

Bessie Smith, an American singer, is known as the Empress of the Blues. She had a beautiful voice. Born in poverty in Chattanooga, Tennessee, she was helped in her career by Ma Rainey, one of the best known of the early women blues singers. After touring in the South, Smith went to New York City in 1923 and recorded with leading jazz musicians, including Louis Armstrong, James P. Johnson, and Benny Goodman. Then she became the most popular blues singer of her time, reportedly earning \$2000 a week at the peak of her career. She died in Clarksdale, Mississippi, after an automobile accident.



### A. Choose the best answer.

- What did Bessie Smith do?  
A. a singer      B. a dancer      C. a teacher      D. a worker
- She was born in a.....family.  
A. rich      B. wealthy      C. poor      D. bad
- .....helped her with her career.  
A. her mother      B. Louis      C. James      D. Ma Rainey
- She became the most popular .....of her time.  
A. blues singer      B. rock singer      C. pop singer      D. red singer
- She died in.....  
A. New York      B. Mississippi      C. Tennessee      D. England

### B. T (True or) F (False)

- Bessie Smith had a good voice. T/ F
- She recorded with other musicians. T/ F
- She didn't earn much money at the peak of her career. T/ F