

# Famous African Americans - Oprah Winfrey

by ReadWorks



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.