

**BECAUSE  
OF THEM  
WE CAN**

**BOX**

**JUST FOR KIDS**

# BECAUSE OF MAYA ANGELOU

AGES 5-8



BOTWC MINI POSING AS  
MAYA ANGELOU



# MAYA ANGELOU'S LIFE

MAYA ANGELOU WAS BORN MARGUERITE ANNIE JOHNSON; WAS AN AWARD-WINNING AMERICAN POET, SINGER, **MEMOIRIST**, AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST. SHE PUBLISHED SEVEN **AUTOBIOGRAPHIES**, THREE BOOKS OF **ESSAYS**, SEVERAL BOOKS OF POETRY, AND A LONG LIST OF PLAYS, MOVIES, AND TELEVISION SHOWS SPANNING OVER 50 YEARS. THERE ARE OVER FIFTY **HONORARY DEGREES** IN HER NAME!

MAYA ANGELOU IS BEST KNOWN FOR HER SERIES OF SEVEN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, ABOUT HER CHILDHOOD AND EARLY ADULT EXPERIENCES. THE FIRST, *I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS* (1969), TELLS OF HER LIFE UP TO THE AGE OF 17 AND IS KNOWN ALL OVER THE WORLD. MAYA HAD MANY **TALENTS**, ALONG WITH BEING A WRITER, SHE HAS ALSO BEEN A FRY COOK, DANCER AND **PERFORMER**, AN **OPERA** SINGER, AND A JOURNALIST. SHE WROTE ABOUT EGYPT AND GHANA!



MAYA WAS AN ACTIVIST IN THE **CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT** AND WORKED WITH MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND MALCOLM X. IN THE 1990S, SHE MADE ALMOST 80 APPEARANCES A YEAR GIVING SPEECHES AROUND THE

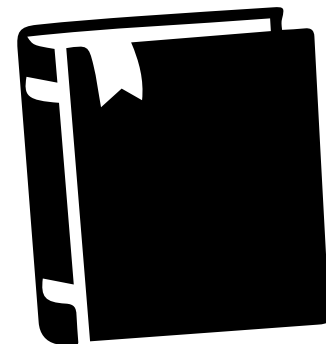


WORLD INTO HER EIGHTIES. IN 1993, MAYA ANGELOU READ HER POEM "ON THE PULSE OF MORNING" AT THE FIRST INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON, MAKING HER THE FIRST POET TO SPEAK AT AN INAUGURATION SINCE ROBERT FROST AT THE **INAUGURATION** OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY IN 1961. SHE ALSO SPOKE ON PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S BEHALF, DURING HIS PRESIDENCY! WOW, WHAT A LIFE!

MAYA ANGELOU BECAME KNOWN FOR HER WORK ABOUT BLACK PEOPLE AND WOMEN. HER WORKS ARE TAUGHT AT SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES WORLDWIDE, EVEN IN THE BECAUSE OF THEM WE CAN BOX! MAYA ANGELOU WAS A BLACK WOMAN WHO STOOD AGAINST RACISM, WAS PROUD OF HER IDENTITY, AND BOASTED OF HER FAMILY AND TRAVELS.

# THREE FACTS ABOUT MAYA ANGELOU

- SHE SPOKE 6 LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH, HEBREW, ITALIAN, AND FANTE (A DIALECT OF AKAN NATIVE TO GHANA).
- SHE WAS A CHEF AND WROTE TWO COOKBOOKS!
- SHE WAS THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN TO CONDUCT A CABLE CAR IN SAN FRANCISCO.



**1928**

BORN ON APRIL 4,  
IN ST. LOUIS, MO

**1969**

*I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD  
SINGS* IS PUBLISHED

**2008**

CAMPAIGN RALLY  
FOR OBAMA

**1960s**

MAYA ANGELOU WORKS WITH  
MLK AND MALCOLM X DURING  
THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

**1993**

BILL CLINTON  
INAUGURAL POEM



1. WHAT ARE THREE FACTS YOU LEARNED ABOUT MAYA ANGELOU?

---

---

---

2. WHAT DID MAYA ANGELOU DO IN THE 1990s?

---

---

---





# POETRY ACTIVITY:

**DIRECTIONS:** IN THIS SECTION, YOU'LL FIND ONE OF MAYA ANGELOU'S FAMOUS POEMS "LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME." THIS POEM IS WRITTEN FROM A CHILD'S POINT OF VIEW. IN RHYME, IT TELLS US THAT NO MATTER WHAT WE ENCOUNTER IN LIFE, WE DO NOT HAVE TO BE AFRAID. THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT WILL MAKE US AFRAID AND THAT'S OKAY. BE SURE TO READ THE POEM WITH YOUR FAMILY AND TALK ABOUT IT.

AFTER YOU'RE FINISHED READING THE POEM, YOU CAN CREATE YOUR OWN POEM WITH THE REFRAIN "LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME" WITH ALL THE THINGS THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE (OR AREN'T) AFRAID OF ANYMORE.

## LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME

BY MAYA ANGELOU

SHADOWS ON THE WALL  
NOISES DOWN THE HALL  
LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

TOUGH GUYS FIGHT  
ALL ALONE AT NIGHT  
LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL  
NOT AT ALL  
NOT AT ALL.

BAD DOGS BARKING LOUD  
BIG GHOSTS IN A CLOUD  
LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

PANTHERS IN THE PARK  
STRANGERS IN THE DARK  
NO, THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

MEAN OLD MOTHER GOOSE  
LIONS ON THE LOOSE  
THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

THAT NEW CLASSROOM WHERE  
BOYS ALL PULL MY HAIR  
(KISSY LITTLE GIRLS  
WITH THEIR HAIR IN CURLS)  
THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

COLOR IN MAYA!

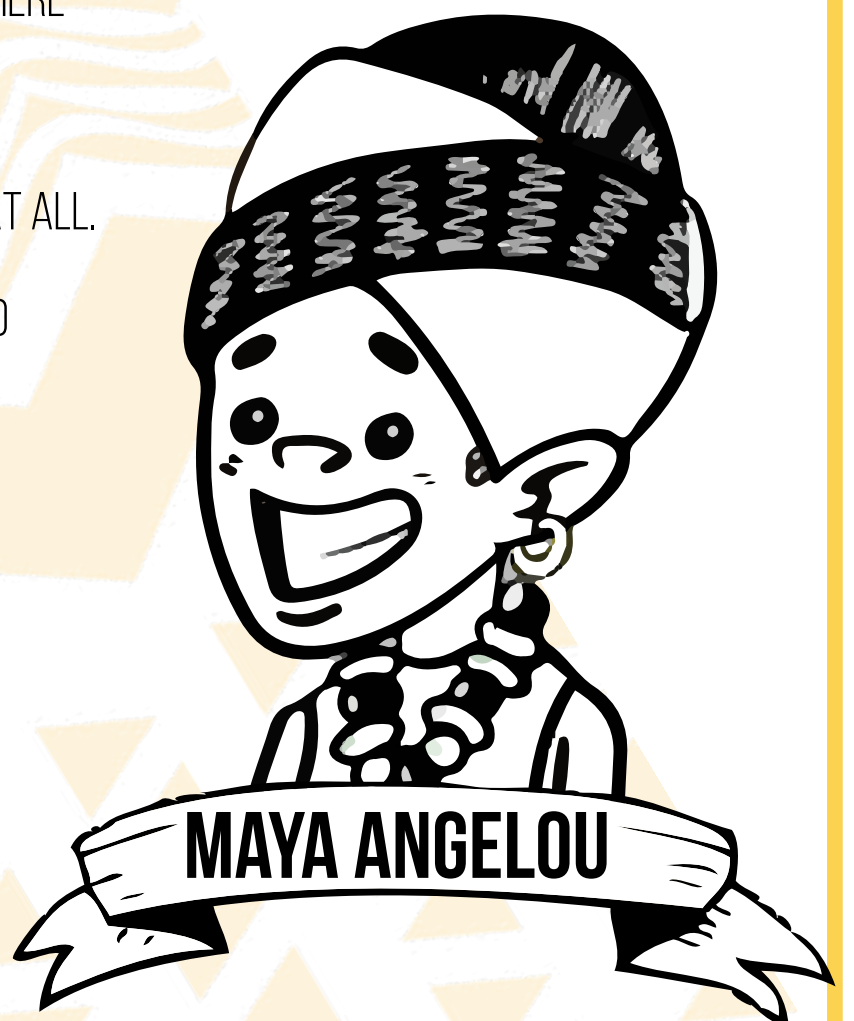
DRAGONS BREATHING FLAME  
ON MY COUNTERPANE  
THAT DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

DON'T SHOW ME FROGS AND  
SNAKES  
AND LISTEN FOR MY  
SCREAM,  
IF I'M AFRAID AT ALL  
IT'S ONLY IN MY DREAMS.

I GO BOO  
MAKE THEM SHOO  
I MAKE FUN  
WAY THEY RUN  
I WON'T CRY  
SO THEY FLY  
I JUST SMILE  
THEY GO WILD

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

I'VE GOT A MAGIC CHARM  
THAT I KEEP UP MY SLEEVE  
I CAN WALK THE OCEAN  
FLOOR  
AND NEVER HAVE TO  
BREATHE.



# NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME

BY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

NO, THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

THEY DON'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

THAT DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

IT'S ONLY IN MY DREAMS.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

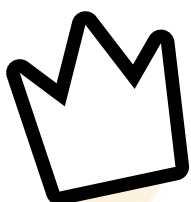
LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL  
NOT AT ALL  
NOT AT ALL.

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AT ALL.

## #BOTWCCALLENGE

AFTER YOU'VE WRITTEN  
YOUR POEM, RECITE IT,  
CAPTURE IT ON VIDEO AND TAG  
US ON SOCIAL!



## GLOSSARY

**CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT:** A SERIES OF ACTIONS TAKEN TO MAKE SOCIETY MORE FAIR FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS

**REFRAIN:** A REPEATED LINE IN A POEM

**CONDUCT:** MANAGING AN ACTIVITY

**DIALECT:** THE USAGE OR VOCABULARY CHARACTERISTIC OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY:** A BOOK OR ACCOUNT OF YOUR OWN LIFE

**CABLE CAR:** A CONVEYANCE FOR PASSENGERS OR FREIGHT ON A CABLE RAILWAY

**HONORARY DEGREE:** AN ACADEMIC DEGREE THAT WAIVES THE REQUIREMENTS (RESIDENCE, ASSIGNMENTS, ETC.) NEEDED

**ESSAY:** A SHORT PIECE OF WRITING ON A PARTICULAR SUBJECT

**PERFORMER:** A PERSON WHO ENTERTAINS AN AUDIENCE

**TALENTS:** NATURAL ABILITIES OR QUALITIES

**OPERA:** A DRAMA SET TO MUSIC

**INAUGURATION:** THE CEREMONIAL INDUCTION INTO A POSITION



# WRITE IT THREE TIMES!



**DEGREE**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**ESSAY**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**MEMOIR**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**GHANA**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**EGYPT**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**TALENTS**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

**PERFORMER**

|                   |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

## TAKE THE PLEDGE

**I WILL HONOR**  
THE SACRIFICES OF  
MY ANCESTORS.

**I WILL BELIEVE**  
IN ME.

**I WILL PURSUE**  
MY DREAMS.

**I WILL HELP**  
OTHERS ALONG  
THE WAY.