

National Civil Rights Museum  
2008 Freedom Awards



B. B. King  
Lifetime Achievement



**Biography**

B.B. King was born September 16, 1925 to sharecroppers in the small Mississippi Delta town of Itta Bena. His early musical inspiration came from the African American church and as a boy he aspired to become a gospel singer. He moved to Memphis, TN in his teenage years and stayed with his cousin who was a bluesman named Bukka White. His first

album was released in 1949 and within the first year had produced six singles. In 1951, his first national hit titled “Three O’Clock Blues” was released. This hit was followed by “You Don’t Know Me,” “Please Love Me,” and “You Upset Me, Baby.” By the 1970s and 1980s B.B. King was playing close to 300 dates a year across the globe and in 1984 he was inducted into the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame and in 1987 into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Mr. King has received 18 Grammy Awards, the Presidential Medal of the Arts and the Kennedy Center Honors.

**Activity I**

What was B.B. King’s dream while growing up?

1. To become a blues singer.
2. To become a rock and roll singer.
3. To become a gospel singer.
4. To become a jazz singer.

**Vocabulary**

- **Sharecropper** - A tenant farmer who gives a share of the crops raised to the landlord in lieu of rent.
- **Aspired (Past Tense of Aspire)** - To have a great ambition or ultimate goal; desire strongly.
- **Inducted ( Past Tense of Induct)** - To admit as a member; receive.

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## Activity II

What do you think “B.B.” stands for?

Name three B.B. King songs.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Explain how the images below connect with B.B. King.



1.



2.



3.

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## B.B. King

### Answer Sheet

#### Activity I

Correct Answer: # 3

#### Activity II

What do you think "B.B." stands for?

**Possible Correct Answers:**

**Beale Street Blues Boy**

**Blues Boy**

**Black Boy**

Name three B.B. King songs.

**Possible Correct answers:**

**1. You Don't Know Me**

**2. Please Love Me**

**3. You Upset Me, Baby**

**4. Rock Me Baby**

**5. The Thrill Is Gone**

Explain how the images below connected with B.B. King.

**1. Image of sheet music of one of his songs.**

**2. Image of "Lucille" - B.B. King's guitar.**

**3. Sign of the B.B. King Blues Club that he opened on Beale St. in Memphis, TN.**

**Learn more about B.B. King through the new B.B. King Museum!**

**<http://www.bbkingmuseum.org/>**

**Attention Teachers! You can also find information on civil and human rights today in our new curriculum guide which is now available online through Learning Village. For information on how to access the curriculum guide go to <http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org>.**

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