

READING COMPREHENSION: An Artist's Biography

Unit 7: ARTS



READING COMPREHENSION: An Artist's Biography

Umm Kulthum was born in 1898 in a small Egyptian village near the Nile Delta. Her father was an imam and her mother was a housewife. She learned how to recite the Quran and to sing by listening to her father. From a young age, she showed an exceptional singing talent. When she was 12, she joined her father's recital band. She dressed up as a boy. At the age of 16, she started learning old classical Arabic music. During the 1920s, she visited Cairo for several times and met different famous composers.

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In 1923, she moved to Cairo and started her professional career. She collaborated with famous Arab composers like Mohamed El Qasbiji and Daoud Hosni. The poet Ahmed Amine wrote 137 songs for her. She recorded about 300 songs and performed in many Arab capital cities, and in the House of Opera in Paris. A typical Umm Kulthum concert consisted of a performance of 2 or 3 songs over a period of 3 to 4 hours. Her songs were 45 to 90 minutes long. Umm Kulthum died in December 1975. Around 4 million people attended her funeral.

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Complete the chart with information from the text.

Artist's name	Umm Kulthum
Date of birth	
Origin (city/country)	
Number of songs recorded by her	
Date of death	

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Complete the chart with information from the text.

Artist's name	Umm Kulthum
Date of birth	1898
Origin (city/country)	a small village in Egypt
Number of songs recorded by her	about 300 songs
Date of death	1975

READING COMPREHENSION: An Artist's Biography

Are these statements true or false.

- 1. Umm Kulthum was born in Cairo.**
- 2. Her father was a musician.**
- 3. She sang with her father.**
- 4. She started learning old classical Arabic music at the age of 12.**
- 5. Umm Kulthum moved to Cairo in 1920s.**
- 6. Her songs were very short.**
- 7. She performed in Arab capital cities only.**
- 8. Four thousand people attended her funeral.**

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Are these statements true or false.

1. Umm Kulthum was born in ~~Cairo~~. **F**
2. Her father was ~~a musician~~. **F**
3. She sang with her father.
4. She started learning old classical Arabic music at the age of ~~12~~. **F**
5. Umm Kulthum moved to Cairo in ~~1920s~~. **F**
6. Her songs were very ~~short~~. **F**
7. She performed in Arab capital cities ~~only~~. **F**
8. ~~Four thousand~~ people attended her funeral. **F**

WRITING: An Artist's Biography

Complete the chart with information about your favorite singer.

Artist's name	
Date of birth	
Origin (city/country)	
Popular songs	
More details	

WRITING: An Artist's Biography

Use the information in the chart. Write a short bio of your favorite singer.

My favorite artist is _____ . He/she was born in _____ (date of birth) in _____ (place of birth). His/her most popular songs are _____ .