

# Historical Heroes: Maya Angelou



Maya Angelou was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1928. As a child, she enjoyed reading and stories. She also liked to dance and sing. Later in life, she became an author and a poet.

As a young woman, she joined Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders who worked to create civil rights organizations. They worked for equality for African Americans.

Maya also loved writing. She wrote seven autobiographies. The first one is called *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. The book became popular all over the world. It told stories about her life as an African American. She was a successful writer. She was also a producer, actor, and teacher.

In 2010, President Barack Obama announced that Angelou would receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. That is the highest civilian award in the United States. She passed away four years later, in 2014.

Directions: Answer the questions below. Use text evidence to support your answers.

1. Maya Angelou won the \_\_\_\_\_ **Presidential** \_\_\_\_\_ Medal of Freedom.

2. What were some of Maya Angelou's interests?

**Maya Angelou was interested in singing, dancing, reading, writing, and acting. She was also interested in helping other people.**

3. Why did Maya Angelou work with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders?

**Maya Angelou worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders to gain equality for African Americans.**

4. What book helped Maya Angelou become very famous?

**The book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, helped Maya Angelou become very famous.**

5. How did Maya Angelou show that she was creative?

**Maya Angelou showed that she was creative by singing, dancing, acting, and writing. All of those activities mean that a person is sharing their creative ideas.**