

## B.B. King Reader's Theatre (6 – 8)

**To the readers:** The content for this reader's theatre was assembled from several sources that are cited within each section of the text. The quote references do not need to be spoken aloud. It might be helpful to use a highlight pen to mark your part, and the parts for all. Listen to others in your group as you read with them, so that your voices and words will blend into one sound. If you are reading a part by yourself, be sure to use a strong voice and clear diction.

- All B. King has been on the road since before it was paved.
- Voices 1, 2, 3, 4 Now in his 80s, he's still pursuing a career he began in the late 1940s, and continues to play more than 100 dates a year.  
– interview with Ted Drozdowski
- Voices 5, 6, 7, 8 He started life as Riley B. King in one of America's most impoverished places, the Mississippi Delta. He had little but the dream in his heart and a destiny that would take him around the world.
- All King remains the world's most influential guitarist, instantly recognizable by a single note.
- Voices 9, 10, 11 King has a reputation for being one of the nicest, most gracious men in show business.  
– interview with Ted Drozdowski
- All Civility is the cornerstone of B.B. King's character.  
– David Ritz, *Blues All Around Me*
- B.B. King 1 I was born in the great Mississippi Delta, that part of America that someone called the most southern place on earth. Born on September 16, 1925, on the bank of Blue Lake, between Indianola and Greenwood, near the tiny villages of Itta Bena and Berclair.  
– B.B. King, *Blues All Around Me*, with David Ritz
- B.B. King 2 I grew up on the plantation in overalls. That's all I had to wear. I swore to God that if I lived to be a man, I would have other types of clothes to wear. I have a few pairs of jeans, but I don't wear them around the stage.  
– interview with Ted Drozdowski
- All This is my belief. I believe that I'm never any better than my last concert.

- B.B. King 3 I believe that each night I do a concert or do a show it's like an audition, 'cause I remember the days when it was. If you played a night and somebody came in the next night and played better than you, you didn't come back.  
– B.B. King, *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman
- All B. B. is king. His heart-and-soul music has inspired me ever since I was a little boy. I truly believe he has influenced generations of singers and musicians. To me he's one of our great masters.  
– Stevie Wonder, quoted in *Blues ll Around Me*, B. B. King, with David Ritz
- Readers 12, 13 He was dedicated always to improving himself and his position, from the very beginning, from the very start of his career in music.  
– Peter Guralnick, in *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman
- All Without a doubt, B.B. King has influenced more rock and blues musicians than anyone else in history.
- Readers 14, 15 Sincere expression, beginning in speech, is the basis of B's music. I love hearing the patterns of speech in his music and the patterns of his music in his speech. The two are deeply intermingled and wonderfully complimentary.  
– David Ritz, *Blues All Around Me*
- Readers 16 Without question, blues is America's greatest music. Without the blues we would not have rock and roll, country, gospel, jazz.
- B.B. King 1 - 3 The most important figure in the blues is B.B. King.
- Readers 1 – 8 He wears his legacy well because he doesn't look on himself as someone who is anything other than an honest, caring human being. I think this is one reason people absolutely adore him.  
– Bill Ferris, *B.B. King Treasures*, B.B. King with Dick Waterman
- Readers 9 – 15 He is really a humble man who has been given a gift, and thoroughly enjoys sharing it. Why is he more of an icon today than ever? The answer is simple.
- All When you give more in life than you get, and you have an enormous amount to give, life gives back to you.  
– Floyd Lieberman, B.B. King's manager, *B.B. King Treasures*