

Units 1–6 Test B audio script

A [Track 15] Listen to a talk about the musician Louis Armstrong. Then check the correct answers.

Speaker: Born in 1901, Louis Armstrong grew up poor in New Orleans. He dropped out of school at an early age and began to sing in a group that performed on the streets of the city. As a youth, he got into trouble with the law and spent several years in a home for delinquent children. There, he learned to play the cornet and other musical instruments.

Armstrong soon realized that he was meant to have a career as a jazz musician. He got his start playing with the cornet player “King” Oliver in New Orleans. Armstrong followed Oliver to Chicago in 1922 and then moved to New York City two years later. In New York, he soon had his own band and began recording songs in which he played solo parts. His recordings of the late 1920s changed the direction of jazz music. Until that time, jazz had been primarily a type of music played in ensembles or groups of more than two players. With Armstrong’s brilliant playing of the cornet and then the trumpet, jazz became an art form for soloists.

From the beginning of his career, Armstrong was also a pioneer vocalist. Although he didn’t create it, he was one of the first artists to popularize scat singing. This form of vocalization is made up of sounds or syllables rather than recognizable words. His unique voice eventually became known around the world.

Armstrong’s worldwide fame became established through his work in motion pictures. In many of his movies, Armstrong was featured as both singer and trumpet player. By 1971, the year of his death, Louis Armstrong had appeared in more than 50 films.