

Units 1–6 Test A audio script

A [Track 14] Listen to a talk about the musician Robert Johnson.
Then check the correct answers.

Speaker: If you've never heard Robert Johnson, you've never *really* heard the blues. The blues is a uniquely American music style. It originated among African American communities in the southern part of the United States.

Robert Johnson was one of the most famous and most important blues musicians who ever lived. However, not much factual information is available about Johnson's life. Biographers did not begin seriously researching his life until the late 1960s, after many famous musicians, such as Jimi Hendrix and the Rolling Stones, identified Johnson as an important influence on them.

He was born in 1911, and he only lived to be 27 years old. Only a few photographs of him are known to exist.

Johnson started playing the guitar at a young age, and by the age of 20, his guitar playing was getting noticed by other musicians. In 1936, he traveled to San Antonio, Texas, to participate in the first of only two recording sessions he ever did. He recorded 16 songs. A year later, he recorded more songs – 11 of which were released. These songs were the ones that made him famous after his death in 1938.

Johnson's masterful playing and singing were admired by and influenced scores of musicians. His music is characterized by haunting melodies and a frenetic pace of guitar playing. Guitarist Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones said that when he first heard Johnson's music, he thought he was hearing two guitars. Only later did he realize that Johnson was doing it all himself.