

Little People, **BIG DREAMS**

Aretha Franklin



Written by Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara

Illustrated by Amy Blackwell

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Frances Lincoln
Children's Books



If there was someone in Detroit who was born to sing, it was little Aretha. Her mother was a gospel singer and her father was a preacher who believed that music could move not just people's hearts, but the world.







Her mom left when Aretha was very little, but she never felt alone. Home was always filled with musicians and she learned to play the piano just by listening to them.





She started singing in the gospel choir at the church where her father was a minister. Aretha's voice was so powerful and as smooth as silk. Listening to her, the whole congregation felt that tomorrow would be a brighter day.

Convinced of her talent, Aretha's father took her on tour, and together they went from church to church. Wherever Aretha performed, she did it with such grace that people would cry with joy.







But, even though she loved gospel music, Aretha dreamed that her voice could be heard outside the church, in people's homes. So, when a record company offered her a contract, she didn't have to think about it twice.







Before long, Aretha's songs were climbing the charts. There was something magical in her voice that moved people's hearts and bodies. Much like her most popular song...





It was called “Respect,” and it was a song written by Otis Redding that sounded brand new in Aretha’s voice. Suddenly, the words of a tired working man became an anthem for African American women demanding equal respect.

One of Aretha's friends was Martin Luther King Jr., the great civil rights leader. She stood next to him, challenging people to raise their voices against racism. When he died, she sang the most beautiful song in his honor: "Precious Lord."







Aretha started writing her own songs and producing them, too. She went from gospel to jazz, doo-wop and pop, to rhythm and blues . . . singing every song from the bottom of her heart.



ARETHA
FRANKLIN
AMAZING GRACE





She recorded hundreds of great hits and she loved them all. Aretha used a secret recipe when writing her songs: They had to talk about everyday ups and downs. That's what soul was all about!



ARETHA FRANKLIN



CHUCK BERRY



B.B. KING



ELVIS PRESLEY

It took Aretha 30 long years to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame; she was the first woman in history to be on the list! Aretha was the Queen of Soul and a trailblazer for many other female artists.





But her greatest honor was singing at the inauguration of the first African American president of the United States. Aretha was voicing one of the most important moments in history!





And no-one has ever been able to sing a song
quite like Aretha. The little girl who asked for
equality and won the R-E-S-P-E-C-T of millions...
the greatest soul singer of all time.

ARETHA FRANKLIN

(Born 1942 • Died 2018)



1960



1965

Aretha Franklin was born in Memphis, Tennessee, into a musical family. The fourth of five children, Aretha understood the power of song at an early age, joining the congregation at her father's church in joyful, gospel worship. She was soon a member of the choir, and after her parents separated, she toured with her father's traveling gospel show. Aretha's childhood was not without pain and troubles. Her mother, Barbara, left the family when Aretha was six years old, and died soon afterwards. Aretha became a mother herself when she was just a teenager, raising her children in Detroit. But she had dreams beyond the gospel band, and wanted to share her music more widely as a pop singer. Aged 18, she left Detroit for the bright lights of New York City. There, she signed a record



1968



2009

deal, creating a string of hit singles that redefined the world of rhythm and blues, with her own style of soul music. Aretha's songs went on to become classics, written from her heart and sung with power and conviction. Aretha's chart dominance soon earned her the title "Queen of Soul." At the same time, she became a symbol of black empowerment during the Civil Rights Movement. "Soul to me is a feeling, a lot of depth . . . being able to bring to the surface that which is happening inside," Aretha once said. In 1987, she became the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, paving the way for women of all backgrounds. In 2008, Aretha won her 18th Grammy Award, making her one of the most honored artists in history, and a symbol of the world's respect.

Want to find out more about **Aretha Franklin?**

Have a read of these great books:

Who was Aretha Franklin? by Nico Medina

A Voice Named Aretha by Katheryn Russell-Brown



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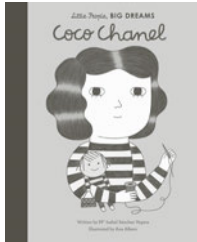
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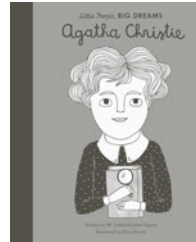
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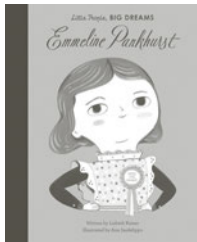
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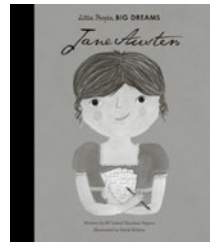
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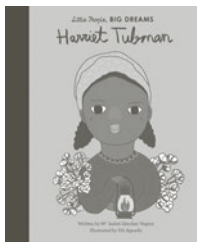
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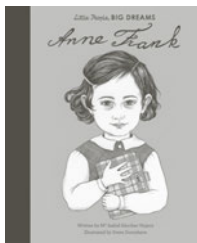
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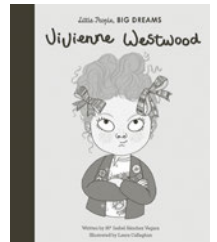
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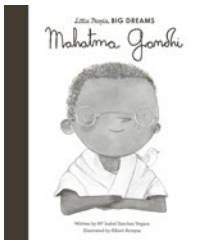
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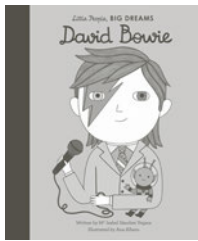
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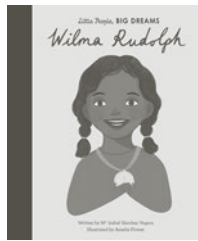
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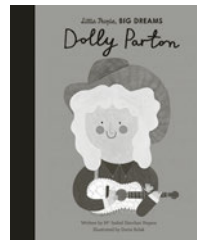
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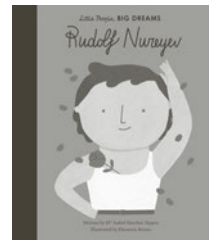
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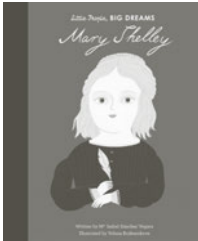
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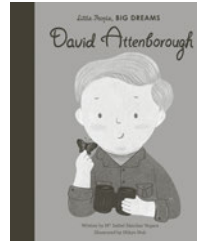
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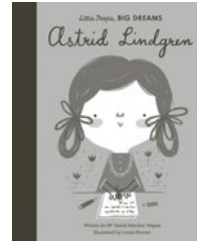
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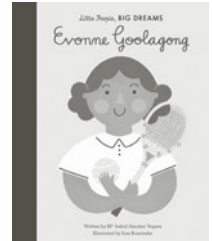
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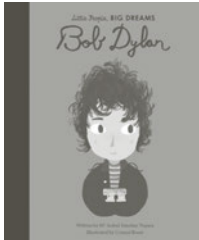
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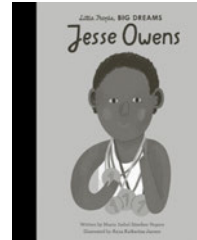
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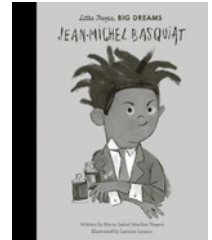
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Little People, **BIG DREAMS**

Aretha Franklin

Discover the lives of outstanding people,
from designers and artists to scientists. All
of them achieved incredible things, yet each
began life as a child with a dream.

Aretha grew up in a family of musicians, singing with
heart and soul in her father's gospel choir. She
went on to bring that feeling to her own music,
creating some of history's best-loved songs that still
spark hope in listeners today. This inspiring story about
the Queen of Soul features a facts and
photos section at the back.

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