



Grade 6

Social Sciences – History

Term 2 - Week 7

Unit 5 – Page 137 – 139

The Dutch East India Company (VOC)

- The **Portuguese** continued to sail to the East.
- On these voyages, they collected **fresh water** and forced the Khoikhoi to **trade sheep and cattle**.
- **Fighting** sometimes broke out and after about 1510 the Portuguese stopped going ashore in southern Africa.
- At the same time, **Dutch ships** began stopping at places along the coast. The Dutch became the first people from Europe to live **permanently in South Africa**.
- The Dutch people are from a country called **Holland or the Netherlands**.
- A big trading company, called the **Dutch East India Company**, was set up to send ships and traders to the East. In Dutch, this company was called the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, which is shortened to **VOC**.
- The VOC ships **stopped** along the coast of South Africa and **traded** iron and copper for sheep and cattle.
- In 1647, a Dutch ship, the **Haerlem**, was ship wrecked in Table Bay. The crew saved what they could from the ship and set up camp to wait for the next fleet of ships to arrive the next year to fetch them.
- When the crew of the ship was able to survive very well for the year, the Company decided that the Cape would be a good place for a **half-way stopping point** to the East. If they planted crops and had their own cattle, then the ships could stop at the Cape for **fresh water and food**.
- In 1652, **Jan van Riebeeck** arrived to set up a **permanent settlement** to provide supplies for the Company ships and to have a place where sick sailors could get better.

Activity 1 (Page 137 and 138)

1. What is another name for Holland?
2. What did the Dutch people call the trading company that was set up in the 17th century?
3. Who did the Dutch compete with for control of the sea route to the East?
4. What did the VOC want to buy in the East?
5. How did the VOC slowly gain power over the Portuguese trading ports?





The VOC flag



A map of the route taken by the VOC ships past the Cape to the East

Life of a sailor on a VOC ship

- Even with stronger ships and useful instruments, life on board a ship was often very **difficult**. Ships were not very big, and at that time they were made out of wood.

- Sailors were away from home for **many months** at a time, and did not know what dangers they would meet.
- Ships had to have everything that was needed including **food and water** for the sailors.
- In those days there was no way to keep **food fresh** as there were no fridges.
- Sailors often became **sick** and died.

Activity 2

Read page 138 and answer the questions.

1. List 5 hardships that the sailors who went on long sea journeys faced.
2. What sickness did the sailors get and what was the reason for the sickness?
3. What happens to the body when you get this disease?
4. What often happened to the food and water that was taken with on the ships?

