

# ***Breakfast with Mugabe* by Fraser Grace**

## **Study Guide**

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These activities will help you and your students understand the characters, historical context, and dramatic structure of *Breakfast with Mugabe* (pronounced “moo-GAH-bee”), as well as the themes and issues the play raises. Most are intended for use prior to attending the performance, though many may also be useful to revisit after attending. While it is not necessary to have read the script of *Breakfast with Mugabe* to make use of this study guide, having a copy of the script may prove helpful for further investigation. It can be ordered in the United States [from Amazon](#).

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## Conversation Questions and Topics

*Use these questions and ideas to prompt discussion in your classroom. Interweave them with any of the other activities shared in this study guide as you feel is appropriate for your students.*

### Colonialism

- What do you know about this topic already? Is it a good or a bad thing – or both? Why do you think countries such as England, who had been major colonial powers, began to give up their colonies?
- What does the word “settle” mean in the context of colonialism? In other contexts? How many possible meanings can you think of? Do any of the meanings contradict each other?

### Race and Culture

- In the first scene of *Breakfast with Mugabe*, Dr. Peric states, “I am concerned with what goes on inside the mind. As my record shows, my own skin color, the color of my patients’ skin, I don’t consider that relevant.” How do you feel about this statement? Do you think it is appropriate for a doctor (a therapist) to make such a comment?
- To what extent do you think one’s race, heritage, or culture determines or influences his or her beliefs? In considering this question, think about any family traditions you may have or know about. Do you know how or why the traditions began?
- As many countries move past the colonial era, how thoroughly do you feel the wounds of colonialism have healed? Compare the post-colonial world of *Breakfast with Mugabe*’s Zimbabwe with the post-civil rights era of the United States. Do you feel people look at President Obama through a color-blind lens? Should they?

### Dealing with Our Past

- During the first scene of *Breakfast with Mugabe*, Robert Mugabe muses about “how the ancestors influence all our lives.” To what extent should we consider the past when attempting to shape our future? How does our heritage inform our values and behavior? What are the risks of being too concerned or not concerned enough with the past? Consider your own identity, heritage, traditions, etc. when thinking about how all that has come before influences you.
- British colonialism contributed significantly to the creation of the United States. What were the initial reasons for British colonialism in North America? What were the costs and benefits of these colonies’ subsequent declaration of independence?
- How has the United States since interacted with the Native American population that lived on the land prior to the British colonists’ arrival? Have Native American values

remained an important part of modern day American culture? What are your feelings about the ways this situation has developed?

### **A Government's Role**

- Should we hold politicians and other public figures to higher standards than the private citizen, or should we afford the people in these roles the same allowances as everyone else? Should we accept public figures who have marital infidelities, for instance? Think about how our culture responds to leaders or other public figures whose moral blind spots have come into the spotlight. Do you feel the public treats these figures fairly?
- Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's land reform policies have been quite controversial, and some critics say they have contributed to his country's sharp economic downturn. Do you think it is acceptable for a government to take control of and repurpose private property if it believes doing so is in the interests of the greater population?
- "Eminent domain" refers to a government or state's right to take private property and put it to public use. Consider New York City's invocation or threatened invocation of eminent domain laws in certain high-profile cases (*e.g.*, Columbia University; New York University; Willets Point, Queens). Should the City have this kind of power? Consider both benefits and costs.

### **Leadership**

- How long should a leader remain in power? If a leader is doing a good job, do you feel he or she should continue to lead regardless of the length of time in office?
- Should a leader's personal beliefs affect national policy or the way he or she performs official duties? What are the potential benefits and costs of having a leader's official business guided by personal beliefs?

### **The Supernatural**

- What are our current beliefs about ghosts, the afterlife, being haunted, etc.? Do you know about cultures with differing beliefs on these subjects? Which do you believe and why?

### **Therapy**

- What does "therapy" mean to you? What associations do you have with it? What is your own understanding of what a therapist does? (Note that you may consider physical therapists as well as psychotherapists, though it may be more productive to focus conversation on the latter, as *Breakfast with Mugabe* features a psychiatrist.) Create a list of qualities that you think an outstanding therapist should possess.

- After thinking about the questions above, look up the formal definition of “therapy” in a dictionary and see how it relates to your previous thoughts. For your reference, here is information from *The Oxford English Dictionary*.
  - Etymology of **therapy**: from modern Latin “therapīa” and Greek “θεραπεία [*therapeia*],” both meaning “healing.” A related word is the Greek “θεραπεύειν [*therapévein*],” meaning “to attend medically.”
  - Modern definition of **therapy**: The medical treatment of disease; curative medical or psychiatric treatment.

### ***Breakfast with Mugabe’s Epigraph***

- An epigraph is a phrase or quotation placed at the beginning of a literary work. It may help summarize the action of the work to follow, set its tone, suggest a connection to another work or idea, or offer a hint about the author’s view on the work’s subject. Epigraphs for plays are not part of the spoken dialogue; they can only be read in a printed edition. Here is the epigraph playwright Fraser Grace chose for *Breakfast with Mugabe*.

“I leaned back against the masasa tree and lay still, trying not to think about the House of Hunger where the acids of gut-rot had eaten into the base metal of my brains. The House has now become my mind; and I do not like the way the roof is rattling.” – Dambudzo Marachera, *The House of Hunger*

- What words or phrases stand out to you in the epigraph? What feelings do they create in you?
- Imagine that you heard a person say this. What adjectives would you use to describe this person’s mood?
- In what ways do you think the quotation from *The House of Hunger* is relevant to *Breakfast with Mugabe*? (Make predictions before attending the play and return to reconsider your predictions after attending.)

### **Spoken Languages**

- Most of *Breakfast with Mugabe’s* dialogue is in English, though some characters occasionally speak in Shona, a native Zimbabwean language. Pay special attention to moments in which characters switch languages and consider why they might be doing so.
- New York City is home to speakers of numerous diverse languages, and many people are bi- or multi-lingual (speakers of two or more languages). Think of someone you know or have heard who speaks more than one language. (It could even be you.)
  - How does it feel to hear this person switch from one language to another? When does he or she use one language instead of the other?

- If you speak more than one language, consider when you choose to use one language instead of the other.
- How does it feel when you hear people who speak your language switch and begin speaking a language you don't understand very well or at all?

### **Self-defense**

- As we all likely know, feeling guilty is not pleasant; it's a sensation most of us would probably rather not experience. What are various ways people attempt to relieve their guilty consciences? Try to think of specific actions someone could take to calm his or her guilt.

### **Grief**

- During one of his sessions with Robert Mugabe, Dr. Peric states, "I do know that not grieving depresses the spirit." Think about your own family, religion, culture, or heritage. Are there rituals of grieving (after a loved one's death, *e.g.*) that you perform? Do you mourn the dead? Celebrate him or her? What do you think the purposes of these rituals are? Are they focused more upon the dead or the living?

### **Faith and Suffering**

- Dr. Peric also tells Robert Mugabe that, regardless of religious convictions, "When a person suffers, faith can waver." Consider a time when hardship made you doubt your personal beliefs. How did it feel to question or doubt? How (if at all) did you ultimately reconcile the experience of the hardship with your beliefs? If you have not experienced such a situation yourself, use your imagination to predict how you might behave.

## Journal Writing Prompts

*Students may compose responses to any of the following prompts either as homework assignments or if given time for in-class writing. The prompts are designed to introduce some of the primary themes and issues of Breakfast with Mugabe without revealing major specifics of its plot. They are good places to begin, as they seek to represent the emotional underpinning of some of the drama's most critical moments and relationships.*

*While students should draw upon their lived experience without fabricating, it is best if their writing can focus on something truly meaningful to them. Encourage them to write about experiences with high stakes, situations in which something important is or was at risk. If students have not had direct experience with the topics at hand, encourage them to use their imaginations to explore what they might do or feel.*

1. Write about something you did that ended up having unintended, negative consequences. Describe what you actually did, what you thought the outcome was going to be, what the outcome really was, and who was affected. How did you feel at each step of the way? How did others react to what happened?
2. Write about an instance when someone in power called you out on something he or she felt you had done wrong. Describe what the event was and how it felt to be confronted with your alleged wrongdoing.
3. Has anyone ever criticized or attacked you for something that you think you do well? What were the circumstances and how did you feel?
4. During a scene in which Grace Mugabe chides Dr. Peric for what she believes have been his missteps with the president, she suggests that Peric's motivations for wanting to help the president may not be entirely pure. "Then I discover your other interests," she states, hypothesizing that Peric may have ulterior motives for wanting to cure the president's anxiety. His aim, Grace implies, may also be to win the president's help with a personal problem.

Describe an experience in which personal interest (*i.e.*, something you wanted for yourself) motivated you to do or consider doing something that crosses an ethical line. What did you want, and why was it so important to you?

5. In *Breakfast with Mugabe*, Dr. Peric remarks that President Mugabe has not turned to expected spiritual sources, such as an oracle or a rain goddess, for help with his personal struggle. The president hasn't even sought professional help from a member of his own tribe. Indeed, Mugabe tells Dr. Peric, "It is not usually our way" to seek help from a traditional psychiatrist like you.

Write about a time when you needed to ask someone outside your closest circle for help with a personal problem. How did it feel to have to ask this person for assistance? Why did you need to reach out to this person at all?

6. Describe a situation in which someone you know has influenced you in ways that make you uncomfortable. What did this other person do or say (to you or to others) that has made you uneasy about his or her effect on you? How do you think you have changed as a result?
  
7. As Dr. Peric attempts to learn more about the president's emotional state, he asks, "Do Vashona [members of Zimbabwe's native Shona tribe] believe the dead talk among themselves, Mr. Mugabe? ...that would also be a terror, wouldn't it. If the dead, through talking, were to discover everything about us."

Imagine that the ghost of a deceased family member or loved one were to visit you and know about everything you have done during your life. Which of your actions or behaviors do you think would make this ghost ashamed, upset, angry, or sad? What would you tell it to put it at ease so that it would not visit you again?

## Scene Writing and Acting Activities

*These activities should be used in class prior to attending a performance of Breakfast with Mugabe or reading the script. The first activity can help expose many preconceptions about difference and open a door to deeper conversation on our beliefs.*

### A. Dichotomies in *Breakfast with Mugabe*

Pick a partner and, for each of the following pairs, use a few lines of dialogue and a single prop of your choice to create 30-second scenes that reveal what you think are the essential qualities of the relationship. In your brief scenes, show what you believe is a typical relationship between the types of people listed. (If you are feeling particularly adventurous, try improvising these scenes instead of writing them out in advance!)

Perform a handful of scenes on the same dichotomy in quick succession. That is, have one team perform its “husband and wife” scene, then ask the next group to perform its “husband and wife” scene, etc. Then, begin performing the “bosses and subordinates” scenes.

- Husbands and wives
- Bosses and subordinates
- Doctors and patients
- Natives and visitors
- Thinkers and fighters
- The dead and the living (the past and the present)

After you have performed quick scenes embodying most or all of these dichotomies, go back and, for each, create a new 30-second scene that shows an atypical or unusual relationship.

Follow performance of these new “uncommon scenes” with discussions about why the relationships you just dramatized seem so unusual. If people laughed at the “uncommon scenes” or otherwise expressed their disbelief in what they were seeing, explore why this might be. (For instance: “The scene was funny because in real life a woman would never do that!” “All right, and why would a woman never do that?”)

*The following activities are designed to place you in positions analogous to those Fraser Grace may have occupied when he was writing the play. In other words, the prompts present dramaturgical problems to be solved and promote deeper understanding of parallel scenes in Breakfast with Mugabe.*



## B. Controlling the Controllers

Create two characters, A and B, and establish a relationship between the two in which A possesses greater power and can use this power against B. Write a scene in which B, from the position of lower power or status, attempts to control A's actions. Consider what and how B might gain if he or she can successfully control A.

- Tip for the teacher: If students are having difficulty creating such a scenario, ask them to consider the following example. Imagine you have shown up to class without doing your work and you absolutely need to get an A on the assignment from your teacher. How could you attempt to get your A? What would you say to the teacher or otherwise do to gain power in this situation?

## C. The Power Plea

1. Write a monologue in which one character, A, confides in another character, B, and requests guidance on a serious personal matter that is painful to talk about. You may have A say what the problem is, but remember, it's painful to discuss. Share these short monologues aloud.
2. Then, after sharing out, return to the monologue you wrote and now compose B's response to A's dilemma. What guidance will B offer? Share a few of these responses aloud.
3. Finally, return to B's monologue, which you created in step 2. Choose a spot in the middle of B's response at which A realizes the guidance is not to his/her liking and turns against B. Have A interrupt B at that exact point. Instead of allowing B to complete his or her monologue, continue to write a dialogue in which A puts B in his or her place (*i.e.*, in which A asserts power over B). At some point in the scene, have A tell B, "Then do what you are told." Share the full written scenes (now encompassing parts 1, 2, and 3) aloud.

## D. Angling for Support

Write a separate two-person scene (taking place sometime after **The Power Plea**, if you chose to write it) in which B tries to convince a new character, C, to help solve an important problem, but C refuses to help. In your dialogue, have B try as many tactics as possible to win C's support – and create an equal number of ways for C to keep B at bay. If you're stuck, brainstorm all the different ways you might try to convince someone to do something for you. Share these scenes aloud.

*After students have written and performed their monologues and scenes, invite them to share their thoughts about the process. What parts felt difficult? What felt simple? Did anything about their own writing or any of their peers' writing feel surprising? Were there any common issues on display in different writers' scenes?*

*After attending a performance of Breakfast with Mugabe, return to consider these scenes again. Explore the parallels between the scenes students created and what they saw and heard on stage. How did playwright Fraser Grace solve dramatic problems similar to the ones about which students wrote?*

## Character Profiles

### Characters seen in the play:

- **Gabriel** – A member of the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), Zimbabwe’s secret service, Gabriel is assigned to guard and otherwise accompany President Robert Mugabe throughout the play. He tells Dr. Peric he comes from Harare, Zimbabwe’s capital, and feels it is an honor to work for the president. Unlike Robert and Grace Mugabe, Gabriel is not a real historical character; he is the playwright’s fictional creation. “Gabriel” also happens to be Robert Mugabe’s real middle name.
  - Consider why the playwright may have decided to have this character’s first name be his boss’s middle name.
  - Who is Gabriel in the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim traditions? What role does he play in these religions?
- **Dr. Andrew Peric** – A well-respected psychiatrist working among various cultures’ populations in Zimbabwe’s capital, Harare, Dr. Peric (pronounced “PEH-rich”) is a third-generation white Zimbabwean citizen who has been privately summoned to assist President Mugabe with an important personal matter. In addition to his time spent working at the hospital in Harare, Dr. Peric also maintains “The Two Trees Farm” as a business in the rural town of Concession, about two hours’ drive north of Harare.
  - *Breakfast with Mugabe* is inspired by news reports that Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe was treated by a psychiatrist. In real life the psychiatrist was apparently European; “Dr. Andrew Peric” is playwright Fraser Grace’s fictional creation.
  - Why do you think Fraser Grace chose to make Dr. Peric a native born Rhodesian instead of, say, a European? What extra dimensions and issues does the fact that Dr. Peric was “born and raised in Zimbabwe” bring to the drama?
- **Grace Mugabe** (*née* Marufu) – The current First Lady of Zimbabwe and second wife of Robert Mugabe, Grace worked as Mugabe’s secretary for many years before marrying him. Grace is 41 years younger than Robert Mugabe. She was Mugabe’s mistress during the time the President was married to his first wife, Sally Hayfron, and had already given birth to two of Mugabe’s children (Bona and Robert, Jr.) by the time Sally Hayfron died of kidney failure in 1992. During Grace’s affair with Robert Mugabe, she herself was also married to another man, with whom she had had a son.
  - Grace is popularly referred to as “Dis Grace” or “Gucci Grace” in Zimbabwe; by contrast, Mugabe’s first wife, Sally Hayfron, was called “Amai,” a loving term meaning “mother.” Based on this information, what assumptions do you have about how Grace will be portrayed in *Breakfast with Mugabe*?

- **President Robert Mugabe** – Robert Mugabe has ruled Zimbabwe (first as Prime Minister, then as President) since its formal legal separation from Great Britain in 1980 through the present day. Mugabe was one of a handful of men – along with Josiah Tongogara, Joshua Nkomo, and Herbert Chitepo – who fought during the 1970s, often violently, to overthrow British colonial rule, which had run Zimbabwe under its former name, Rhodesia, since the 1880s. At the time of *Breakfast with Mugabe*, he is in his late 70s.
  - Mugabe’s style of leadership is markedly different from that of Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected black President of neighboring South Africa. While both Mugabe and Mandela fought (occasionally with extremely violent means) to overthrow racially oppressive governments and were held as political prisoners in their respective lands for many years, the two leaders’ presidential policies represented different reactions to their nations’ fraught pasts as well as their personal struggles.
  - Research some of Mugabe’s national policies, including the Fast-track Resettlement Program spanning the 2000s and Operation Murambatsvina of 2005, and consider what you think Mugabe’s rationale for undertaking these policies was. If you were in power in Zimbabwe at the time, what might you have done similarly or differently?
  - Research the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission that Nelson Mandela championed. How does it compare with what you know about Mugabe’s policies in Zimbabwe? How do you think Mugabe might have reacted to such a program in his country? Why?

**People and concepts referenced in the play but not seen onstage:**

- **Canaan Banana** (1936-2003) – The first president of independent Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1987, Banana was also a Methodist minister. Robert Mugabe served as Zimbabwe’s Prime Minister under Banana, but it was widely felt that Mugabe was truly in command throughout Banana’s tenure and that Banana was merely a puppet leader. Subsequent to his time as President, Banana was dogged by allegations of sodomy (a crime in Zimbabwe), formally charged in 1997, and served between six and twelve months in jail.
- **The Burning Bush** – Described in [the Book of Exodus, Chapter Three of the Judeo-Christian Bible](#), the burning bush represents the form God takes when He appears to the mortal leader Moses to give instructions on how the Israelites are to be freed from bondage and suffering in Egypt. Particularly notable in the Bible’s description of the episode is that the bush in which God appears burns but is not consumed by the flames. Moses is quite fearful of the sight and of God’s powerful presence, though he listens and asks how he can best follow God’s orders. In *Breakfast with Mugabe*, Robert Mugabe describes the spirit of his deceased comrade Josiah Tongogara as being like the burning bush.

- **Herbert Chitepo** (1923-1975) – Along with Robert Mugabe, Josiah Tongogara, and others, Herbert Chitepo was a leader of various factions that opposed white minority rule during the 1960s and ‘70s in what was to become Zimbabwe. Chitepo was a leader of the rebellion group ZANU from 1963 through the mid-1970s, a political and guerrilla warfare organization through which he collaborated with Josiah Tongogara. However, when Chitepo was assassinated by car bomb while in exile in Zambia (just north of Rhodesia), many eventually pointed a finger at Tongogara as the murderer. *Breakfast with Mugabe* suggests that Tongogara’s supposed murder of Chitepo may have influenced Robert Mugabe’s subsequent relationship with Tongogara.
- **Sally Hayfron-Mugabe** (1931-1992) – Sally was the first wife of Robert Mugabe from 1961 until her death from kidney failure in 1992. In *Breakfast with Mugabe*, Grace refers to her as “the woman of good works,” an unofficial title alluding to the high esteem in which many Zimbabweans held her. In the play, Robert Mugabe also mentions her other popular title, “Amai,” meaning “Mother” of Zimbabwe. She and Robert had one child together: Michael Nhamodzenyika Mugabe, who died of a brain disease before his fourth birthday.
- **Nelson Mandela** (1918-2013) – The first democratically elected and first black president in post-apartheid South Africa, Nelson Mandela had been a political prisoner in his country for over 27 years for having opposed the apartheid government. His release from prison and ascension to presidency – along with his subsequent establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which provided a forum to discuss individuals’ victimization and aggression during apartheid – are major turning points in the history of South Africa and have largely enshrined Mandela as an international icon of patience and restorative leadership.
- **Nhamodzenyika Mugabe** (1963-1966) – The son of Robert and Sally Hayfron-Mugabe. While his father Robert was in prison, Nhamodzenyika died of encephalitis before his fourth birthday in Accra, Ghana. Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith personally intervened to prevent Robert Mugabe’s release from prison on the occasion of Nhamodzenyika’s funeral.
- **Nehanda** (1840-1898) – In the Shona tribe, which inhabited the land that eventually became Rhodesia and then Zimbabwe, Nehanda is the name of both a mythical spirit and the real medium who apparently conjured or communicated with her. Nehanda was a spiritual leader who rallied the Shona during one of their first major rebellions against British colonial rule in 1896-7. The Shona refer to this uprising against the British as “The First Chimurenga,” a term meaning revolutionary struggle. When the colonial forces finally put down the attempted rebellion in 1898, the British South Africa Company hanged Nehanda for her alleged role in the murder of a government official. Nehanda’s spirit, however, influenced the so-called “Second Chimurenga,” which occurred in the 1960s and ‘70s, as Robert Mugabe, Josiah Tongogara, and other sometimes Marxist-inspired revolutionaries again sought to overthrow British colonial rule – this time successfully. Nehanda continues to represent historic and spiritual inspiration in these native tribes’ fight against white colonial oppression.

- **Sekai** – A nurse in the rural town of Concession and Dr. Peric’s wife. Her family are Goba, one of the native tribes that were increasingly marginalized after the birth of Zimbabwe and Mugabe’s rule. *Note that Sekai is not a real historical figure, as the others listed here are.*
- **Ian Smith** (1919-2007) – A native-born Rhodesian who served as prime minister from 1964 until his white minority rule government fell to the black revolutionary forces of Robert Mugabe and others in 1979, thus setting the stage for the birth of Zimbabwe. Though Rhodesia began in the 1880s as a British colony, Smith declared Rhodesia’s independence from Britain in 1965 and, from the native tribes’ perspective, continued to rule harshly and discriminated strongly against the black population.
- **Josiah Tongogara** (1938-1979) – A former comrade of Robert Mugabe, Tongogara died in a mysterious car accident in 1979. Tongogara, like Mugabe, had fought violently against white minority rule in Zimbabwe (then called Rhodesia), but the relationship with Mugabe apparently soured when Tongogara proposed a political union with another of the anti-colonial forces led by Joshua Nkomo. Popular belief held that Tongogara may have been in line to be post-colonial Zimbabwe’s first black president with Mugabe as his prime minister; however, Tongogara was dead before he had any chance to run for this office.
- **“War Vets” (Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association)** – The war vets, as they are colloquially known in Zimbabwe, are a loosely assembled group of former soldiers who fought against the Ian Smith regime during the so-called Second Chimurenga of the 1970s that led to the birth of modern Zimbabwe. By the 2000s, despite the fact that many who associated with the group were actually too young to have participated in the struggle of the ‘70s, the war vets became closely involved with President Mugabe’s ZANU-PF political party and the related land reform policies.

## Glossary of Shona and Culturally Specific Terms

*In addition to information in the previous section regarding people and ideas referenced but not seen in Breakfast with Mugabe, the following glossary will help you understand potentially unfamiliar terms used in the play.*

<b>Ambuya</b> –	respected female, roughly equivalent to auntie or, in the context of the play, madam
<b>Chimurenga</b> –	uprising or revolutionary struggle
<b>Chiremba</b> –	respectful term for doctor
<b>Concession</b> –	town and rural area an hour’s drive north of Zimbabwe’s capital, Harare
<b>Muntu</b> –	derogatory term for black African
<b>Murungu</b> –	ambivalent term for white person
<b>Ndebele</b> –	second most populous tribe in Zimbabwe, mainly living in south and west of the country (Matabeleland)
<b>Ngozi</b> –	a bitter, malevolent spirit. A departed spirit may become an ngozi by dying violently, by remaining childless, or by not receiving proper burial rites.
<b>Pamberi ne...</b> –	“Power to...”
<b>Shona</b> –	largest tribe in Zimbabwe, dominating the center and east of the country and, progressively since independence, the government. Shona also refers to the spoken language of this tribe.
<b>ZANU-PF</b> –	Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front: political party, formed in 1987 via a Unity Accord that merged ZANU, the largely Shona party headed by Robert Mugabe, and ZAPU, the predominantly Ndebele party then led by Joshua Nkomo

## Historical Contexts and Supplements

### Web Resources:

[War Veterans Continue Wave of Farm Evictions](#), The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum; December 27, 2002

[Land Redistribution in Southern Africa: Zimbabwe's Land Program](#), PBS: Online NewsHour; April 14, 2004

[Mugabe Still Fears Chitepo's Legacy](#), Institute for War & Peace Reporting; ZIM Issue 16; April 10, 2008

[Did Mugabe Kill Tongogara?](#), Mark Olden, *The New Statesman (UK)*; April 8, 2004

Maps of Southern Africa and Zimbabwe, courtesy of [www.CustomDigitalMaps.com](http://www.CustomDigitalMaps.com) and the [CIA World Factbook, 2007 Edition](#)



### Print Resources:

Goodwin, Peter. [When a Crocodile Eats the Sun: A Memoir of Africa](#). New York: Back Bay Books, 2008.

Holland, Heidi. [Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter Who Became a Tyrant](#). South Africa: Penguin Books, 2008.

Smith, Ian. [Bitter Harvest: Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence](#). London: John Blake Publishing, Ltd., 2008.



## **Timeline: Zimbabwe and Mugabe's Rule**

*Significant content in this section derives from Internet supplements to PBS's POV documentary Mugabe and the White African. The original PBS-created timeline [may be viewed here](#).*

### **1880 – Cecil Rhodes and the BSAC**

The British South Africa Company (BSAC), led by Cecil Rhodes, attains a concession for gold mining, which leads to colonization of the land that was under Ndebele rule. The name Southern Rhodesia is adopted for the region.

### **1896-1897 – First Chimurenga**

Native African tribes in Southern Rhodesia revolt against their British colonial oppressors. The British forces squelch the rebellion and hang an important spiritual leader of the Shona tribe, Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana.

### **1930 – The Land Appointment Act**

The Land Appointment Act denies land ownership to Africans and simultaneously forces Africans to work the land.

### **1966-1979 – Guerrilla Warfare by ZAPU & ZANU (Second Chimurenga)**

Guerrilla warfare campaigns against white rule by the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) intensify. These battles are collectively known as the Second Chimurenga and result in the overturning of British colonial rule.

### **1979 – The Lancaster House Agreement**

The Lancaster House Agreement requires the new government to protect the land of white farm owners for 10 years following independence. Zimbabwe receives 44 million pounds to resettle the land.

### **1980 – Independence for Zimbabwe**

Canaan Banana becomes the first president of Zimbabwe. Robert G. Mugabe, member of the ZANU party, is elected prime minister. Mugabe is seen as a liberation hero. Southern Rhodesia becomes Zimbabwe, and its independence is internationally recognized.

### **1987 – Mugabe Changes Zimbabwe’s Constitution**

Mugabe changes Zimbabwe’s constitution, making himself president and moving toward one-party rule.

### **1992 – The Land Acquisition Act**

The government enacts the Land Acquisition Act. This act strengthens the power of the government to acquire land for resettlement. The government is required to provide “fair” compensation for the land it acquires.

### **1997 – Land Seizure**

Of 162,000 families, 71,000 families resettle on approximately 3.5 million hectares of land, most of which is unsuitable for grazing or cultivation. About 400 elite black farmers lease 400,000 hectares of state land, and about 350 black farmers buy their farms. Mugabe announces that he will seize an additional 1,500 farms and says the British should pay for them. The British respond that the cost of land reform is not their responsibility.

### **1998 – Economic Crisis**

Economic crisis hits Zimbabwe as inflation rises, inciting riots and strikes.

### **2000 – Reclaiming of Land**

The government and squatters seize land owned by white farmers, claiming that the land was originally stolen by white settlers. Large portions of the reclaimed land are given to inexperienced, novice farmers, leading to what some call an “economic freefall.”

### **2002 – Re-election, Food Shortages, and Displacement**

Mugabe is re-elected. The opposition contends that the election was rigged and was stolen from the leader of the MDC, Morgan Tsvangirai. Food shortages add to the threat of famine hanging over the country. Many white landowners are forced to leave their land under the terms of a land acquisition act.

## Post-Show Reflections and Activities

1. What line of dialogue or other moment in the play stands out to you? What about this moment made it powerful?
2. How did the production's use of scenery, costumes, props, lighting, or sound support or enhance your understanding of the play? Describe a moment in which one of these elements was particularly important to your understanding of the story.
3. Imagine you were the playwright and had to compose a next scene to go after the end of the play you saw. What would your next scene be? Who would appear onstage? What issues would be discussed? How long after the final scene you saw would your new scene take place – a few minutes? hours? days? months?
4. Who are the winners and who are the losers in *Breakfast with Mugabe*? Are there clear victims and victors? What do you feel the play ultimately says about the situation in Zimbabwe?
5. Return to any of the scene writing prompts on which you worked prior to seeing a performance of the play and search for parallels between your writing and that of playwright Fraser Grace. Did you and he deal with any dramaturgical issues in the same ways?