

FAMOUS AFRICAN AMERICANS – OPRAH WINFREY

By: ReadWorks

<https://www.readworks.org/article/Famous-African-Americans---Oprah-Winfrey/fcdaf41a-2246-4b03-b8f9-ffbbc94a0e72#!articleTab:content/>



African American female writers have always inspired Oprah Winfrey. When she was a teenager, Winfrey read a book that changed her life. That book was *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou. The book spoke to Winfrey. It gave her hope. She realized she could rise above the poverty and racism that marked her life.

Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi, in 1954. When she was 20, she became the first African American female to host TV news. She was the anchor at WTVF-TV in Nashville, Tennessee. After moving to Chicago, Winfrey began hosting a morning TV program. At first it was called *AM Chicago*. However, the show was so popular that it was renamed *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Today, Oprah Winfrey's career is not only in television. She has produced and acted in several movies. These include *The Color Purple* and *Beloved*. Both movies are based on best-selling novels by African American female writers.

Winfrey has won many Emmy Awards for her talk show. She has become one of the most popular, powerful, and influential African Americans of our time. She is also one of the richest women in America today.

VOCABULARY:

influential

adjective

definition: if someone is influential, they have power to affect how other people think or how they act. When you are very little, your parents or other caregivers are the most influential people in your life, but when you get older, your teachers and your friends start to become very influential too

Spanish: influyente

inspire

verb

definition: to stimulate or influence (someone to do something) by stirring the emotions

My mother's kindness inspired me to write a book about her.

The captain's bravery inspired the crew to face the storm without fear.

Spanish: inspirar

forms: inspired, inspires, inspiring

READING COMPREHENSION

1. According to the text, what works of art inspired Oprah Winfrey?
 - a. Writing by African American females
 - b. Movies based on the lives of journalists
 - c. Paintings by African Americans

- d. Plays about small towns
2. Which of these is an effect of Winfrey's show *AM Chicago* being so popular
- a. She became a news anchor in Nashville
 - b. She read a book that changed her life
 - c. The name was changed to *The Oprah Winfrey Show*
 - d. She produced and acted in several movies
3. Oprah Winfrey achieved things that no African American woman had achieved before. What evidence from the text supports this conclusion?
- a. "Today, Oprah Winfrey's career is not only in television. She has produced and acted in several movies. These include *The Color Purple* and *Beloved*."
 - b. "Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi in 1954. When she was 20, she became the first African American female to host TV news."
 - c. "She was the anchor at WTVF-TV in Nashville, Tennessee. After moving to Chicago, Winfrey began hosting a morning TV program. At first, it was called *AM Chicago*."
 - d. "Winfrey has won many Emmy Awards for her talk show. She has become one of the most popular, powerful, and influential African Americans of our time."
4. Based on the text, why did Winfrey most likely produce the movies *The Color Purple* and *Beloved*?
- a. Those were her favorite books as a child
 - b. They were books that inspired her
 - c. She thought they would make a lot of money
 - d. She liked the titles of the books