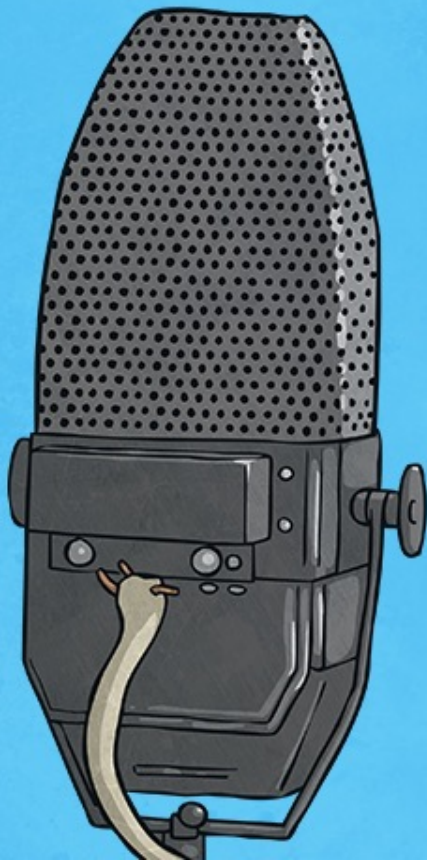


Ella Fitzgerald

'The First Lady of Song'



Learning Objective

- To understand how Ella Fitzgerald became known as 'The First Lady of Song'

Success Criteria

- To know the key events in Ella Fitzgerald's life.
- To understand how she continues to inspire musicians today.

Ella Fitzgerald – ‘The First Lady of Song’

Listen to this broadcast all about Ella Fitzgerald:

<https://www.npr.org/2017/04/25/525583944/remembering-ella-fitzgerald-who-made-great-songs-greater>



Contents

Who is Ella Fitzgerald?

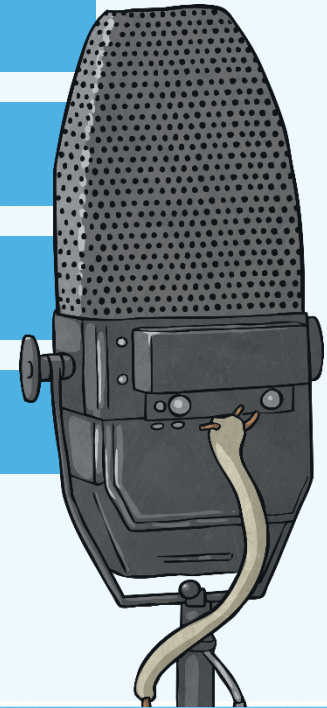
Early Life

Talent Contest

A Big Hit!

Bebop Scat

“The First Lady of Song”



Who Is Ella Fitzgerald?



Ella Fitzgerald was one of the most famous American jazz singers of the twentieth century. She inspired many modern singers including Adele and Lady Gaga.

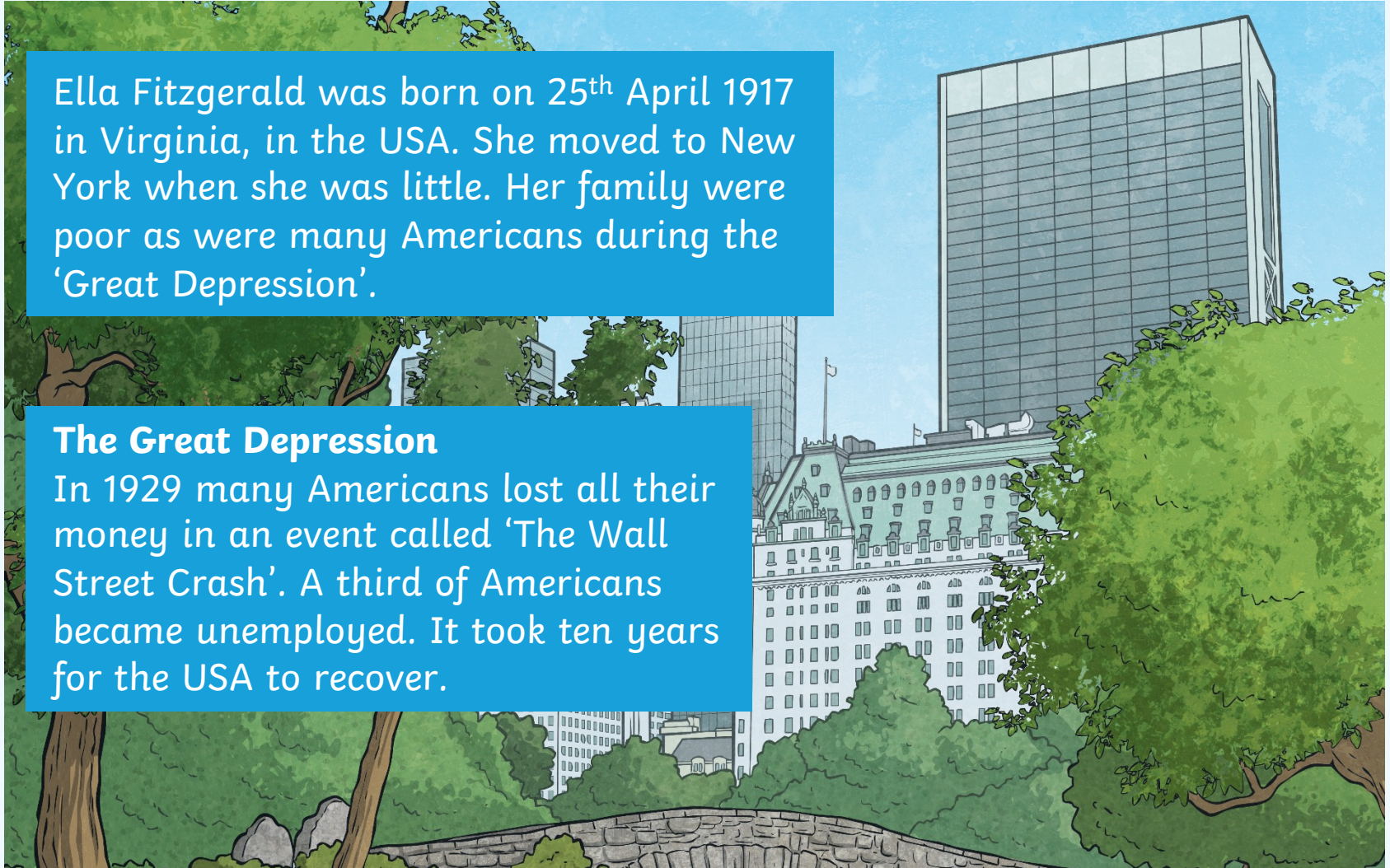


Early Life

Ella Fitzgerald was born on 25th April 1917 in Virginia, in the USA. She moved to New York when she was little. Her family were poor as were many Americans during the 'Great Depression'.

The Great Depression

In 1929 many Americans lost all their money in an event called 'The Wall Street Crash'. A third of Americans became unemployed. It took ten years for the USA to recover.



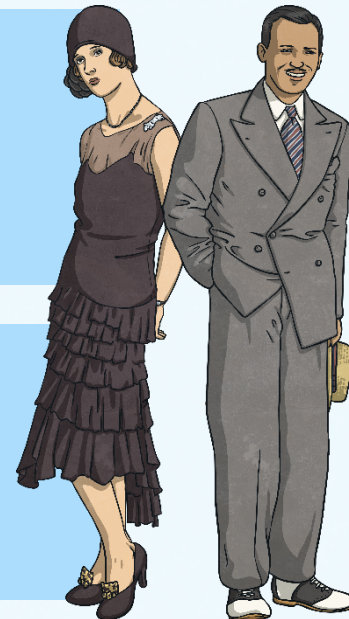
Early Life

Ella and her family attended a Methodist church regularly when she was growing up. She also enjoyed listening to the jazz music of Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong and her favourite 'The Boswell Sisters'.



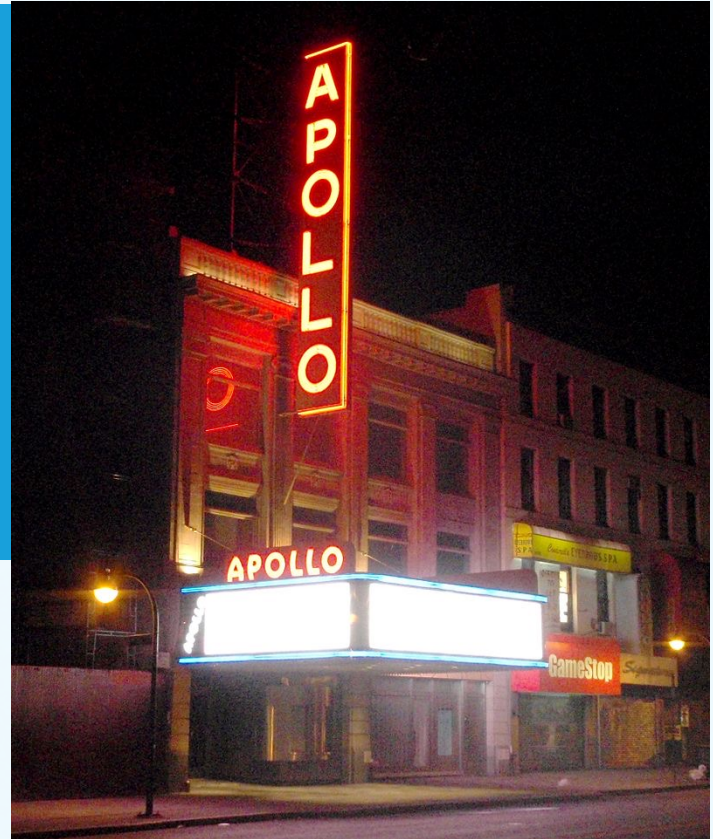
Ella also loved to dance! She copied the style of Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker and would dance in front of her friends during playtimes at school.

Tragically, her mother died following a car accident when Ella was just 15 years old. After a series of further awful events, Ella found herself homeless at the age of 16.



Talent Contest

The night of 21st November, 1934 changed Ella's life forever. She had entered an amateur night at the Apollo Theatre in New York. Originally, she planned to dance, however she was so intimidated by the other dance acts that she decided to sing instead. She came first, winning \$25!



A Big Hit!

After the talent contest, Ella joined the Chuck Webb Orchestra.

Ella and the orchestra had their first big hit when she was just 21. It was a song that Ella co-wrote and was called "A-Tisket, A-Tasket". It was based on a nursery rhyme.

Watch Ella sing "A-Tisket , A-Tasket"

<http://www.tcm.com/mediaroom/video/342524/Ride-Em-Cowboy-Movie-Clip-A-Tisket-A-Tasket.html>



Bebop Scat

Ella Fitzgerald loved performing in front of an audience. She became part of a group of music artists who invented a new style of music called bebop scat singing. She used her voice like an instrument to help her create this new sound. “How High the Moon” was one of Ella’s famous bebop scat songs.

Listen to “How high the Moon”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djZCe7ou3kY>



“The First Lady of Song”

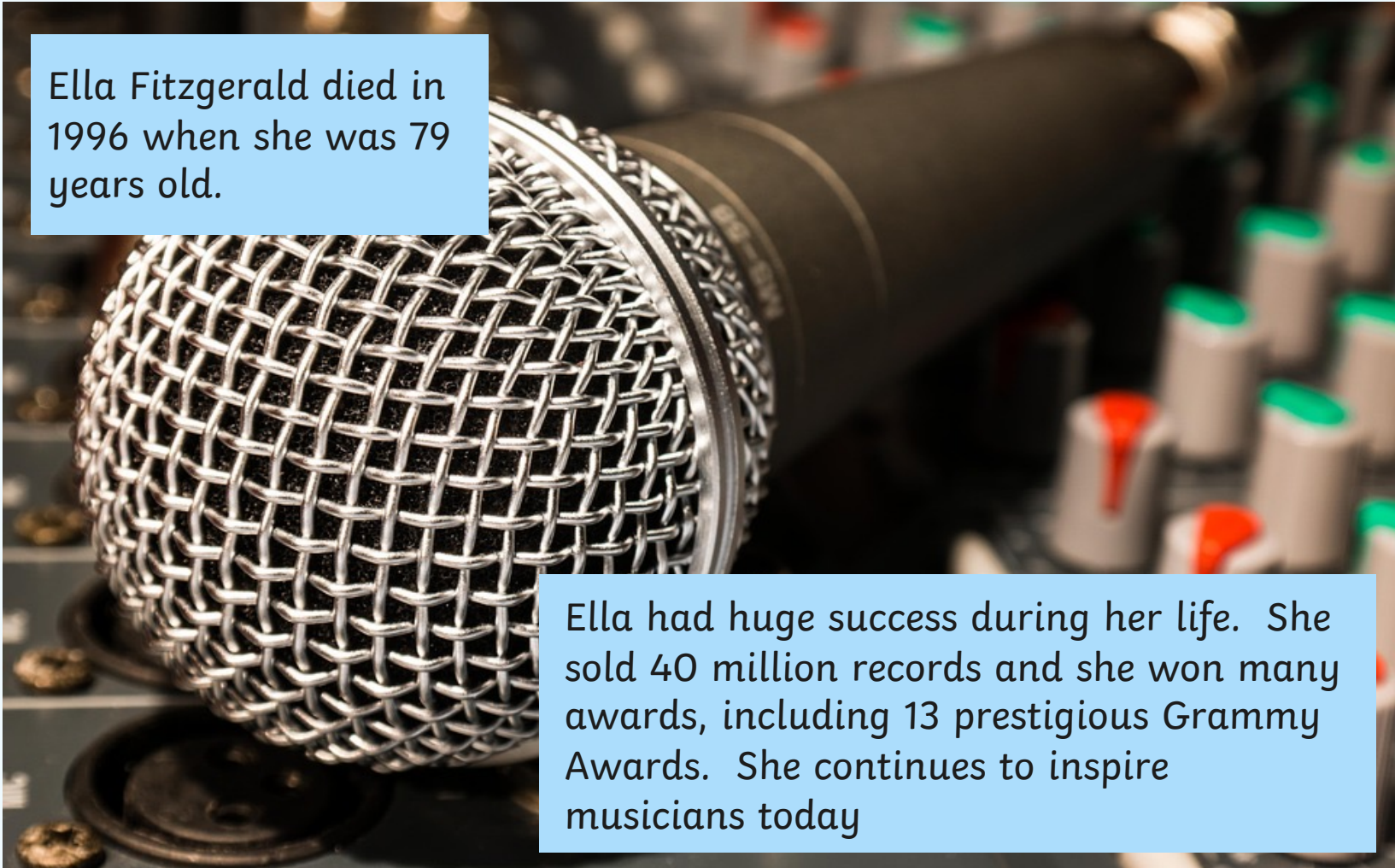
Fitzgerald recorded new songs and performed continuously throughout the 1940s and 1950s. It was during this period that she became known as “The First Lady of Song”.



In the 1950s, Ella Fitzgerald began to record The Great American Songbook. This was a collection of music written by famous American composers including Duke Ellington, George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter and others.

She also began to star in American films and TV programmes.

“The First Lady of Song”



Ella Fitzgerald died in 1996 when she was 79 years old.

Ella had huge success during her life. She sold 40 million records and she won many awards, including 13 prestigious Grammy Awards. She continues to inspire musicians today

