\*Most important and influential musician in the history of jazz music

Jazz

**1.** *Music*

**a.** A style of music, native to America, characterized by a strong but flexible rhythmic understructure with solo and ensemble improvisations on basic tunes and chord patterns and, more recently, a highly sophisticated harmonic idiom.

http://www.thefreedictionary.com/jazz

Louis Armstrong was born on Aug 4 1901 in New Orleans Louisiana.

Louisiana has been called the "birthplace of jazz".

Louis's father, Willis Armstrong, a turpentine worker, abandoned his family soon after he was born.

Mother's grandparents had been slaves.

Louis lived in a neighborhood where there was gangs. Known as "the Battlefield" gambling, drunkenness, fighting, and shooting

His mother was named Mayann.

Louis spent his early years living with his grandmother.

Late he went back to live with his mother and little sister Beatrice. Age 5

Louis enrolled in Fisk School for Boys

Louis worked collecting used bottles, delivering newspapers and rags and delivering coal when he was 7.

Louis often heard music from the dance halls and bars when he roamed the streets.

With the Karnofsky's help he bought an old beaten up cornet.

Louis dropped out of school in the 3rd grade to work for the Karnofskys. Age of 11

He lead a vocal quartet on the street to earn money for his family.

In 1913 he was arrested for firing a gun into the air on New Year's Eve and sent to a home for troubled boys, the Waif's Home.

At the home he talked the band director into letting him become a member of the band.

Later he became the band leader.

He practiced on the bugle and quickly learned the cornet.

He was released from the home at age 13.

He sold newspapers and unloaded bananas from boats to help his family.

He also went to listen to local bands and played a few "gigs".

Befriended Joe "King" Oliver, leader of the first great African American band to make records, who gave him trumpet lessons.

Later, Louis got a job performing on steamboats. Toured on steamboats and improved his skills for the next 3 summers.

The steamboat bandleader insisted Louis learn to read as well as play music.

This training helped him become a professional musician.

He got paid $50 a week to play on the steamboat. This was more than he had ever made.

Joe "King" Oliver, a famous cornet player, invited Louis to play in his band in Chicago.

(1922)

Worked there 2 years

Louis had performed small jobs for Oliver a few years prior. Oliver had been quite a mentor to Louis.

A famous bandleader, Fletcher Henderson, heard Louis in New Orleans in 1922. and asked him to go to New York to play. Louis refused then but when Henderson tried again in 1924, Louis agreed. (dq)

Louis switched to the trumpet to blend his sound better with the other members of the trumpet section.

Worked in NY 1 year

Returned to Chicago made his first recording with his own band "The Hot Five."

He originated scat singing

Once, during a recording session, Louis dropped his lyrics on the floor. The record producer encouraged Louis to keep on singing without the lyrics so he sang the chorus in nonsense syllables and improvised sound with perfect timing--otherwise known as "scat singing." He used his voice like an instrument, a practice he learned singing in his boys quartet in New Orleans. Louis's scat singing was recorded in his song, "Heebie Jeebies." The unpredictable rhythms of Louis voice inspired other artists to try scat singing. Soon it became a hot trend among jazz musicians and even non-jazz singers. Louis became the most influential singer of the 20th century.

Louis' records made him very famous. He performed on Broadway, played in movies, recorded music and gained intentional fame. Louse was an all round performer, singer master of trumpet, danced in some musicals, traveled the world, dedicating his life to bringing joy to people through music.