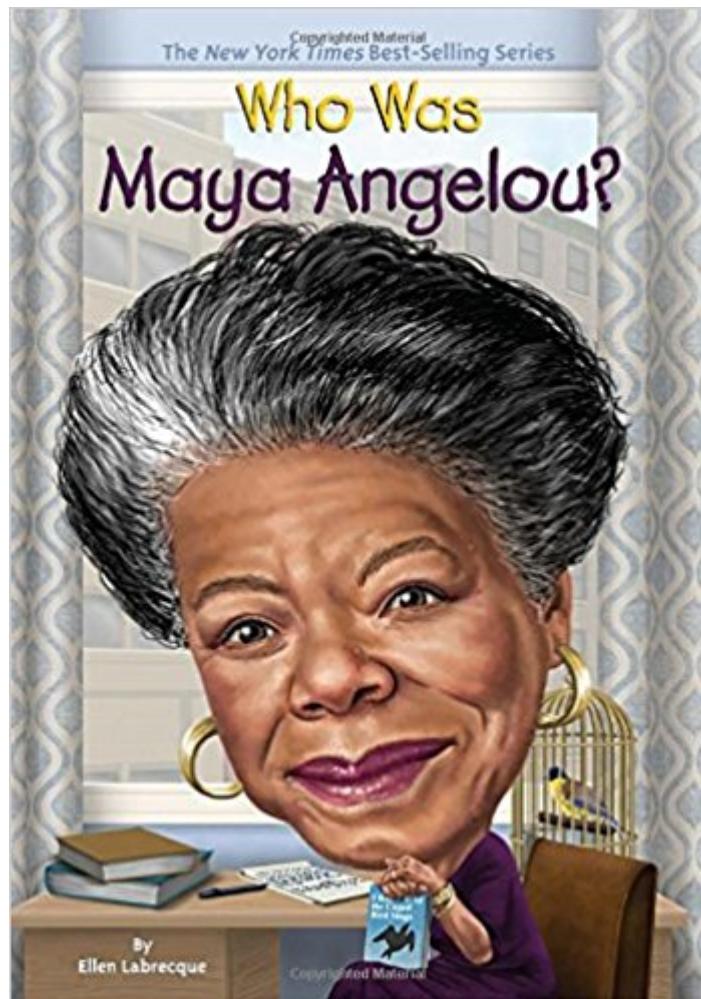


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# Who Was Maya Angelou?



## **Synopsis**

Born in Missouri in 1928, Maya Angelou had a difficult childhood. Jim Crow laws segregated blacks and whites in the South. Her family life was unstable at times. But much like her poem, "Still I Rise," Angelou was able to lift herself out of her situation and flourish. She moved to California and became the first black and first female streetcar operator before following her interest in dance. She became a professional performer in her twenties and toured the U.S. and Europe as an opera star and calypso dancer. But Angelou's writing became her defining talent. Her poems and books, including *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, brought her international acclaim.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 0900 (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 29 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Ellen Labrecque is a former Senior Editor for Sports Illustrated for Kids and the author of over twenty nonfiction books for young readers, including biographies of Jim Thorpe and Magic Johnson.

Who Was Maya Angelou? A January 20, 1993, was a sunny and crisp winter day in Washington, DC. Maya Angelou, a six-foot-tall, sixty-four-year-old African American woman, stood on the steps of the Capitol Building. She wore a black coat, bright red lipstick, and gold hoop earrings. It was the day that America's forty-second president, William Jefferson Clinton, was taking office.

Maya was about to read her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" in front of two hundred fifty thousand people. Millions more watched on their televisions at home. It had been thirty-two years since a poem had been read at a presidential inauguration. She was the first African American and the first woman ever to do so. Despite being a prizewinning writer, she felt nervous. "I tried not to realize where I was," she said later. The crowd became silent and spellbound. She spoke powerfully in a deep voice that rose up and down like ocean waves as she read each line of her poem. The words called for peace and friendship between people around the world. It took her six minutes to read the entire poem. The last lines are: "And say simply Very simply With hope • Good morning." When Maya finished, the large crowd rose to its feet and broke into loud applause. President Clinton gave her a giant hug in thanks for her beautiful words. Maya Angelou was a world-famous poet and writer. She was also a teacher, a civil rights champion, and a singer and dancer. And when she spoke, she had a beautiful and strong voice that was uniquely Maya's. Through her ideas and words, Maya taught people to live with love and to treat one another with respect and kindness. Bringing joy to others, especially if they were down or sad, was very important. "Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud," she said. Despite a tough childhood, Maya used her voice. She became a rainbow for the whole world to see.

This book speaks and gives hope in the midst of the hopelessness of life's tragedies! It reminds me that no matter what card life deals you; you can still make up your mind and rise to be a better person. Doesn't matter where you came from, but make it matter where you are headed!

Excellent book about a fantastic person

CAUTION: Some of the subject matter may not be appropriate for a 7 year old!

Great addition to my collection

Perfect for 7-10.

Gift

This book is a small and simple summary of Maya Angelou's life, appropriate for all ages even

young children. A good way to get a quick overview of a subjects life.

Love this entire series of books and plan to purchase many more. Is written to be education and informative to the younger reader. Writer gives enough detail to highlight the persons life by doesn't drag the facts out with a lot unnecessary adjectives.

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