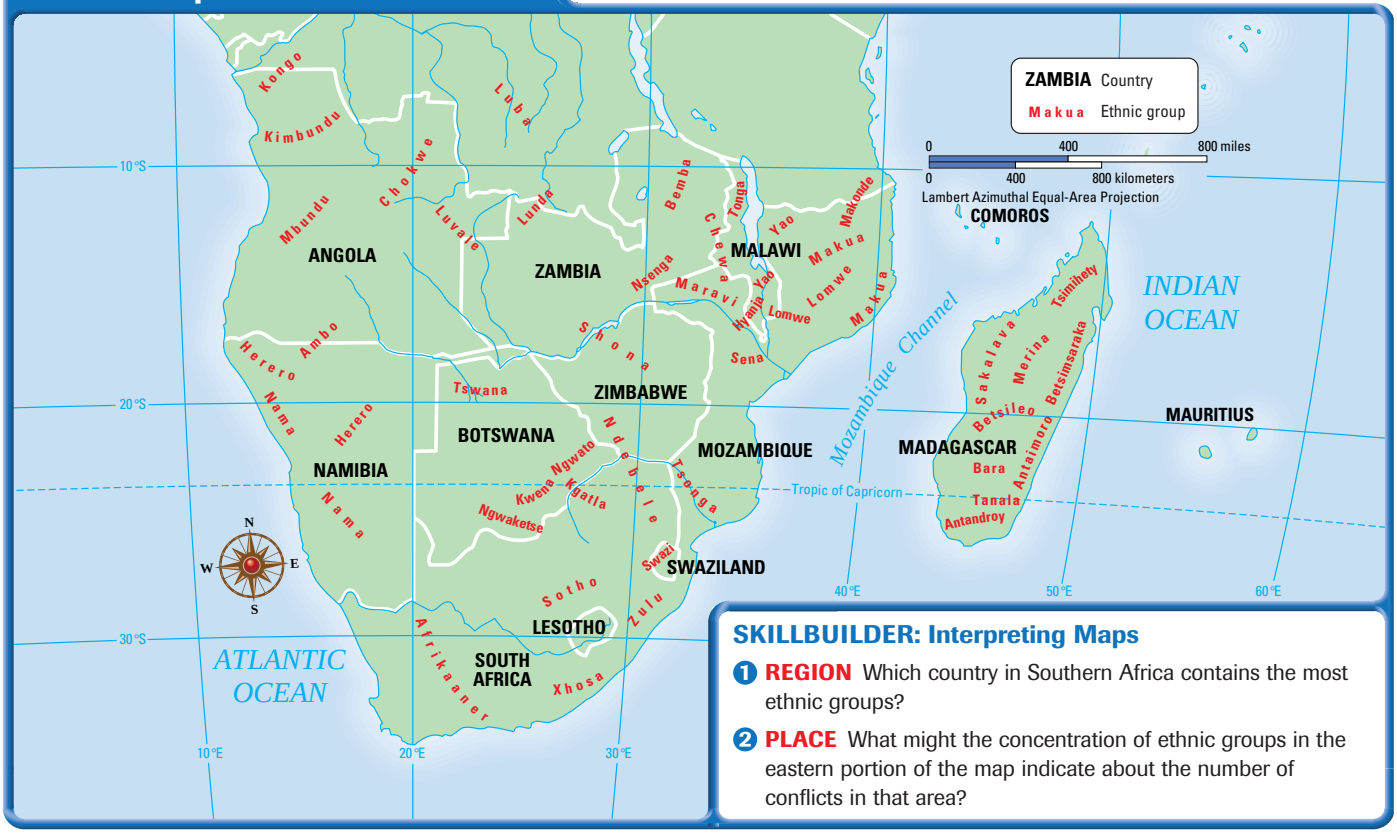
THE POLICY OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA In 1948, the white minority government of South Africa instituted a policy of **apartheid,** or complete separation of the races. It banned social contact between blacks and whites and established segregated schools, hospitals, and neighborhoods. Although blacks made up 75 percent of the population, they received only a small percentage of the land. The government kept the best land for whites.

BACKGROUND

Segregation is the separation of people on the basis of race or ethnicity.

In 1912, blacks had founded the African National Congress (ANC) to fight for their rights. In 1949, **Nelson Mandela** emerged as one of the

Ethnic Groups of Southern Africa



SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

1. **REGION** Which country in Southern Africa contains the most ethnic groups?
2. **PLACE** What might the concentration of ethnic groups in the eastern portion of the map indicate about the number of conflicts in that area?

leaders of the ANC, and he led a long struggle to end apartheid that resulted in his being imprisoned. By the 1980s, nations around the world—including the United States—pressured South Africa to end apartheid. In 1989, F. W. de Klerk became the president, and he wanted to change South Africa.

As a result, South Africa experienced a peaceful revolution, and the government ended its apartheid laws. An election that involved members of all races in South Africa took place in 1994. Mandela, having been released from prison, won the election and became president. In 1996, the government passed a new, democratic constitution that guarantees the rights of all citizens.

Southern Africa Grows Economically

The economies of Southern African countries are some of the most advanced in Africa. However, many countries are struggling to raise the standard of living for blacks, who get the worst jobs, own the least productive land, and attend the worst schools.

SOUTH AFRICA The policy of apartheid has hurt the economy of South Africa. Because of apartheid, foreign nations imposed economic sanctions that prevented their countries from conducting business with or investing in South Africa. In addition, the policy led to poor education of blacks, creating an uneducated mass of young people. As a result, two economies exist in South Africa.

One segment of South Africa has an upper-middle-income economy like that of the United States. South Africa possesses great cities with huge industrial complexes, such as Johannesburg and Cape Town. It also has modern, mechanized farms and large ranches. In contrast, though, South Africa also has poverty-stricken rural areas. Black townships and shantytowns also fill portions of the cities. Furthermore, the government currently faces problems arising from unequal land distribution and a severe housing shortage. B

SUCCESS AT A COST Botswana illustrates a problem that exists in many African countries today. It made a great deal of money from valuable resources but has serious agricultural problems and an unequal distribution of wealth. Botswana gained its independence from Britain in 1966 and subsequently experienced long-term economic growth. In 1966, its per capita income stood at $69. In 1997, that figure had risen to $3,900 per capita.

Geographic Thinking

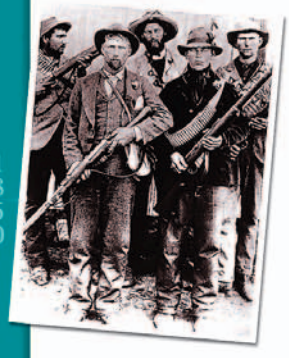
Making Comparisons

B What are the two segments of South Africa's economy?

Southern Africa, 1800–2000

1819
The **Zulu** *(left)* establish their supremacy in Southern Africa.

1836
Boers *(right)* come into conflict with native groups in Southern Africa.



1891
DeBeers gained 90 percent of African diamond industry.

1905
The world's largest diamond, called the **"Star of Africa,"** *(above)* is cut in South Africa.

1912
The African National Congress is formed.

1948
Apartheid begins in South Africa.

1973
Swaziland bans political parties, and its king assumes absolute power.

1994
Nelson Mandela and **F. W. de Klerk** *(below)* shake hands after Mandela wins South Africa's first multiracial election.

Botswana's wealth is based on minerals. People discovered diamonds there shortly after the country's independence from Britain. By 1995, Botswana had become the world's third largest diamond producer. Diamonds account for more than 63 percent of government revenue. A problem, however, is the uneven distribution of the profits—an issue in many African countries.

Approximately 80 percent of the people work as farmers and never benefit from the diamond revenue. The other 20 percent grow wealthy from diamond money. One problem developing from this unequal distribution is that wealthy people are purchasing large tracts of land for cattle ranching from poor farm owners. As a result, poor farmers often move to less productive land. Meat production then increases, but overall food production actually decreases. The country winds up producing only 50 percent of the food needed to feed its population. The rest must be imported or come from international aid.

CONNECT TO THE ISSUES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
C How has Botswana increased its wealth?

AIDS AFFECTS SOUTHERN AFRICA By 1999, the most severe AIDS-affected countries were in Southern Africa. In Zimbabwe and Botswana, for example, more than 25 percent of all adults were infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In Botswana, the life expectancy was 60 years old in 1994 but had declined to 39 years of age in 1999. The disease also has far-ranging implications for any country's economic well-being. In Botswana, many highly trained diamond sorters have died from the disease.

REGION Colorfully painted Ndebele houses, like the one shown below, are common in South Africa. **Why might the Ndebele have painted their houses in this way?**

Celebrations of Southern Africa

Southern Africa is a rich mosaic of cultures and traditions. More than any other region, it is a mix of African and European cultures.

A VARIETY OF DANCES Celebrations and festivals are a large part of life in Southern Africa. The Chewa people perform a dance called the *gule wa mkulu,* which reflects their traditional religious beliefs. Dancers dress in ragged costumes of cloth and animal skins. They wear masks and sometimes walk on stilts.

The Tumbuka people in northern Malawi perform the *vimbuza,* a dance performed by healers who wish to cure people of sickness. Other dances include the *benji* dance of the Yao people in southern Malawi. This dance, performed by Yao warriors, pokes fun at what these warriors saw as the desire of the European militaries to march and have parades.

In Madagascar, during the *hira gasy* festival, costumed groups of 25 or more people play music, perform dances, and act out stories. The themes are upbeat and praise the virtues of honesty and respect for elders.

Living in Southern Africa

Johannesburg, South Africa, is one of Southern Africa's largest cities and offers its residents a variety of opportunities and experiences.

JOHANNESBURG About 100 years ago, Johannesburg began as a small mining town and grew because of nearby gold reserves. Today, greater Johannesburg is a city of more than six million people with many different ethnicities and lifestyles. The center of Johannesburg looks like most modern big cities, with a cluster of skyscrapers dotting the skyline. However, as a result of apartheid, greater Johannesburg developed into two different cities. To the north lie the spacious suburbs that were once exclusively white. To the south are poor black townships. D

Geographic Thinking

Seeing Patterns
D What resource fueled the growth of both Johannesburg and Great Zimbabwe?

MODERN AND TRADITIONAL LIFESTYLES Some Southern Africans live a modern lifestyle as doctors, lawyers, and businesspeople. These people live in tree-lined suburbs that look no different from those found in the United States. Many blacks, on the other hand, because of apartheid's legacy, still work in menial and unskilled jobs. They still live in the former black-only homelands and shantytowns.

Some ethnic groups of Southern Africa follow more traditional patterns as farmers, traders, or herders. For example, the Zulu either work in menial jobs, such as mining, or cling to their traditional roles as farmers and metalworkers. The Zulu have a long tradition of making hoes, spears, axes, and other tools and weapons.

In the next chapter you will read more about major issues facing Africa today, including economic development, health care, and the effects of colonialism.

AFRICA

SECTION 5 Assessment

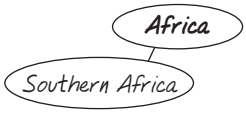
1 Places & Terms

Identify these terms and explain their importance in the region's history or culture.

- Great Zimbabwe
- Mutapa Empire
- apartheid
- Nelson Mandela

2 Taking Notes

PLACE Review the notes you took for this section.



- What was the basis for the growth of Great Zimbabwe?
- How would you describe the occupations of the people who live in Southern Africa?

3 Main Ideas

a. Who ended the system of apartheid in South Africa?

b. How is AIDS affecting Botswana's economy?

c. What are some of the major traditional cultural activities in Southern Africa?

4 Geographic Thinking

Identifying and Solving Problems How did apartheid affect the economy of South Africa? **Think about:**

- how blacks were treated
- international economic sanctions

RESEARCH LINKS CLASSZONE.COM

GeoActivity

MAKING COMPARISONS Review the information about Botswana's economy on pages 455–456. Using the Internet or encyclopedias, find out where the major natural resources are located in each country of the region. Then create a **resources map** of Southern Africa.