

Jay-Z

Early Life

Shawn Corey Carter was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1969. Shawn went on to be known as Jay-Z; a world-famous rapper and businessman.

Shawn had a hard life growing up in 1980s Brooklyn. This part of New York was poor, and crime was a problem. Shawn lived in a rough area and was surrounded by guns and drugs for all his young life. He believed he would end up in jail. When he was just 12, Shawn shot his older brother in the shoulder during an argument. Thankfully, he never went to jail but was saved by music. He remembers his mother giving him a **boom box** for his birthday and encouraging him to perfect his talent.



Shawn didn't do well at school but was taught about rapping by his **mentor**, Jaz-O, an older hip-hop artist who helped Shawn with his music. Shawn was good at rapping and was known as 'Jazzy' to his friends. He changed his stage name to Jay-Z which was a tribute to his nickname and his mentor.

Career

Jay-Z started his hip-hop career by performing on other artist's albums. He was the co-founder of his own record label, Roc-A-Fella, in 1995 and released his first solo album, Reasonable Doubt in 1996. This would make Jay-Z famous and over the following decades he released 12 further solo albums. He believes the best song he's ever written is the track '4:44'.

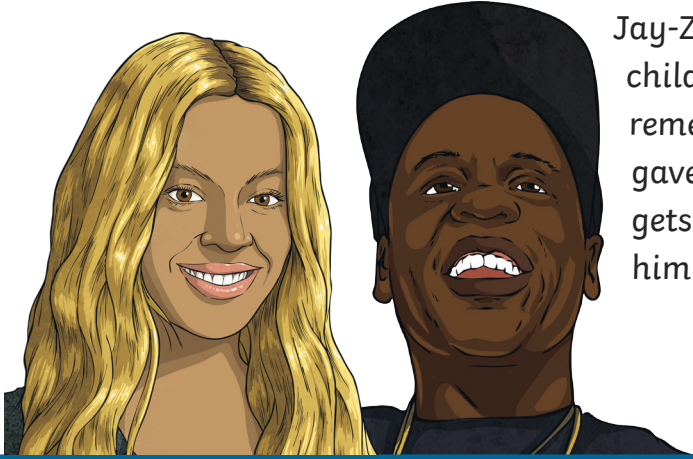
Jay-Z has created songs with many famous artists from Mariah Carey to Kanye West. A significant artist he collaborated with was the singer Beyoncé (former member of Destiny's Child). The pair fell in love and were married in 2008. The couple have three children; Blue, Rumi and Sir.

Jay-Z also runs several successful businesses including a Jay-Z clothing brand, a drinks



Jay-Z

company, and a beauty product company. Together with his wife, the pair are worth an estimated \$1.18 billion. This makes them one of the richest couples in the music industry.



Jay-Z has come a long way from his childhood in Brooklyn. He fondly remembers the boom box his mum gave him for his birthday but now he gets bigger gifts; Beyoncé once gave him a private jet!

Did You Know?

Jay-Z started his career by selling his records from the boot of his car.

Jay-Z donated \$1 million to help victims of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Glossary

Boom Box – A large portable cassette player with built-in speakers, popular in the 1980s.

Mentor – a teacher or guide.

Questions

1. What is Jay-Z's real name? Tick one.

☐

Mr Jay-Z

☐

Shawn Corey Carter

☐

Dennis Z

☐

Jeremy Zeebok

2. True or False? Jay-Z was born in London? Tick one.

☐

True

☐

False

3. What was the name of Jay-Z's first album?

☐

This is Jay-Z

☐

Notorious

☐

Unreasonable Trout

☐

Reasonable Doubt

4. Match the correct dates with the events below:

1996

Jay-Z gives £1 million to help people effected by Hurricane Katrina.

2005

Jay-Z marries Beyonce.

2008

Jay-Z releases his first album.

5. Jay-Z's has made songs with Mariah _____ and _____ West.

6. Name Jay-Z's three children:

7. What did Beyonce once give Jay-Z as a present?

Answers

1. What is Jay-Z's real name? Tick one.

- ☐ Mr Jay-Z
- ☒ Shawn Corey Carter
- ☐ Dennis Z
- ☐ Jeremy Zeebok




2. True or False? Jay-Z was born in London? Tick one.

- ☐ True
- ☒ False

3. What was the name of Jay-Z's first album?

- ☐ This is Jay-Z
- ☐ Notorious
- ☐ Unreasonable Trout
- ☒ Reasonable Doubt

4. Match up the correct facts:

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1996 |  | Jay-Z gives £1 million to help people effected by Hurricane Katrina. |
| 2005 |  | Jay-Z marries Beyonce. |
| 2008 |  | Jay-Z releases his first album. |

5. Jay-Z's has made songs with Mariah **Carey** and **Kanye** West.

6. Name Jay-Z's three children:

Blue

Rumi

Sir

7. What did Beyonce once give Jay-Z as a present?

A private jet

Jay-Z

Early Life

Shawn Corey Carter was born in Brooklyn, New York on December 4th, 1969. Shawn went on to be known as Jay-Z; a world-famous rapper and businessman. He is worth an estimated \$810 million, making him one of the richest musical artists in history.

Shawn had a hard life growing up in 1980s Brooklyn. This part of New York was poor, and crime was a constant problem. Shawn lived in a **housing project** and was surrounded by guns and drugs for all his young life. He believed he would end up in jail. When he was just 12, Shawn shot his older brother in the shoulder during an argument. Thankfully, he never went to jail but was saved by music. He remembers his mother giving him a **boom box** for his birthday and encouraging him to perfect his talent.

Shawn never graduated from college, but he entered a different type of education.

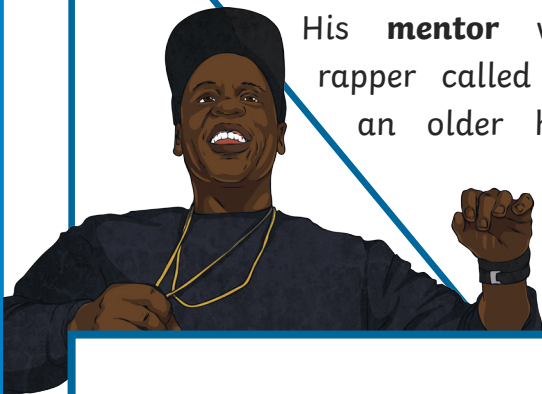
His **mentor** was a rapper called Jaz-O, an older hip-hop artist who helped

Shawn with his music. Shawn had an obvious talent for rapping and was known as 'Jazzy' to his friends. He changed his stage name to Jay-Z which was a tribute to his nickname and his mentor.

Career

Jay-Z started his hip-hop career by performing on other artist's albums, such as his good friend The Notorious B.I.G. He was the co-founder of his own record label, Roc-A-Fella, in 1995 and released his first solo album, Reasonable Doubt in 1996. This would catapult Jay-Z to fame and over the following decades he released 12 further solo albums. He believes the best song he's ever written is the track '4:44'.

Jay-Z has **collaborated** with many famous artists from Mariah Carey to Kanye West. One collaboration in 2002 changed his personal life forever. He collaborated with Beyoncé (former member of Destiny's Child) and the pair fell in love. They were married in 2008. The couple have three children. The oldest child, Blue, is the youngest person to ever appear on a Billboard hit record at just two days old, in January 2012!



Did You Know?

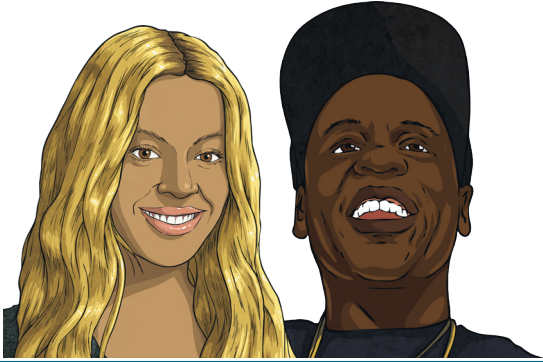
Jay-Z started his career by selling his records from the boot of his car.

Jay-Z donated \$1 million to help victims of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Jay-Z

Jay-Z also runs several successful businesses including a clothing brand, a drinks company, and a beauty product company. Together with his wife, the pair are worth an estimated \$1.18 billion. This makes them one of the richest couples in the music

industry. Jay-Z has come a long way from his childhood in Brooklyn. He fondly remembers the boom box his mum gave him for his birthday but now he gets bigger gifts; he was given a private jet by his wife for Father's Day in 2012.



Did You Know?

Jay-Z has had 14 number one hits in the US Billboard top 200 songs list. That's the second highest amount for anybody, ever!

Jay-Z is friends with Barak Obama.

Glossary

Boom Box – A large portable cassette player with built-in speakers, popular in the 1980s.

Collaborated – Worked with.

Housing project – Government-owned homes that are given to poor people to live in. Many 'projects' are associated with gang crime and drug culture.

Mentor – a teacher or guide.

Questions

1. What is Jay-Z's real name?

2. Where was Jay-Z born?

3. Which of these people has Jay-Z collaborated with?

☐

Ed Sheeran

☐

Johnny Cash

☐

Kanye West

☐

Amy Winehouse

4. Jay-Z's first album was called _____, He released it in _____.

5. Name one business that Jay-Z owns, other than his record label:

6. Why do you think Jay-Z thought he would end up in jail?

7. Which fact shows that Jay-Z gives money to charity?

8. Match the correct dates with the events below:

1996

Jay-Z gives £1 million to help people effected by Hurricane Katrina

2002

Jay-Z marries Beyonce.

2005

Jay-Z releases his first album.

2008

Jay-Z works with Beyonce for the first time.

9. How has Jay-Z's life changed for the better since he was a child?

10. Do you like Jay-Z's music? Why?/Why not?

If yes, what is your favourite track and why?

Answers

1. What is Jay-Z's real name?
Shawn Corey Carter.
2. Where was Jay-Z born?
Brooklyn, New York.
3. Which of these people has Jay-Z collaborated with?
 - ☐ Ed Sheeran
 - ☐ Johnny Cash
 - ☒ Kanye West
 - ☐ Amy Winehouse
4. Jay-Z's first album was called **Reasonable Doubt**. He released it in **1996**.
5. Name one business that Jay-Z owns, other than his record label:
One of the following: Clothing, drinks, beauty products.
6. Why do you think Jay-Z thought he would end up in jail?
Example answer: He lived in a poor, dangerous area with a lot of gun crime around him.
7. Which fact shows that Jay-Z gives money to charity?
He gave \$1 million to help the Katrina victims.
8. Match the correct dates with the events below.

1996		Jay-Z gives £1 million to help people effected by Hurricane Katrina
2002		Jay-Z marries Beyonce.
2005		Jay-Z releases his first album.
2008		Jay-Z works with Beyonce for the first time.
9. How has Jay-Z's life changed for the better since he was a child?
He is now rich and does not live in fear of violence and drugs.
10. Do you like Jay-Z's music? Why?/Why not? If yes, what is your favourite track and why?
Children's own responses.

Jay-Z

Early Life

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Shawn never graduated from college, but he entered a different type of education.

His mentor was a rapper called Jaz-O, an older hip-hop artist who

helped Shawn with his music. Shawn had an obvious talent for rapping and was known as 'Jazzy' to his friends. He changed his stage name to Jay-Z to reflect this, and in **homage** to his mentor Jaz-O.

Career

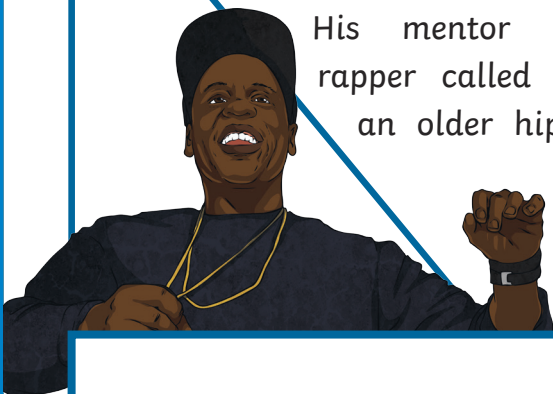
Jay-Z started his hip-hop career by performing on other artist's albums, such as his good friend The Notorious B.I.G. He was the co-founder of his own record label, Roc-A-Fella, in 1995 and released his first solo album, Reasonable Doubt in 1996. This would catapult Jay-Z to fame and over the following decades he released 12 further solo albums with the latest at the time of writing being 4:44.

Jay-Z has **collaborated** with many famous artists from Mariah Carey to Kanye West. One collaboration, in 2002, changed his personal life forever. He performed a track called 03 Bonnie and Clyde with Beyoncé Knowles (former member of Destiny's Child). The pair fell in love and were married in 2008. The couple have three children. The oldest child, Blue, is the youngest person to ever appear on a Billboard hit record at just two days old, in January 2012!

Did You Know?

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Jay-Z

Jay-Z also runs several successful businesses including the clothing brand Rocawear, a drinks company, a beauty product company and real estate businesses which deals in homes and other buildings. Together with his wife, the pair are worth an estimated \$1.18 billion. This makes them one of the richest couples in the music industry.

built his career on rapping about his difficult upbringing and now raps about his great success. Is Jay-Z the perfect example of living the American dream?

Jay-Z has come a long way from his childhood in Brooklyn. He fondly remembers the boom box his mum gave



him for his birthday but receives more extravagant presents now; he was given a private jet by his wife for Father's Day in 2012. He

Did You Know?

Jay-Z has had 14 number one hits in the US Billboard top 200 songs list. That's the second highest amount for anybody, ever!

Jay-Z is friends with Barak Obama.

Glossary

Boom Box – A large portable cassette player with built-in speakers, popular in the 1980s.

Collaborated – Worked with.

Homage – Showing respect to somebody publicly.

Housing project – Government-owned homes that are given to poor people to live in. Many 'projects' are associated with gang crime and drug culture.

Questions

1. In what year was Jay-Z born?

☐

1965

☐

1969

☐

1979

☐

1981

2. What two words are used to describe the area Jay-Z grew up in?

3. Which word here is the closest to 'mentor'?

☐

Friend

☐

Father

☐

Teacher

☐

Muse

4. What was Jay-Z's first solo album called?

5. Why do you think Jay-Z thought he would end up in jail?

6. Why do you think Jay-Z collaborated with so many other hip-hop artists?

7. 'Jay-Z is a better businessman than an artist'

Explain what this means and why some people believe that this is true.

8. Put the following statements in order by writing numbers 1 to 8 in the boxes. Can you figure out what year they happened as well?

- ☐ _____ Jay-Z married Beyonce.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z shot his brother in the shoulder.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z set up Roc-A-Fella Records.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z donated \$1 million to victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z released his first album.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z's daughter, Blue, was born.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z receives a private jet as a present from Beyonce.
- ☐ _____ Jay-Z first collaborated with Beyonce.

9. True or false? Jay-Z is friends with an ex-president of the USA? _____

Research Challenge

Which artist has more number ones than Jay-Z on the Billboard Chart?

Answers

1. In what year was Jay-Z born?

- ☐ 1965
- ☒ 1969
- ☐ 1979
- ☐ 1981

2. Jay-Z comes from a **poor or deprived** part of New York.

3. Which word here is the closest to 'mentor'?

- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Father
- ☒ Teacher
- ☐ Muse

4. What was Jay-Z's first solo album called?

Reasonable Doubt

5. Why do you think Jay-Z thought he would end up in jail?

Example answer: He lived in a poor, dangerous area with a lot of gun crime around him, he assumed he would end up getting involved in this crime and therefore end up in jail.

6. Why do you think Jay-Z collaborated with so many other hip-hop artists?

This increases his publicity, makes him known to more fans. This helps him create the best music possible by combining his talent with others.

7. 'Jay-Z is a better businessman than an artist'

Explain what this means and why some people believe that this is true.

Jay-Z is incredibly rich and a lot of this money comes from his non-musical businesses. These business successes are built on his raw musical talent however. He is very good at promoting himself.

8. Put the following statements in order by writing numbers 1 to 8 in the boxes.

- 6** 2008 Jay-Z married Beyonce.
- 1** 1981 Jay-Z shot his brother in the shoulder.
- 2** 1995 Jay-Z set up Roc-A-Fella Records.
- 5** 2005 Jay-Z donated \$1 million to victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- 3** 1996 Jay-Z released his first album.
- 7** Jan 2012 Jay-Z's daughter, Blue, was born.
- 8** June 2012 Jay-Z receives a private jet as a present from Beyonce.
- 4** 2002 Jay-Z first collaborated with Beyonce.

9. True or false? Jay-Z is friends with an ex-president of the USA? **True**

Research Challenge

Which artist has more number ones than Jay-Z on the Billboard Chart?

Answer will vary