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*Little Guides to
Great Lives*

MAYA ANGELOU



Written by
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Laurence King Publishing

Marguerite Annie Johnson was born on 4 April 1928 in a large city called St. Louis, in Missouri, America. It was a place that was full of tall buildings, busy roads and jazz clubs. Marguerite lived with her mum Vivian, her dad Bailey and her big brother, Bailey Jr.

It was Bailey who first gave Marguerite the name 'Maya', after trying to say 'my sister' when they were younger.



Things soon became hard at home. Maya's parents began to argue more and more, and they decided to get a divorce. Maya and Bailey were sent to live with their Grandma Annie, in a place called Stamps, Arkansas. Maya had never even left St. Louis or been on a train, and Stamps was over 400 miles away from home!



Even though this was a time of great sadness for Maya, it was also when she started to develop her unique talents and skills. These included an extraordinary memory, a love of books and a limitless imagination. Maya learned poetry by heart so that she would never be bored. She existed in her own bubble of words and language.

