

Project -

1. Read Article *Poet Maya Angelou chosen as one of two women to appear on the U.S. quarter*
2. Using [this list](#) as a guide, choose someone to research from history that made an impact in our lives (<https://www.ducksters.com/biography/> )
3. Using the research guide, collect enough information on your historical figure to persuade your audience on why he/she should be on a piece of currency
4. Create a PowerPoint Presentation that shows your research and persuades your audience to why your historical figure should be on a piece of currency
5. Present your PowerPoint to your family/friends. Remember to give eye contact and speak loud, clear, and at an appropriate pace.

# Poet Maya Angelou chosen as one of two women to appear on the U.S. quarter

By Atlanta Black Star, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.03.21

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Level **710L**



Image 1. The U.S. Mint released drafts of Maya Angelou and Sally Ride as they will appear on quarters in 2022. Photo: U.S. Mint

The U.S. Mint produces coins. In April, the Mint announced that two women have been selected to appear on new quarters: Maya Angelou and Sally Ride.

Maya Angelou was a well-known poet and nationally honored Black author. Sally Ride was the first American woman astronaut to travel to space in 1984. Angelou and Ride are part of the American Women Quarters Program. The program recognizes women who have made important contributions to the country.

Congresswoman Barbara Lee of California introduced the bill creating the program. She is pleased that the first women recognized by the program are outstanding people in science and literature. They paved the way for many who came after them and inspired young women. "I'm glad they are among the first of many to be recognized," she said.

The heads-side of the coin will have an updated engraving of President George Washington. The tails-side will have different women like Angelou and Ride. Twenty women will be chosen for the

tails-side. The coins will be issued over four years.

### **First Black Woman On A Quarter**

Angelou will become the first Black woman on a U.S. quarter. Throughout her career, Angelou was celebrated for her writing and poetry. She wrote "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," about her life. It is one of her most popular books.

During the 1950s and the 1960s, Angelou was an activist. She joined Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the fight for civil rights.

Angelou received many honors. President Bill Clinton awarded Angelou with the National Medal of Arts in 2000. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama in 2011. Angelou died at the age of 86 on May 28, 2014.

### **Reactions On Social Media**

The new quarters will begin rolling out in January 2022. On social media, news of the updates was met with mixed reactions. Some said it was a great way to honor women. Others felt the coin design did not look like Angelou.

People also questioned another currency program. They asked about the delay in placing Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill.

Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849. She made many trips back to the South. She rescued other enslaved people, including her family.

"We were promised #HarrietTubman on the Twenty. When will we see that?" wrote one person.

Tubman was supposed to replace President Andrew Jackson on the bill. Jackson owned hundreds of enslaved people. Jackson also supported the removal of Indigenous Americans from their lands as part of the "Trail of Tears."

### **Renewed Push For Tubman On \$20 Bill**

Obama introduced the plan to place Tubman on the bill in 2016. But it never happened. With Joe Biden serving as president, the program is being restarted.

It's important that American money reflect the history and diversity of the country, said Jen Psaki. She is the White House press secretary. "Harriet Tubman's image gracing the new \$20 note would certainly reflect that."



## Quiz

1 Read the following paragraph from the Introduction [paragraphs 1-4].

*The heads-side of the coin will have an updated engraving of President George Washington. The tails-side will have different women like Angelou and Ride. Twenty women will be chosen for the tails-side. The coins will be issued over four years.*

How does this paragraph support the main idea of the article?

- (A) by explaining how the American Women Quarters Program will work
- (B) by explaining why Maya Angelou will appear on the quarter first
- (C) by describing a problem that people have with the American Women Quarters Program
- (D) by describing what type of update President George Washington will get on the quarter

2 Select the answer choice that summarizes the article.

- (A) Maya Angelou and Sally Ride will appear on the back of the quarter. George Washington will also get a more updated look on the front.
- (B) Maya Angelou and Sally Ride will be two of 20 women on the tails-side of the quarter. Angelou was an activist and Ride traveled to space.
- (C) The United States Mint will honor Maya Angelou, Sally Ride and other women on the quarter. Some people liked the idea while others had questions about the \$20 bill.
- (D) The United States Mint will honor Maya Angelou, Sally Ride and other women for their achievements. Angelou wrote the book "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."

3 WHY do some people feel disappointed with Maya Angelou's quarter?

- (A) because they believe she should be on the \$20 bill instead
- (B) because they believe she should replace George Washington
- (C) because they think it is not fair that she got on the quarter before Sally Ride
- (D) because they think the design does not look enough like her

4 How did Barbara Lee become involved with the United States Mint's new quarter program?

- (A) She is the one who designed the pictures of Maya Angelou and Sally Ride.
- (B) She is the one who introduced the bill to start the program.
- (C) She is the one who chose which women would go on the quarters first.
- (D) She is the one who the Mint first recognized to be in its program.