

MONDAY 25TH MARCH

Singer and pianist Aretha Franklin was born on this day in 1942. She is nicknamed “The Queen of Soul” and considered by some as the greatest singer of all time.

Her mother died when she was just 10-years-old, whilst her father was a famous baptist preacher, known as the man with the million- dollar voice. As a child, Aretha would often be taken to churches by her father where she would sing gospel songs for the **congregation**. Several famous singers coming to hear her father’s sermons identified her talent and encouraged her father to allow her to pursue a singing career. Her father became her manager and helped produce her 2-song demo record when she was just 18 years old.

Aretha would go on to become one of the most famous singers of all time, recording 38 studio albums and more than 100 singles including *I Say A Little Prayer*, *Think* (from film *Blues Brothers*), and *A Natural Woman* (iconic performance aged 73). She won 18 Grammy Awards and was the first woman inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

She was immersed in the civil rights movement throughout her life, donating money to civil rights causes. Her song *Respect* became an anthem for social change. In 1968 she sang at the funeral of Martin Luther-King. Aretha Franklin died in 2018.



- Have you ever heard any Aretha Franklin before?
- What is your favourite Aretha Franklin song and why is it *Think*?
- Do you think Aretha would have still become a famous singer if her father hadn't also been famous?