

# I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS

*Maya Angelou*



## ***RESOURCE GUIDE***

***Reading + Writing + Analysis***

**NO PREP**

**PRINT & GO**

**HIGH SCHOOL ELA**

# About the Text

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*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is an autobiography that tells the story of Maya Angelou's childhood and early teenage years. Through her experiences growing up in the American South, the book explores how she navigates racism, trauma, and identity while finding strength through language and self-expression.

The text shows how personal experiences shape identity and highlights the importance of resilience, voice, and growth. Angelou's journey reflects both individual struggle and broader social realities.

## *Comprehension Questions:*

1. What are some major challenges Maya faces during her childhood?
2. How does Maya respond to the trauma she experiences?
3. What role does reading and literature play in Maya's life?
4. How do the people around Maya influence her growth and identity?
5. How does Maya change from the beginning to the end of the autobiography?

# Quick Discussion

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## Time to Reflect

*How do life experiences shape a person's identity and sense of self?*

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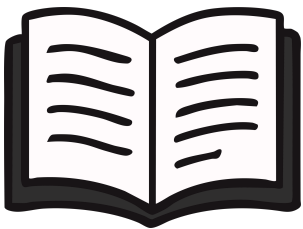
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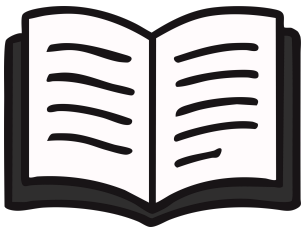
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# Extension Activity

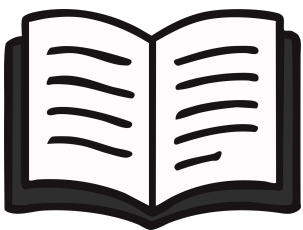
**Choose one activity to complete.**



• Create a timeline of key events in Maya's life and explain how each one contributes to her growth



• Write a personal narrative connecting one theme from the book to your own experiences



• Analyze how Maya develops her voice throughout the autobiography

# *Understanding the Big Ideas*

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**This text explores:**

- Identity is shaped by experience
- Voice can be lost and regained
- Resilience develops through challenges
- Growth comes through both struggle and support

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**How does Maya Angelou show the development of identity and voice in I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings? Use at least one example from the text to support your response.**

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# Final Project

## Choose One:

- **Character Analysis Essay**

Explain how Maya Angelou develops over time. Include specific examples from the text.

- **Theme Analysis Presentation**

Create a presentation explaining one major theme such as identity, resilience, or voice using evidence from the text.

- **Personal Reflection Project**

Write or present how Maya's story connects to real-life challenges and growth.