Alabama Voices

How four Alabamians shaped American culture after World War II

SS24.5.11a "Identify Alabamians who contributed to the growth of American culture post-World War II into the 1970s."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the passage. Underline each Alabamian's name, then number the part that tells how that person influenced American culture.

From Alabama to the Nation

1. After World War II, radio and television carried music into homes across the country. Hank Williams, who grew up in Alabama, sang songs such as "Your Cheatin' Heart." His plainspoken stories helped make country music popular with listeners far beyond the South. Nat King Cole, a Black singer born in Montgomery, hosted a national television variety show in 1956. His performances reached viewers across the United States.

2. Books also carried Alabama voices across the nation. Harper Lee grew up in Monroeville and published *To Kill a Mockingbird* in 1960. The novel follows a young girl as her town faces a trial shaped by racism. Millions of readers encountered its questions about fairness and justice. A book could influence culture by changing what people talked about at home, in classrooms, and beyond.

3. Culture includes everyday rules about who can take part in public life. Rosa Parks, born in Tuskegee, refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in Montgomery in 1955. Her arrest helped start a bus boycott led by local Black residents. Their actions challenged unfair segregation rules and drew attention across the country. Parks became a lasting symbol of the fight for equal rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which Alabamian helped country music reach listeners beyond the South? What about his songs helped?

2. Which Alabamian brought singing to a national TV audience in 1956? How did he do it?

3. Which Alabamian brought questions about fairness and justice to millions of readers? Name the book.

4. Which Alabamian became a symbol of equal rights? What did she do that helped start a boycott?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence museum label that pairs two Alabamians from different fields in the passage. Name each person and tell what each contributed, then explain in your own words why their stories belong together.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read the passage. Underline each Alabamian's name, then number the part that tells how that person influenced American culture. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which Alabamian helped country music reach listeners beyond the South? What about his songs helped?	**Hank Williams. His songs told plainspoken stories that appealed to listeners beyond the South.**
2	Which Alabamian brought singing to a national TV audience in 1956? How did he do it?	**Nat King Cole hosted a national television variety show.**
3	Which Alabamian brought questions about fairness and justice to millions of readers? Name the book.	**Harper Lee did so through *To Kill a Mockingbird*.**
4	Which Alabamian became a symbol of equal rights? What did she do that helped start a boycott?	**Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger. Her arrest helped start the Montgomery bus boycott.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Nat King Cole brought his singing into homes across the country through a national television show. Rosa Parks helped start a bus boycott that challenged segregation. Their stories belong together because both reached people far beyond Alabama and made Americans think about who could take part in public life.

Accept accurate descriptions of each person's contribution drawn from the passage. For the museum label, look for two people from different fields and a connection that goes beyond listing their achievements.