

Reading Comprehension

Violeta Parra

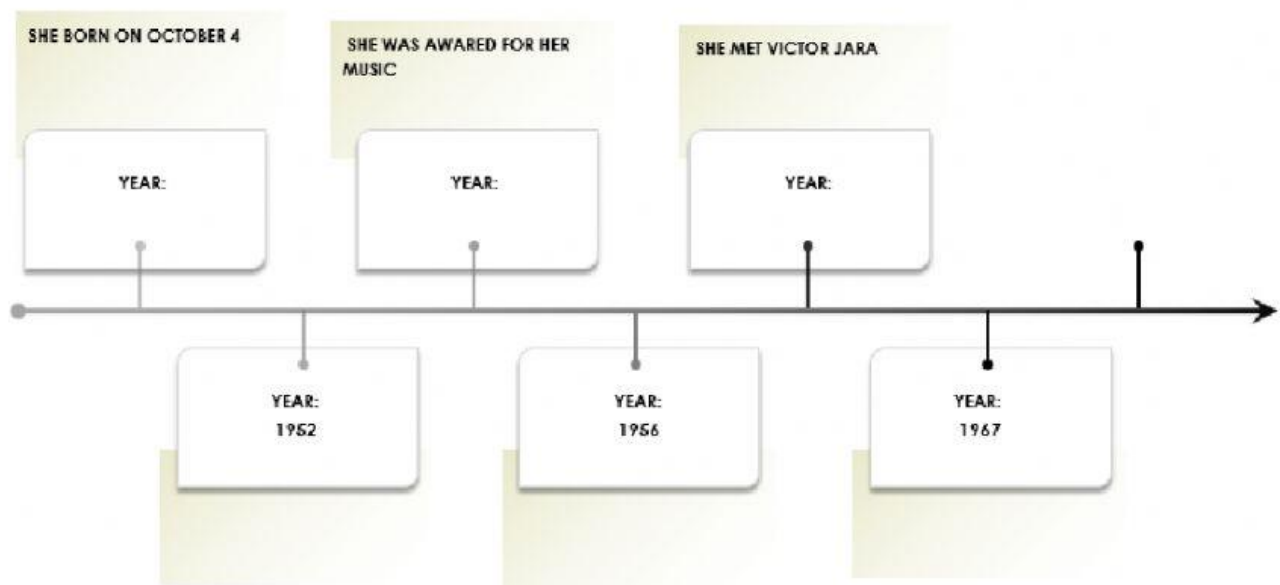
Violeta Parra, in full **Violeta del Carmen Parra Sandoval**, (born October 4, 1917, San Carlos, Chile—died February 5, 1967, Santiago), Chilean composer, folk singer, and social activist, best known as one of the founders of the politically inflected Nueva Canción (“New Song”) movement. In addition, she painted, wrote poetry, sculpted, and wove *arpilleras* (folk tapestries). Her best-known song, “Gracias a la Vida” (“Thanks to Life”), endures throughout the West as a beloved and poignant folk song.

Parra was born to a large, poor family in the small town of San Carlos in the southern region of Ñuble. Her father, a music teacher, taught all of his children how to sing and play various instruments, especially the guitar. She started writing songs at an early age, initially performing at bars, small ballrooms, and circuses. In 1952, encouraged by her brother poet Nicanor Parra, she travelled throughout Chile to record the breadth of Chilean folk music. Her exposure to that music served as her inspiration for Nueva Canción, and her work began to synthesize Chilean folk traditions and her growing concern for social conditions.

In 1954, having been awarded what was referred to as the “Chilean Oscar” at the Caupolicán Theatre for her music, Parra was invited to Poland to play at a youth festival. She popularized her music as she travelled throughout the Soviet Union and Europe, and she finally settled in Paris for two years, where she recorded several albums. Parra’s stay was cut short by the sudden death of her youngest daughter, and she returned to Chile in 1956. In 1957 she met with folksinger Víctor Jara and inspired the young artist to join the movement.

She committed suicide at age 49 while living in a tent on the outskirts of Santiago.

READING COMPREHENSION



1957

1917

SHE TRAVELLED THROUGHOUT CHILE

1954

SHE DIED ON FEBREUARY 5

SHE RETURNED TO CHILE FROM EUROPE

READ THE BIOGRAPHY AGAIN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

- 1.- WHERE WAS SHE BORN? _____
- 2.- WHAT IS HER BEST KNOWN SONG? _____
- 3.- WHO WAS A MUSIC TEACHER? _____
- 4.- WHO ENCOURAGED HER TO TRAVELLED THROUGHOUT CHILE? _____
- 5.- WHERE SHE RECORDED SEVERAL ALBUMS? _____