

**ENGLISH  
FIRST  
ADDITIONAL  
LANGUAGE**

**Grade 12**

**Literature  
Module:  
Cry, the beloved  
country**

**RESOURCE PACK**

"The tragedy is not that things are broken. The tragedy is that things are not mended again."

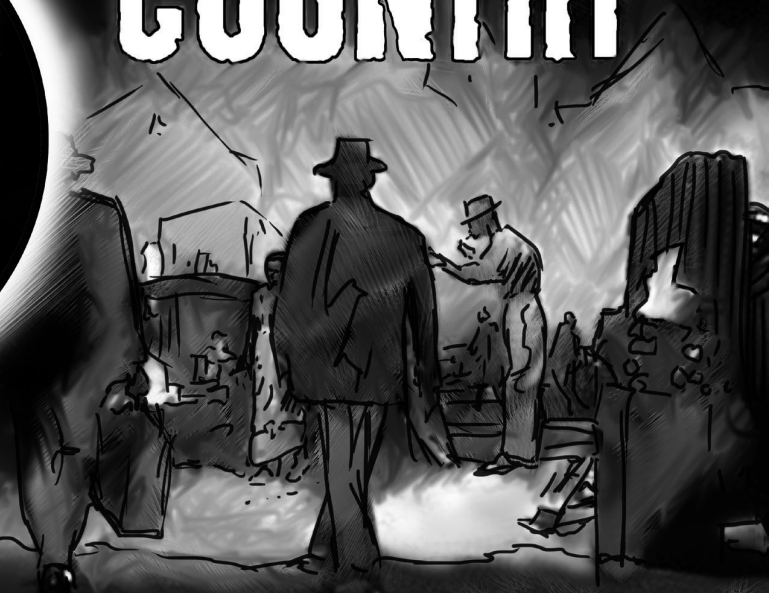


# CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY



**ALAN PATON**

**1908 - 1988**



**CRY, THE  
BELOVED COUNTRY:  
Alan Paton**

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**Reverend Stephen  
Kumalo**

**Absalom  
Kumalo**

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**Reverend  
Theophilus  
Msimang**

**Arthur**

**Jarvis**

**James  
Jarvis**

**Gertrude  
Kumalo**

**John  
Kumalo**

**Matthew  
Kumalo**

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**Mrs  
Lithebe**

**Urbanisation and  
the Destruction of  
Traditional Culture**

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**Racial  
Oppression  
and Fear**



**Comfort in  
Desolation**

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**Journey**

# Redemption

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# Taking Responsibility for Your Actions

# The Role of the Church Patriarchy

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**Johannesburg**

**Sophiatown**

**Ndotssheni**

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**Shanty**

**town**

**Umnzimkulu**

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**Native Land  
Act (1913)**

**reformatory**

**soiled  
minions**

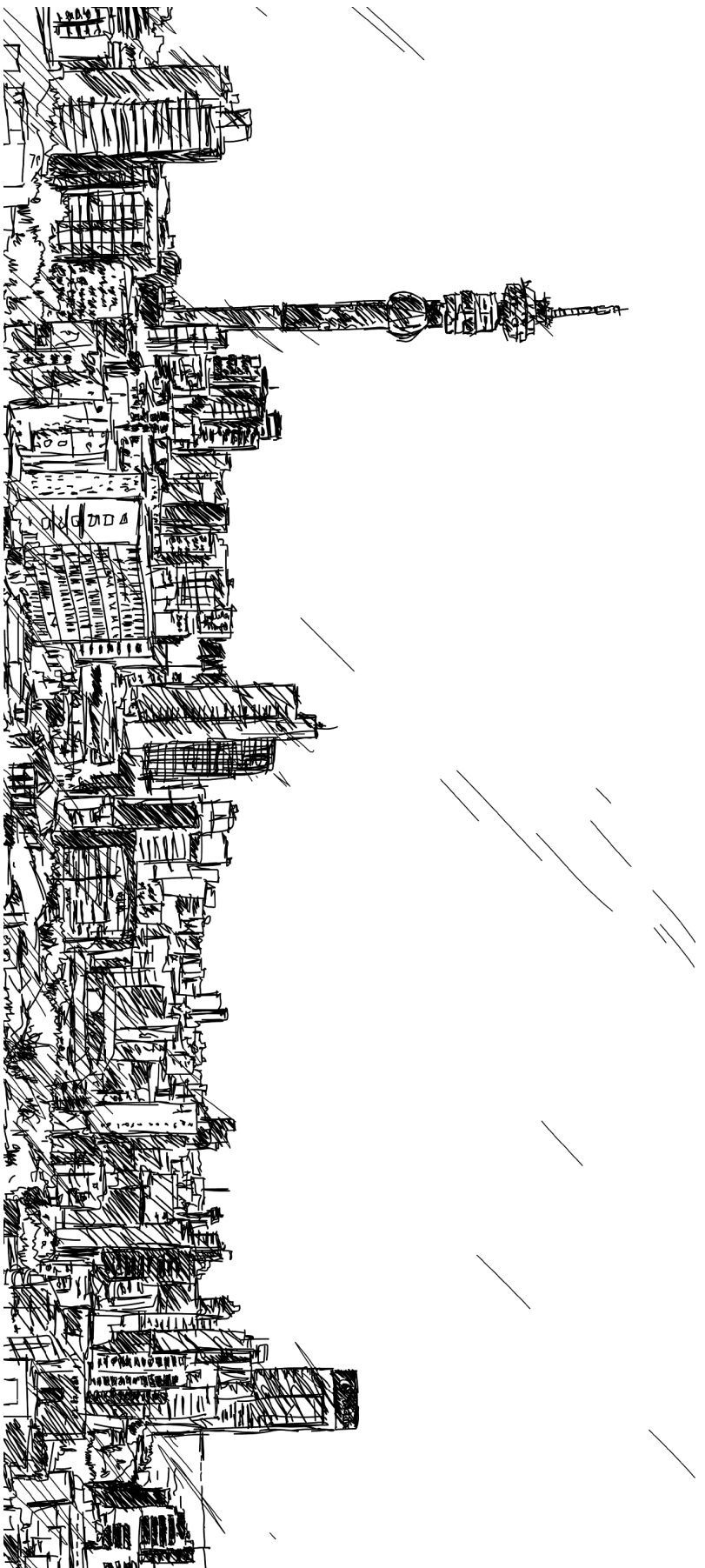
**striking**

**inequality**



**C  
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# Resource 1: Johannesburg



LizSparg / Shutterstock

The Johannesburg skyline. It wasn't as built up as this in the 1940s, but it was still the largest and most developed city in South Africa. It was overwhelming for migrants from rural areas. Reverend Kumalo is shocked by its size.

## Resource 2: Trams



Elliott Brown / Wikimedia

Public Transport in Johannesburg in the 1940s.  
Reverend Kumalo sees trams for the first  
time when he travels to Johannesburg.

## Resource 3: Miners



Everett Historical / Shutterstock

South Africa's wealth was built on mining. Gold was discovered in Johannesburg in 1886, and the city grew around the gold mines. Millions of men have travelled from all around southern Africa to work in the mines as migrant labourers. The wealth from these mines has not, however, made the miners rich. Instead, it has enriched the mine owners, while miners live in poverty.

## Resource 4: Railways



Jne Valokuvaus / Shutterstock

During the 1940s, railways were the primary means of long-distance travel in South Africa. They enabled people to migrate to the cities and mines to find work. Kumalo takes a train from Ndotsheni to Johannesburg.

## Resource 5: Umzimkulu valley



Wolf Avni / Shutterstock

Kumalo lives in Ndotsheni in the Umzimkulu Valley in Natal (today Kwa-Zulu Natal). It is a beautiful rural area, and he often speaks of it with love. However, because of racial oppression, black people are forced to live in crowded 'native reserves'. The lush and fertile areas are kept for white farmers.

## Resource 6: Natal



BradleyvdW / Shutterstock

Natal (today called Kwa-Zulu Natal) is one of the most beautiful parts of South Africa. It has a warm climate and lots of rainfall, so it is lush and green. Kumalo lives in Ndotsheni, in the Umzimkulu Valley in Natal.

## Resource 7: Soil erosion



Neil Bradfield / Shutterstock

Soil erosion leaves the land dry and damaged, making it difficult to farm. The system of 'native reserves' forced black people to live on and farm only 13% of the land in South Africa. Because these areas were overcrowded, there were too many cattle grazing, which led to soil erosion. This process contributed to urbanisation because there was not enough food to support all the people living in these rural areas.

Therefore, many young people left and looked for work in the mines or cities, like Johannesburg.



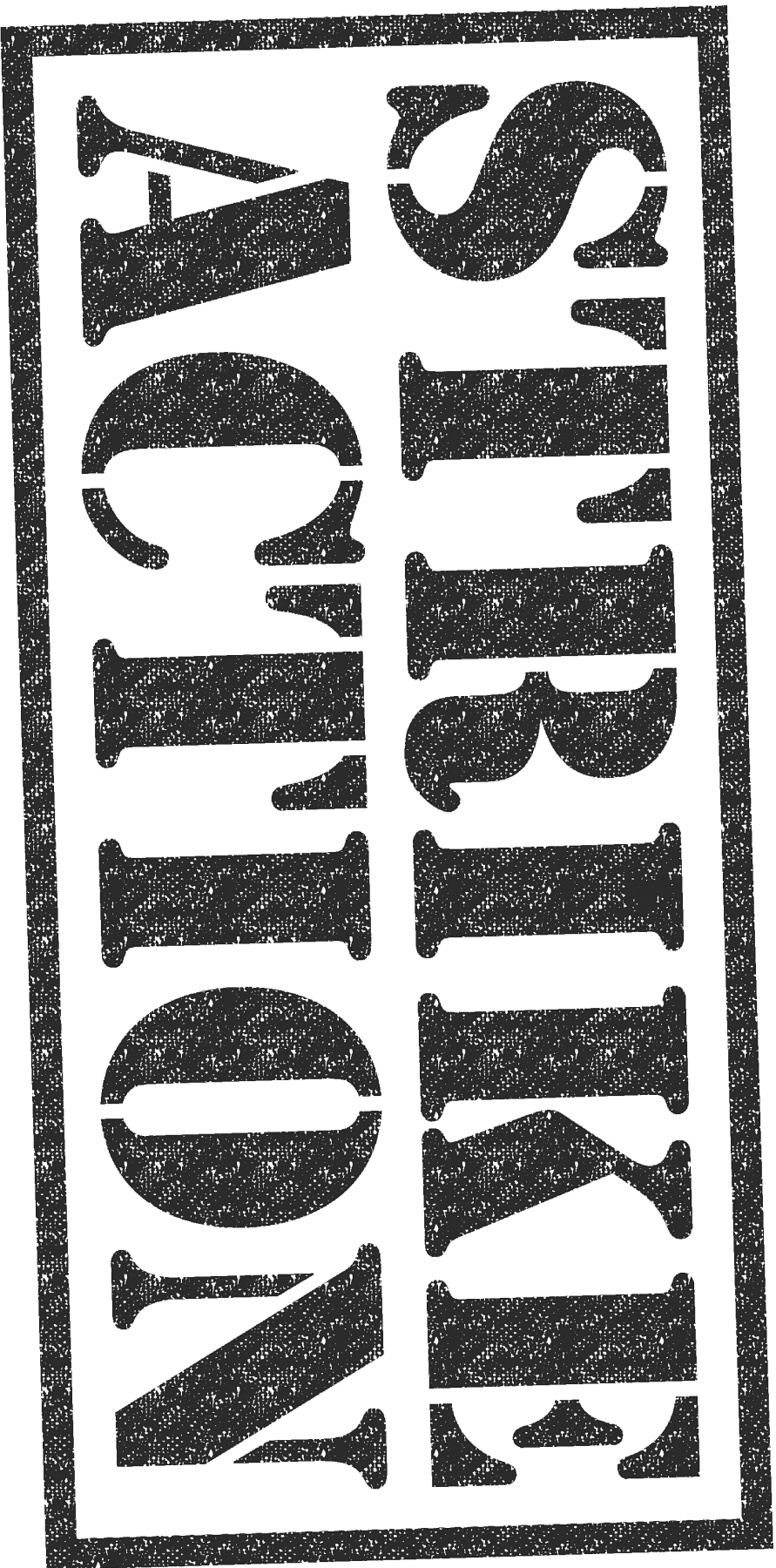
## Resource 8: Shanty town



Amier / Shutterstock

Today, informal settlements are common in all cities in South Africa. However, in the 1940s – when the novel is set – such settlements were new. We learn about the construction of Shanty Town, the first informal settlement in Orlando, Johannesburg. Absalom spends some time living in Shanty Town before being sent to a reformatory.

## Resource 9: Strike



chrisdorney / Shutterstock

In the novel, the miners strike for higher wages. Striking is one of the only methods that miners and workers have to protect their rights. Striking has a long history all over the world. Workers strike for safer and better working conditions, fair wages and decent working hours.

## Resource 10: Anglican parson



Art Babych / Shutterstock

Reverend Kumalo and Reverend Msimangu are Anglican Parsons.

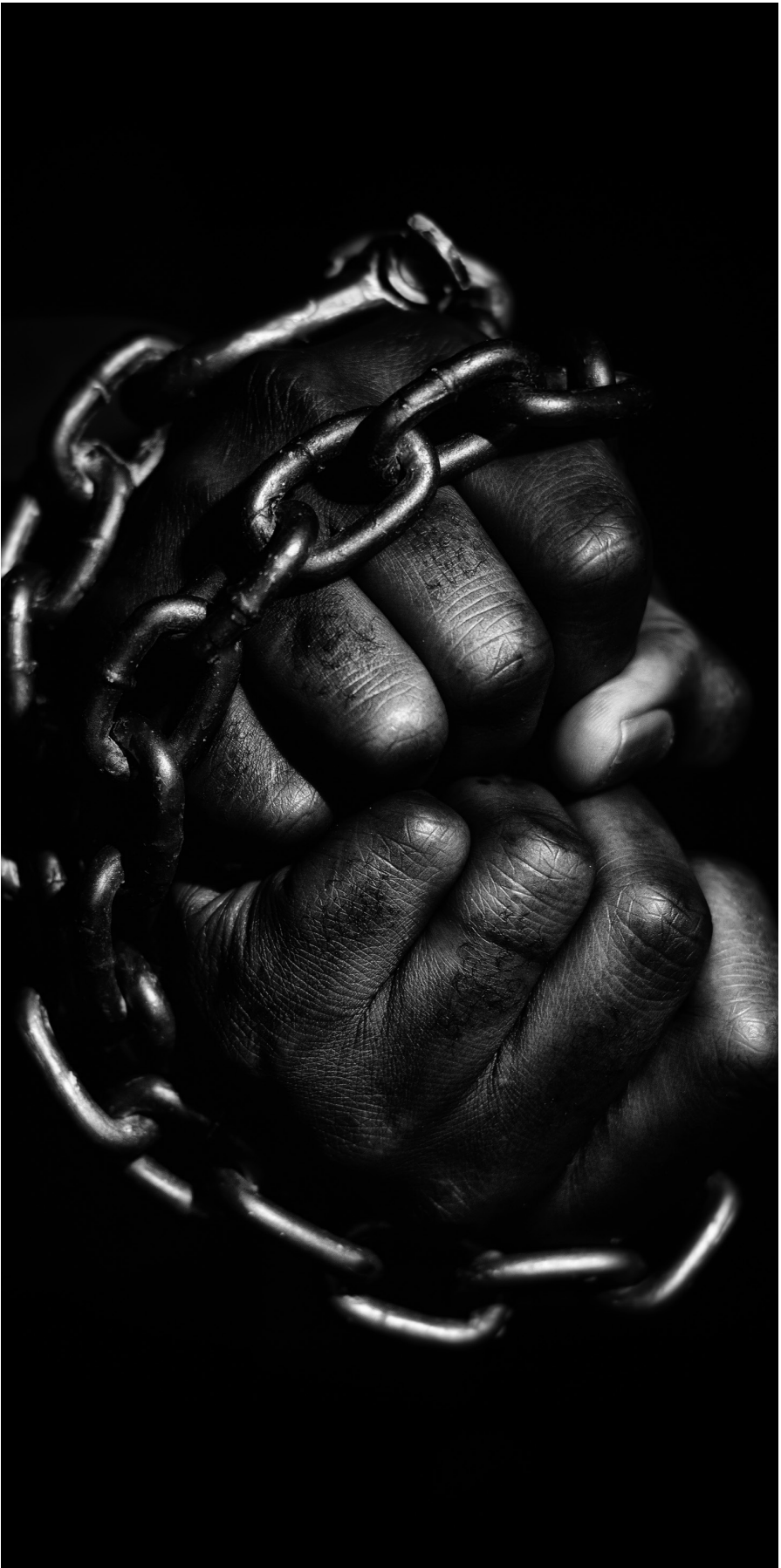
## Resource 11: Prison



holwichakawee/Shutterstock

South Africa has struggled with crime for a long time. Even though the novel is set 70 years ago, we learn that everyone is afraid of crime, and many people are sent to prison.

## Resource 12: Imprisonment



Valery Sidelnykov / Shutterstock

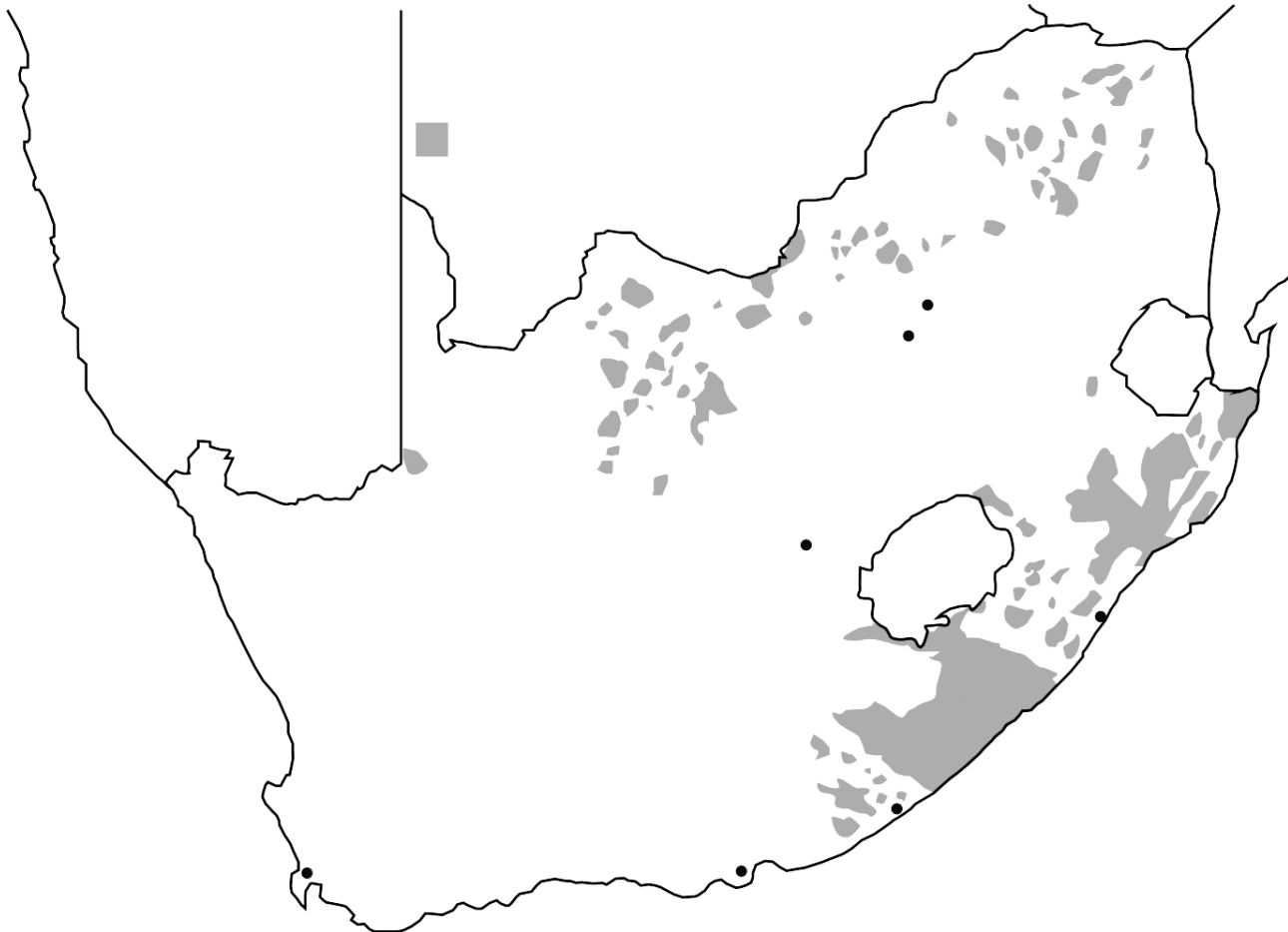
There are many kinds of imprisonment in the novel. Literally, Absalom is locked up in jail for his crime. Figuratively, many other characters are imprisoned by their poverty, by racial discrimination, by their desire for power or by their bad choices.

## Resource 13: Alan Paton



Alan Paton, the author of 'Cry, the Beloved Country'. Paton was born 11 January 1903 and died 12 April 1988. He was a teacher, the principal of a reformatory, a successful writer, and a vocal anti-apartheid activist. He founded the South African Liberal Party which fought against Apartheid.

## Resource 14: The Native Land Act (1913)



Everett Historical / Shutterstock

In 1913 the South African government passed the Native Land Act. This law formalised the 'native reserves' which had already existed for some time. All black people in South Africa were officially allowed to only live in these small rural areas. The rest of the country was reserved for white, coloured and Indian people. Black people were allowed to stay in the 'white' areas if they were working in factories or mines there, but they were not considered to be citizens. This map shows that very little land was allocated to the 'native reserves'. The 1913 law allocated only 7% of the land to the 'native reserves', and this was expanded to 13% some years later. This amount of land was not enough to support all the black people in South Africa. This led to over-use of the land for agriculture. In particular, there were too many cattle grazing on the land, which resulted in soil erosion.

# Resource 15: Sophiatown



Drum Social Histories / Baileys African History Archive / Africa Media Online

A Sophiatown Party. Sophiatown was famous for its parties and entertainment, as well as its crime.



# Resource 15: Sophiatown



Drum Social Histories / Baileys African History Archive / Africa Media Online

'The Americans' were Sophiatown's most notorious gang. The Americans robbed businesses and were famous for dressing in flashy clothes.

# Themes

<b>THEME 1:</b>	<b>Urbanisation and the Destruction of Traditional Culture</b>
<p>EXPLANATION OF THEME:</p>	<p>From the second half of the 1800s (about 150 years ago), South African society started changing a lot. People started leaving rural areas (villages in the country) and moving to urban areas (cities). When lots of people move from rural areas to urban areas, this process is called urbanisation. It has happened in every country in the world in the last 200 years.</p> <p>In South Africa, people moved to urban areas looking for work in factories and mines. This happened because gold and diamonds were discovered, so there were new mines to work in, and because new machines were invented so there were new factories to work in. It also happened because the government demanded that people pay taxes, and traditional African societies did not use money. Therefore many black people were forced to leave their homes so that they could earn money to pay taxes to the government.</p> <p>In cities, people followed a different way of life. This change had advantages and disadvantages. People who spoke different languages lived together. They shared languages and customs. It was very exciting. However, it also led to them moving away from their traditional cultures. They became very different from the people who were left behind in the rural villages. They were often less religious and more political.</p> <p>In the big city, there is more opportunity to make money, and to start again if you are not happy with your life. You can create a new kind of society if you are not happy with the old way that society has been structured. At the same time, when things change so quickly in society, it can be difficult. Firstly, the people left behind in the rural areas miss their loved ones who leave and go to the city. Secondly, the people who move to the city sometimes feel lost without their families, communities and traditions.</p>
<p>DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you live in an urban area (city or town) or rural area (village)? Do you like living there? Why or why not?</li> <li>2. What is the best thing about living in a city? What is the worst thing about it?</li> <li>3. What is the best thing about living in a village? What is the worst thing about it?</li> <li>4. Do you think traditions are important? Explain your answer.</li> <li>5. Is it more important to follow your culture or to be an individual? Why?</li> </ol>

<b>THEME 2:</b>	<b>Racial Oppression, Exploitation and Fear</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>'People of colour' is a phrase that refers to all people who are not white. Life for people of colour in South Africa got much worse in 1948 when Apartheid started. However, discrimination and oppression had existed for hundreds of years before that as well. 'Discrimination' means treating people differently because of their race, gender, religion, nationality, disability or sexual orientation, etc. 'Oppression' means taking away their freedom and rights. Often, discrimination and oppression happen because people are afraid of people and cultures that they don't know.</p> <p>White people discriminated against people of colour (especially black people) from the time they arrived in 1652. People of colour were oppressed first by the Dutch, then by the British and then by white South Africans. People of colour were oppressed in many ways. They had their land stolen and their rights taken away. Official legal discrimination and oppression ended when we became a democracy in 1994. This does not mean that discrimination ended, but it does mean that laws no longer oppress people.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your race? How did it make you feel? How did you react?</li> <li>2. Have you ever been discriminated against for other reasons? E.g. your accent, language, nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation or disability? Do you think this hurts as much as being discriminated against because of your race?</li> <li>3. In what ways is your life different from your parents' lives when they were your age? Do you think you have been discriminated against more or less than them?</li> <li>4. Have you ever discriminated against anyone? Why?</li> <li>5. What do you think we should do if we see someone being discriminated against?</li> </ol>
<b>THEME 3:</b>	<b>Journey</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>A journey is literally a trip from one place to another. However, the word can also be used figuratively (not literally). It can be a metaphor for a change that someone goes through. Usually, this is a psychological or spiritual change. (Psychological change means a change in our minds – usually in our thinking or emotions)</p> <p>For example, if I go through a difficult experience in my life (like losing a family member) and it makes me a stronger person, I can say that I have been on a journey towards strength. If that experience makes me sadder, then I have been on a journey towards heartbreak. Often people who lose their money, get</p>

<b>THEME 3:</b>	<b>Journey (continued)</b>
	<p>divorced or lose their job later say that that experience was a journey, because they learned something about themselves or became a better person in some way.</p> <p>Sometimes a literal journey (going from one place to another) can even lead to a figurative journey (an important change).</p> <p>For example, if I go and live in another country for a year, that literal journey will teach me new things about other cultures and about myself, so it will lead to changes inside me. Therefore, it will also be a figurative journey.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you ever gone on a literal journey? In other words, have you ever been on a trip away from your home? If so, did it teach you anything about yourself or about the world? What did it teach you?</li> <li>2. Have you ever been through a difficult experience? Did it teach you anything about yourself? Was it a positive or negative journey for you?</li> <li>3. Do you think that a person has to go on a literal journey (a trip somewhere) in order to have a psychological or spiritual journey?</li> <li>4. Do you think travelling to other places is important? Why or why not?</li> </ol>
<b>THEME 4:</b>	<b>Comfort in Desolation</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>'Comfort' means feeling better. 'Desolation' means feeling so sad that it feels like you have been destroyed.</p> <p>Life is complicated, and human emotions are complicated. We can feel many different emotions at the same time. For example, we can feel angry and happy at the same time. We can feel hopeful and sad at the same time. Even when we are suffering and feeling grief, we can still find love and joy. 'Grief' is the feeling of loss we have when someone we love dies. When we feel grief, it can be a great comfort to us to feel loved or respected by someone else. This does not take away our suffering, but it can make it easier to bear.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you ever lost someone you loved? What did your grief feel like?</li> <li>2. Think of a time when you have suffered or felt grief. Were there people in your life who comforted you? How did they bring you comfort? What did they do that made you feel better?</li> <li>3. Have you ever comforted someone else who was sad? How did you do it?</li> </ol>

<b>THEME 5:</b>	<b>Redemption</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>Redemption is the act of making up for your wrongdoing. This word was originally used when talking about religion. It meant being saved by God from sin.</p> <p>However, this is not the only way it can be used. It can also be used when not referring to anything religious. In this context, it means making up for something bad or starting fresh after you have done something wrong. It often includes forgiveness.</p> <p>So if you have done something terrible, or if you have lived your life in a way that you are not proud of, finding redemption means:</p> <p>Finding forgiveness for what you've done, either from yourself or from the people you have hurt.</p> <p>Atoning for your behaviour. This means making up for something bad by doing something good.</p> <p>Changing your behaviour or acting differently.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Think of a time you treated someone badly, hurt someone's feelings or were mean to someone. Did you ever do anything to try to make it up to them, or to try to fix the hurt you caused? What did you do to try to fix it?</li> <li>2. Did this make any difference? Did it make you feel better? Did it make them feel better? Did it heal the damage that you had caused?</li> <li>3. What is the best way to make things better when we have behaved badly?</li> <li>4. Is it always possible to make up for doing bad things? Is it always possible to heal people's feelings? Should we try?</li> </ol>

The following themes will NOT be given to learners, as there is not enough time in the lesson to analyse all the themes. They are here for your reference, so that you can summarise and explain them at the end of the lesson.

<b>THEME 6:</b>	<b>The Role of the Church</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>Before and during Apartheid, people disagreed about how to feel about the Church. On the one hand, it did a lot to help black people who suffered. The Church ran schools, collected charity and provided a community for people. On the other hand, some people criticised it because Christianity teaches people to endure (put up with) suffering in this life, because they will find peace in the</p>

<b>THEME 6:</b>	<b>The Role of the Church (continued)</b>
	next life. This means they are less likely to resist (stand up against) oppression.
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you believe in life after death? In other words, do you believe that there is a heaven where we will find peace and happiness?</li> <li>2. Do you believe it is important to resist (stand up against) oppression?</li> <li>3. Do you think there is any contradiction between resisting oppression in this life, and hoping to find peace and happiness in the afterlife? Why or why not?</li> </ol>
<b>THEME 7:</b>	<b>Patriarchy</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>'Patriarchy' is the system in society of giving men more power, opportunities and freedom than women. Patriarchy has existed in most places in the world. It is not as strong as it used to be, because women have been fighting very hard to be treated as equals. For example, in the past women were not allowed to work, have bank accounts, choose who they married or even vote. Now, women can do all those things in many countries.</p> <p>However, patriarchy still exists in many ways. There are more men in government, more men who own businesses and more men who are rich. Another way in which men have more freedom than women is when it comes to sex. Women are judged more harshly for having sex before marriage than men are. In some cultures, they are even judged for talking to men they are not married to. When it comes to sex and relationships, there is one set of expectations for men, and a harsher set of expectations for women. This is called a double standard.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you ever been treated differently from someone else because of your gender? How did it feel?</li> <li>2. Have you ever treated a girl or woman differently from the way you would have treated her if she were a boy or man? Why? How did this make her feel?</li> <li>3. Do you think that girls and boys should be treated as equals? Why or why not?</li> </ol>

<b>THEME 8:</b>	<b>Taking Responsibility for Your Actions</b>
EXPLANATION OF THEME:	<p>Taking responsibility for your actions means caring about how you affect other people. If you take responsibility for your actions, you think about your effect on others, you care when you hurt them and you try to heal any damage that you cause.</p> <p>For example, if I accidentally scratch someone’s car, taking responsibility for my actions means leaving my phone number so that the owner of the car can contact me and I can pay for the repairs. Taking responsibility for my actions means doing this even though I know that it will cost me money.</p> <p>Taking responsibility for your actions doesn’t always have to involve money. For example, if you are in a bad mood and say something nasty to your friend, you know it will hurt their feelings. If you take responsibility for your actions, you will apologise to them for what you said and try really hard not to treat them badly again in the future.</p> <p>All religions and laws try to get us to take responsibility for our actions. However, doing this can be very difficult. When we are lazy, selfish, greedy or careless, we fail to take responsibility for our actions.</p>
DISCUSSION QUESTION/S:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Think of a time when you did something that hurt someone else. Did you take responsibility for your actions? How? Why or why not?</li> <li>2. Do you think you should take responsibility for your actions, even if this will be unpleasant or cost you money?</li> <li>3. Why do you think it can be so difficult to take responsibility for our actions?</li> <li>4. Do you think we have a responsibility to take responsibility for the actions of our community or our society?</li> </ol>