



## About the Book

**Text Type:** Nonfiction/Informational   **Page Count:** 24   **Word Count:** 1,937

### Book Summary

Winner of the National Medal of Arts and 13 Grammy Awards. Sold over 40 million records. Named the "First Lady of Song." These are just some of the accomplishments of music legend Ella Fitzgerald. Although life for this top female vocalist was not without its struggles, Ella showed the world that people can overcome adversity and achieve their dreams. Photographs support the text.

## About the Lesson

### Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

### Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand text
- Main idea and details
- Understand the use of the dash
- Fluently read numbers within text

### Materials

**Green text** indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Ella Fitzgerald* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- **Ask and answer questions, vocabulary, main idea and details, dash worksheets**
- **Discussion cards**



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

### Vocabulary

\*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

- **Content words:**

**Story Critical:** *engagement* (n.), *gig* (n.), *headliners* (n.), *improvised* (v.), *predecessor* (n.), *racism* (n.)

**Enrichment:** *auditions* (n.), *compassionate* (adj.), *frustration* (n.), *impersonations* (n.), *jazz* (n.), *legend* (n.), *petrified* (adj.), *professional* (adj.), *reform school* (n.), *scat* (n.)

## Before Reading

### Build Background

- Have students listen to recordings of Ella Fitzgerald. Invite them to describe the type of music they hear. Explain that the style of music is jazz, which is characterized by a strong rhythm that supports improvisations.
- Write the name *Ella Fitzgerald* on the board. Tell students that she is the singer on the recordings and that she is considered a music legend. Invite students to share what they know about Ella Fitzgerald, music legends, and how a person becomes a music legend.

## Preview the Book

### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Discuss how asking and answering questions while reading can help readers understand and enjoy reading the information in a book.  
*Think-aloud: From what I see on the cover and title page, it appears as though this book is about a singer named Ella Fitzgerald. I'm curious to know how Ella became a singer. I wonder whether someone discovered her talent accidentally or whether she spent a long time singing in different places before she was discovered. This makes me wonder whether Ella always wanted to be a singer or whether she had a different goal in life. Before I read, several questions often come to mind about the topic. As I read, I enjoy looking for answers to my questions, which often spark further curiosities and questions to answer as I continue to read.*
- Create a chart on the board similar to the one on the ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Introduce and explain the [ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#) to students. Ask them to tell what about the topic sparks their curiosity. Have them write their questions in the first section on their worksheet. Invite them to share some of their questions, and write them on the class chart.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

### Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Write the following list of words on the board: *happy, sad, angry, nervous*. Ask students to tell what these words refer to (different types of emotions). Point out that these words help to identify the main idea. (People feel different types of emotions.) The words *happy, sad, angry, and nervous* are details that support this main idea.
- Explain that sometimes there is so much information on a topic that it is grouped into sections, each section with its own main idea.
- Read pages 4 through 7 aloud to students. Model identifying the main idea and details of the first section of the book.  
*Think-aloud: As I read the first section of the book, most of the sentences are about Ella's night at the Apollo Theater during a talent show. I will underline this information on page 5. The sentences also include information on how, as a teenager, she was a singing hit in front of the live audience, even though she was very nervous. Based on what I've read, I think the main idea of this first section of the book is: Ella Fitzgerald successfully shared her singing as a teenager at the Apollo Theater.*
- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify the details from the book that support this main idea (*thunderous applause erupted throughout the Apollo Theater, they asked for an encore, and so on*). Write these details on the board.

### Introduce the Vocabulary

- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *auditions, engagement, gig, and headliners*.
- Give pairs or groups of students several pieces of blank paper. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Have groups discuss and create a definition for each word using prior knowledge.
- Review or explain that the glossary and dictionary contain a list of vocabulary words and their definitions.

- Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Have students locate the glossary at the back of the book. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *engagement* in the glossary. Have students compare the definition with their prior knowledge of the word. Then have them follow along on page 12 as you read the sentence in which the word *engagement* appears to confirm the meaning of the word. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.
- Invite students to review the photo on the front cover of the book. Have them use the vocabulary words on the board to create a brief oral story about how they think Ella became a well-known singer. Repeat the activity after reading the book to check for student understanding of the vocabulary.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [vocabulary worksheet](#). Review students' answers aloud.

## Set the Purpose

- Have students read to learn about Ella Fitzgerald. Encourage them to ask and answer questions while reading. Remind students to also think about the main idea and details of each section as they read.

## During Reading


### Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 8 to the end of page 12. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread.
- When students have finished reading, have them circle any questions on their [ask-and-answer-questions worksheet](#) that were answered in the text.
- Model answering a question and filling in the second column of the ask-and answer-questions chart on the board.

**Think-aloud:** *Before reading, more than one question came to mind about this book. I was curious how Ella became a singer. I wondered whether someone discovered her talent accidentally or whether she spent a long time singing in different places before she was discovered. I also wondered whether Ella always wanted to be a singer or whether she had a different goal in life. While reading, I found the answers to some of these questions. I found out that when Ella was younger, her goal was to become a professional dancer. However, she loved singing. As a teenager, Ella lived on the streets and earned a living by singing and dancing. When Ella won the Apollo's Amateur Night, she knew that her true calling was singing. I know from the first section in the book that Ella first intended to dance in this contest. So, her success on this night came about as an accident. Although the second section of the book mentioned that auditions were gaining in popularity, I still don't know whether Ella went to many auditions in order to get further noticed by the music industry. I'll keep looking for the answer to this question as I read. The information I read also sparked new curiosities about the topic. I found it interesting that Ella lived on the streets for some time. I wonder how long she did this. I also wonder whether anyone helped her along the way. I will write these questions on the ask-and-answer-questions chart.*

- Ask students to write answers for the circled questions and to also write additional questions they raised on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book. Write shared responses on the class chart on the board.
- Model identifying a main idea and details.  
**Think-aloud:** *As I read the section titled "First Lady of Song," I read how Ella won multiple Grammy Awards and dominated the music magazine polls. She was the top female vocalist for 40 years. As I read, I realized that most of the sentences mentioned something about how Ella was the predecessor to the popular recording stars of today. Therefore, I think that the main idea of the section is: Ella Fitzgerald is recognized as the First Lady of Song, a predecessor to current popular headliners.*

- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify details that support this main idea (she won 13 Grammy Awards, dominated the music magazine polls, and so on). Write these details on the board.
- **Check for understanding:** Invite students to share any information they underlined in the third section, “The First Lady’s Early Years.” Write these details on the board. Have students work with a partner to identify the main idea from these details. Discuss their responses as a class and write the main idea on the board.
- Have students read pages 13 and 14. Have them circle any questions on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet that were answered. Ask students to write answers to any circled questions and to write additional questions they raised on their worksheet. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated while reading.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for and write answers to their questions on their worksheet. Encourage students to add new questions they might have to their worksheet.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

## After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

### Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Reinforce that asking questions before and during reading, and looking for the answers while reading, keeps readers interested in the topic. It also encourages them to keep reading to find answers to their questions and helps them understand and enjoy what they read.
- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know how long Ella lived on the streets and whether anyone helped her along the way. I learned that Ella got a break when she was introduced to Chick Webb, a bandleader. The bandmates taught Ella how to dress and purchased a room for her to stay in. I’m curious to know whether Ella continued singing with a band or whether she became a solo artist. I will write the questions I’m still curious about on the ask-and-answer-questions chart.*
- Point out to students that all of their questions may not have been answered in this text. Brainstorm other sources they might use to locate additional information to answer their questions. Invite students to fill in the last column of their worksheet with information they still would like to know about Ella Fitzgerald.
- Ask students to share questions they added to their worksheet while reading.

### Reflect on the Comprehension Skill


- **Discussion:** Discuss how stopping to review the important details helped students remember the facts and better understand the information in the book. Ask them how the details they identify support the main idea.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [main idea-and-details worksheet](#) using one of the remaining sections. If time allows, discuss their answers.
- **Enduring understanding:** Ella started out wanting to be a dancer, but an event happened that highlighted her singing talent. Now that you know this information, what does it tell you about being open to change?

## Build Skills

### Grammar and Mechanics: Dash

- Review or explain that a *dash* (—) is a punctuation mark used to indicate a break or omission. It is also used to clarify information within a sentence.

- Direct students to page 11 in the book. Point out the following sentence: *Eventually, Ella was caught skipping school by truancy officers—people whose job it was to make sure kids were attending school.* Ask students how the dash is used in this instance (to clarify the meaning of the phrase *truancy officer*).
- Point out to students the difference between a dash and a hyphen. Have students turn to page 12 and locate the word *seventeen-year-old*. Review or explain that hyphens are shorter in length than dashes and are used to connect two or more words, such as in compound adjectives.

 **Check for understanding:** Direct students to page 13 in the book. Point out the following sentence: The first time Chick Webb—an up-and-coming bandleader—was introduced to Ella, he told the main who introduced them, “You’re not putting that on my bandstand!” Have students circle the dashes (after the words *Webb* and *bandleader*). Then ask them to write in the margin how the dash is used in this instance (to provide extra information about Chick Webb). Discuss their responses. Point out the hyphens in the compound adjective *up-and-coming*.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [dash worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

## Word Work: Numbers within text

- Direct students to page 22. Point out that when reading aloud, readers will sometimes encounter different symbols, numbers, and abbreviations within the text. Good readers read these parts of the text fluently, just as they read the words.
- Ask students to locate four numbers within the text on page 22 (1996, 78, 40, 26). Write the numbers on the board. Review or explain that when reading the sentence aloud, the numbers are read in the same manner as the words. Explain that sometimes students will find numbers spelled out, such as *forty*. At other times, they will find numbers written as numerals, such as *40*.
- Point out that one of the numbers on page 22 is a date (1996), which is read differently from the four-digit number (*nineteen ninety-six*, not *one thousand nine hundred ninety-six*). Explain that good readers look for context clues to know whether a four-digit number should be read as a date. Write the corresponding words on the board under each number (*nineteen ninety-six*, *seventy-eight*, *forty*, *twenty-six*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to pages 8 and 9, and practice reading the numbers within text aloud fluently to a partner. When everyone has read the pages aloud, ask volunteers to write the number and words for each number on the board (13: thirteen; 40: forty; 25: twenty-five; 1917: nineteen seventeen; 1923: nineteen twenty-three).

## Build Fluency

### Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

### Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them discuss their questions about Ella with someone at home.

## Extend the Reading

### Informational Report Writing Connection

Provide additional print and website sources for students to research a performer mentioned in the book: Chick Webb, Bing Crosby, Nat King Cole, or Louis Armstrong. Have them identify information such as: when and where the individual lived, major achievements, and his influence on music history.

## Elements of Nonfiction Connection

Review with students the photographs throughout the book. Read the caption under each photograph. Discuss the purpose for incorporating captions under photographs (to provide clarification and elaboration of the photograph and information on nearby pages; to draw conclusions about information presented in the main body of the text). Ask students to explain why it might be beneficial to examine and understand these nonfiction elements in the text as they read.

## Skill Review

**Discussion cards** covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

## Assessment

### Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently ask relevant questions about a topic prior to and during reading; locate answers to their questions and write them on a worksheet
- accurately identify main ideas and details
- correctly identify the use of dashes as punctuation; distinguish dashes from hyphens during discussion and on a worksheet
- fluently read numbers within the text; write the words that correlate with numbers during discussion

## Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**