African American Newsmakers

In honor of Black History Month, meet some African Americans who inspire others.

Wynton Marsalis

Jazz legend **Wynton Marsalis** was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1961. He started playing the trumpet when he was a child. Over the years, he has won many awards for his music. This past fall [2005], Marsalis organized a concert to help the people of his hometown who were affected by Hurricane Katrina. The concert raised more than $2 million!

Bryan Collier

Artist **Bryan Collier** uses pictures to bring history to life. His latest artwork can be seen in *Rosa*, a children’s book that tells the story of Rosa Parks. Collier also illustrated *Martin’s Big Words*, about Martin Luther King Jr., and *Visiting Langston*, about poet Langston Hughes.

Condoleezza Rice

**Condoleezza Rice** is the U.S. secretary of state. She is the first African American woman to hold that job. Rice gives President George W. Bush advice on working with other countries. She also works with world leaders on important issues. "[The job is on] a 24-hour schedule, because while we’re asleep, the rest of the world is awake," Rice told *Weekly Reader*.
Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey is the first woman to own and produce her own television talk show. She uses her star power to help others. She recently received an award in honor of the work she does with her talk show and charity. Her charity helps children and families around the world.

Muhammad Ali

Boxing champion Muhammad Ali received last year’s Presidential Medal of Freedom. It is the highest award the government can give a person not in the military. President Bush praised Ali for his sports successes and goodwill toward others. Ali travels more than 100 days a year to help charities around the world.
“African American Newsmakers” Questions

_____ 1. Wynton Marsalis organized a concert to help hurricane victims. This shows that he is
   a. a good musician.
   b. a giving person.
   c. rich.
   d. smart.

_____ 2. Condoleezza Rice advises the president. This shows that she is
   a. knowledgeable.
   b. friendly.
   c. beautiful.
   d. athletic.

_____ 3. Who illustrated the book, Martin’s Big Words?
   a. Condoleezza Rice.
   b. Oprah Winfrey
   c. Muhammad Ali
   d. Bryan Collier

_____ 4. Muhammad Ali was a boxing champion. To be good at boxing you need to be
   a. in good shape.
   b. friendly.
   c. wealthy.
   d. famous.

_____ 5. The author writes, "[Oprah] uses her star power to help others". What does that mean?

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“African American Newsmakers” Answer Sheet

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3. Who illustrated the book *Martin’s Big Words*?
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4. Muhammad Ali was a boxing champion. To be good at boxing you need to be
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5. The author writes, "[Oprah] uses her star power to help others". What does that mean?

   Answers will vary. This means that Winfrey uses her fame to bring attention to people and organizations that need help. She understands that, because she is famous, people might be more likely to listen to what she has to say.

   *Suggested Additional Vocabulary: inspire, charity, illustrate*