The Pan African Congress (PAC)

The PAC was formed in 1959 after a breakaway from the African National Congress. THE PEOPLE WHO JOINED WERE FRUSTRATED AT THE LACK OF PROGRESS THE ANC HAD MADE IN FIGHTING APARTHEID. Robert Sobukwe was the PAC's first president, elected at the founding conference in April 1959 in Johannesburg. THE PAC WAS AN AFRICAN ONLY ORGANISATION, WHEREAS THE ANC WANTED WHITES, BLACKS AND COLOUREDS TO JOIN TOGETHER. The PAC's first and most successful campaign was the protest against the pass laws - a campaign which was to prove to be a significant turning point for South Africa. PAC members were urged by Sobukwe to leave their passes at home and to surrender themselves for arrest at the nearest police station. Members were instructed to conduct the campaign in a spirit of non-violence which they did. But the protest erupted in tragedy when police opened fire on a group of protestors in Sharpeville who had presented themselves for arrest. Sixty-eight people were killed and 186 injured, many of them having been shot from the back. In the words of Benjamin Pogrund: The 705 bullets fired by the police that day changed South Africa, and nothing was ever to be the same again. The Sharpeville tragedy was the start of country-wide protests at the pass laws. A panic-stricken National Party government imposed a state of emergency and introduced legislation to ban both the PAC and the ANC. Hundreds of people were arrested. Sobukwe and many other PAC leaders were jailed, and when they were released they were restricted by bans. Many of the national and regional leaders went into exile.

1) Why did many people join the PAC?
2) Who was the leader of the PAC?
3) What was the main difference between the ANC and the PAC?
4) Describe what happened at Sharpeville.
5) What did the National Party do after Sharpeville?

YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT THE REASONS WHY THE PAC STARTED AND HOW IT FOUGHT AGAINST APARTHEID.