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The Savvy Reader—Clarifying, A Collection of Readings

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Manhattan

Five boroughs make up New York City. They are Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. The biggest borough, or part of the city, is Manhattan. Many of the famous landmarks of New York City are located in Manhattan. You can find each of these places by knowing how Manhattan is divided. People who live in Manhattan describe location using the terms downtown (south), mid-town, and uptown (north). East and west can be figured out by knowing which side of Fifth Avenue a landmark is on.

Many smaller neighborhoods make up Manhattan. Many neighborhoods are known for specific reasons. For example, Greenwich Village is known for being an art and cultural district that is also home to New York University. TriBeCa, which stands for Triangle Below Canal Street, is another Manhattan neighborhood. A third important neighborhood in Manhattan is Harlem. A popular time in American and jazz music history, known as the Harlem Renaissance, took place there in the 1920s.

People not only recognize Manhattan by its neighborhoods, but also by its landmarks. The Empire State Building, Broadway—home to some of the country’s best theaters—Times Square, Wall Street, and the Museum of Modern Art are all in Manhattan. Thus, the city lends itself to the many people who live there, as well as people who want to visit. There is something for everyone in the heart of the Big Apple!
Can you imagine a place where you can ride your bike, see a polar bear, and grab something to eat all within a few city blocks? Well, you can at Central Park, an historic landmark in Manhattan. Two men named Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed the park in 1858. The park has had some good times and bad times. But, it’s had mostly good times since the Central Park Conservancy was started in 1980.

The Central Park Conservancy works with the city of New York. They have a big job to keep up with the most-visited park in the United States! The group makes sure that the grass, plants, flowers, and trees in the park are taken care of. They also tend to the memorials, or statues, and bridges in the park. As if that wasn’t enough to see in the park, there is also a zoo, a jogging trail, two restaurants, and plenty of room for a picnic, in addition to an ice-skating rink. So, the next time you’re in the city and need a break from all the cars and buildings, take a stroll in Central Park. You’re bound to find something you’ll like!
Anthony Johnson Leaves the Arcade

Story by Andy Wolinsky
Illustration by Nicole Tadgell
“Yo, Anthony!” Javon Walker called out as he rolled up on his battered, old bicycle, the noisy pedals squeaking in a desperate plea for grease. “Yo! Anthony! Get out here!”

Anthony Johnson was out back with his older brother, Terrell. The boys were working on Terrell’s motorcycle, trying to tweak the starter. Terrell had been saying, “See, if we can just move this bolt around just a bit, just the slightest bit, this ride will start up with one kick every time.” Anthony loved working on his brother’s motorcycle. He knew that one day, when he finished high school, he might just have a motorcycle of his own. But that was a long way off. “You’re still just a kid,” Terrell would always say.

When Anthony heard Javon yelling from the front of the house, he put down his brother’s wrench and trotted around the house. “What’s up?” he asked as Javon coasted to a squeaky stop. It wasn’t just the pedals that squeaked. The whole thing squeaked: the brakes, the tires, even the handlebars squeaked. “Man, get some oil for that ride! That squeaking is LOUD!” Anthony said with a laugh.

Javon ignored Anthony’s teasing. He was obviously too excited to care. “Did you hear, man, did you hear?” he asked, breathlessly.

“What?” said Anthony.

“I was just talking with my cousin Joe,” said Javon, “down at The Slice, and he said that he’d heard that they’re opening a new video arcade right around the corner from the pizza place!”

“Really?” Anthony said. “When?” Anthony and Javon loved playing video games. The problem was that there were too few places to play them. Neither of them had a video-game system at home, and the ones in The Slice were too expensive. Anthony had heard that video arcades usually had plenty of games that cost only a quarter, or maybe fifty cents. That would be perfect!

Javon said, “The grand opening is tomorrow! Isn’t that the coolest thing you’ve ever heard?”

Anthony had to admit that it was pretty cool.

“We should totally go tomorrow!” Javon exclaimed.

“I’ll have to talk to my parents about it,” Anthony said, “but that shouldn’t be too much of a problem.”

“Yeah, same here,” said Javon. “I’ll go do that right now.” And off he rode, squeaking, down the street.
Before Anthony could talk to his parents, he had to check something. He ran upstairs to his room. Opening his closet door, he looked for his plastic piggy bank. It wasn’t really a piggy bank because it didn’t look anything like a pig. It looked more like a lumberjack chopping a log. The little plastic log had a slot in it where you could drop coins. There was a cap at the bottom that you could unscrew to get the coins out.

Anthony took his little bank out of his closet and put it on the bed. He unscrewed the cap. The coins clicked and jingled as they poured out onto Anthony’s bedspread. Anthony then sorted his coins out. He put pennies in one pile, nickels in another, dimes in another, and finally quarters in another. Anthony had been saving quarters for a few years now, and he had amassed quite a few.

Totaling them up, Anthony discovered that he had $16.73. That would make for a pretty good day at the video arcade, he thought. But before he could make any other plans, he had to talk to his parents. He had to get their permission to let him go with Javon to the arcade. He didn’t think that would be a problem. But he had to find out for sure.

Anthony went downstairs to find his dad. His dad was in the garage, working on something. “Hey, Dad,” Anthony said, trying to get his dad’s attention.

His dad turned around when he heard Anthony’s voice. “Hey, son, what’s up?”

Anthony told his dad all about the new video arcade. “Is it okay if I go tomorrow with Javon?”

His dad said, “That’s fine with me. But those video games cost money. What are you going to do about that?”

Anthony explained about the $16.73 he had in his lumberjack bank. “That’s plenty of money to take to an arcade,” Anthony said.

A stern look came over his dad’s face. “That’s true, son,” he said, “But think about this. You’ve been saving those coins for a long time. And let’s say you spend all that money tomorrow. You’ll probably have a good time, but then you’ll come back with nothing to show for it. And then you’ll have no money.”

“Wow, I hadn’t thought of that,” Anthony said.

“Well, that’s the problem with video games,” his dad continued. “They can be fun, but they’re expensive, and the enjoyment doesn’t last.”

Then Anthony said, “Wait. I have an idea. What if I take just a few of my coins, like maybe a dollar or so, and see how much fun I have? I’ll leave the rest here, where it’s safe.”

“No, you’re using your head,” his dad said with a smile.
CHAPTER 3

Over the phone, Anthony and Javon planned to meet outside the new video arcade at 11:00 am. That gave Anthony plenty of time to have breakfast and get some chores done before he took off. As he was getting ready to go, his brother asked, “You want a lift?”

Anthony’s dad overheard the boys. He said sternly, “There is no way Anthony is getting on the back of that motorcycle, Terrell. It’s bad enough that you give him all these ideas by letting him work on that thing with you. When he’s your age, he’ll probably want one. But he’s way too young to be riding around with you on that thing. Understand?”

“Yes, sir,” Terrell said sheepishly as his face turned red. He was embarrassed. He should have known better. So Anthony caught the #5 cross-town bus from the corner near his house to the corner near the new arcade. Anthony liked riding the bus, and school kids his age could ride for free. You’d better believe there were quite a few kids from Anthony’s school riding the bus that day, headed for the arcade. Tyrone was there sitting in the back, making cracks out the bus window until some grownup told him to stop. Franco was sitting across the aisle from Anthony, listening to music on his headphones. A few other kids that Anthony recognized were sitting here and there throughout the bus.

In his pocket, Anthony could feel the six quarters he’d brought with him. Anthony would reach into his pocket and jingle them around until his palms smelled like metal. There was no doubt about it, Anthony was excited.

When the bus stopped at the corner, most of the kids Anthony’s age got off. Anthony did too. He watched a lot of the kids scramble through the doors under the bright sign that read Lightsmith’s Funhouse and Palace of Games. Anthony wanted to go in, but he thought it would be best if he just waited until he saw Javon. So he looked around. After a few minutes, he saw Javon locking his old, rickety bike up to a parking meter. Anthony walked over to Javon.

“You don’t need to lock that scrapheap!” Anthony said with a laugh. “Nobody’s going to steal that thing.”

“Hey man, it’s my pride and joy, you know? I’ve got to protect it from harm!”

“You’ve got to be kidding me,” Anthony said, laughing, as they walked toward the doors and into the arcade.
CHAPTER 4

Anthony and Javon didn’t know what to expect before they walked into the arcade. It was amazing. Lights were flashing all over the place. Bells were ringing, sirens were wailing, and computers were beeping. And above it all, Javon and Anthony could hear the yells, laughs, and shouts of joy from young people playing all sorts of games.

Some played sports games. Others played action games. Some played the same kinds of carnival games you’d see at fairs and festivals. Some rolled small wooden balls up a miniature bowling alley into tiny white pins, while others knocked balls around a table that looked like an ice hockey rink.

Every now and then, a voice would come over the loudspeaker. “Welcome! Welcome! Welcome to Lightsmith’s Funhouse and Palace of Games! Here, having fun is number one!” the voice would shout out. Some of the younger kids would clap for joy, while some of the older kids, the high school kids, would just roll their eyes and get back to their technology and adventure games.

Then Anthony felt Javon grab his arm. He heard Javon say, “Oh, snap! Check it out, Anthony! They have Mega-Baseball 2006! And the machine’s open! We’ve got to play it!” Anthony and Javon had heard all about this video game. According to the press, or at least to the magazines and television shows that the boys watched, this was the best video baseball game that had ever been created.

Experts had been saying that it was more like playing real baseball than any other video that had come before it. Javon said, “You and I can be the Monarchs, and we can take on the Barons! Just like we talked about!”

“You’re on!” Anthony said, and the boys raced over to the machine. They each took out a quarter and prepared to put them in the coin slot.

“Hey, wait a minute!” Anthony said, his voice full of disappointment. “This game costs 75 cents to play! What a scam!”

But Javon said, “But still, we’ve got to play it! It’s the best game in the world!”

Anthony felt the six quarters in his pocket. “Well,” he figured to himself, “if I play this game, I’ll still have three quarters left over.”

“I guess so,” he said aloud to Javon.

“All right, my man!” Javon said.
CHAPTER 5

But there were a few problems. Javon and Anthony weren’t very good at the game. Maybe it was because they hadn’t played it before OR maybe it was a tremendously difficult game. Either way, neither of the boys could score any runs when their teams were up to bat. Also, neither of the boys could strike out the computerized batters. Before they knew it, they’d lost the game. It hadn’t taken any time at all.

“Man, we’ve got to play again! That was weak! I know we can do better!” Javon exclaimed. Anthony agreed. Before he knew what he was doing, Anthony put his last three quarters in the slot. Javon did the same. And, unfortunately, the result was the same. Neither boy could score against the computerized pitchers or strike out the computerized batters. Before they knew it, the game was over.

“Think we should play again?” Javon said.

Anthony reached into his pockets, which were empty. “I’d like to, but I can’t. I’m all out of quarters. I’m spent.”

Javon reached into his own pockets. “Oh, man! I’m out too! What are we going to do?” he asked.

“There isn’t anything we can do,” Anthony said as two other boys came up and pushed him and Anthony out of the way so they could play. “We’ve got to leave.”

“Yeah, I guess you’re right,” Javon said. “We should’ve brought more quarters, you know?”

“Well, I’m not sure that’s the right idea,” Anthony said. Anthony hadn’t had the amount of fun he’d hoped to have.

“Tell you what,” Javon said. “We have a vacation day from school tomorrow. Let’s meet here again, with more quarters. I know we can beat this game! It’ll be fun!”

Right when Javon said that, Anthony heard the voice on the loudspeaker say, “Having fun is number one.”

Anthony wasn’t so sure.
Anthony Johnson Leaves the Arcade

CHAPTER 6

Javon and Anthony said goodbye to each other outside the brightly lit, but not so fun, Funhouse. “Think about meeting here again tomorrow with some more quarters. I think we can really beat this game,” Javon said, as though he were almost pleading.

“I don’t know,” said Anthony, “I’ll think about it.”

“Fair enough,” Javon said. “Call me.”

“I will,” Anthony said. Then he turned toward the bus stop. “Oh no!” he shouted, “the bus is leaving!” Anthony took off in pursuit after the bus for a block and a half, knowing it was the last one leaving for an hour. But unfortunately, he couldn’t catch it.

Javon came riding up on his old, squeaky bike. “How are you going to get home? Do you want to sit on my handlebars?”

Anthony laughed. “Nah, that’s okay. That’s not very safe anyway. I’d rather get home intact. It’s a nice afternoon. I’ll walk home.”

“Suit yourself,” Javon said and pedaled away.

Anthony started walking home. Rather than thinking about how much fun the arcade had been, he was thinking instead about how much fun he hadn’t had. Then he started thinking about how six quarters had vanished so fast. Anthony didn’t think it seemed fair.

As he walked, Anthony passed one of the city softball parks. Anthony stopped to watch. As he stood, his fingers wrapped through the chain link fence, he realized that he recognized the people playing. He’d seen some of these people at his house. They were Terrell’s friends. Anthony looked closer. Someone was walking up to bat. It was Terrell, his brother.

“Go Terrell!” Anthony heard himself shout through the fence. Everybody in the outfield stopped and looked over at him. “Sorry!” he shouted.

Then he heard his brother say, “Hey, little bro! This one’s for you!” The pitcher hurled the softball toward Terrell. Terrell swung his aluminum bat with all his might. Even from the other side of the fence, Anthony heard an awesome PONG! as the bat struck the ball. The ball soared through the air toward Anthony. Anthony leaped up and caught the ball just as the ball crossed over the fence. Everybody on Terrell’s team started cheering. “Now that,” Anthony thought to himself, “looks like fun.”
CHAPTER 7

Even though Anthony had a good time watching the real softball game, he thought he’d give the virtual computerized game a second shot. So he called Javon the next morning. When Javon answered, he said, “Hey, Javon, let’s meet at the arcade at eleven, just like yesterday.”

“Cool, man, I’m glad you decided to give it another shot, you know? It’s supposed to be a really cool game, and I know we can do better at it today.”

“I certainly hope so,” Anthony said, though he really wasn’t sure. In fact, because he wasn’t so sure, Anthony decided he’d only take another three quarters with him. He didn’t want to spend any more than that, and he didn’t really care if Javon did.

Like the day before, Anthony caught the #5 cross-town bus to get to the arcade. And, just like the day before, there were plenty of kids Anthony’s age on the bus. They were all talking about the arcade. Franco and Tyrone were talking about all the games they’d played the day before.

Franco said, “Man, did you see me playing Street-Court Basketball Jams? I was doing awesome!”

“Hey, that’s nothin’,” replied Tyrone. “You should’ve seen me playing Gridiron Pro Football 7! I scored like ten touchdowns in five minutes!”

Anthony was thinking about the baseball game that he and Javon had played. He was thinking about how much fun it wasn’t and how much fun he had not had. The other boys kept yakking on and on about the games they’d played. Two boys, the same two who had pushed Anthony and Javon out of the way at the baseball video game, were talking about that game.

“I hit a home run so far, all the lights on the machine started blinking,” one boy said.

“Well, I threw a fastball so fast the batter didn’t even have time to swing!” the other boy exclaimed.

Anthony had enough. He turned to Tyrone and Franco. “Hey, guys,” he said, “have you ever played real basketball or football?”

They looked at him. “What do you mean, Anthony?” Tyrone asked.

Anthony didn’t know exactly what he meant, but he said something anyway. He said, “I mean, don’t you think the real sports are much more fun than the virtual, computerized games? I mean, really, don’t you think so?”

All the other boys started laughing. “Man, that’s whack!” Franco said.

Anthony blushed as he turned to face forward on the bus. He rode the rest of the way in silence.
When Anthony got off the bus, Javon was waiting for him, his old, squeaky bike already locked to a parking meter. “Hey, buddy,” Javon said.

“Hey,” Anthony said, quietly. He looked up at the glowing sign that read Lightsmith’s Funhouse and Palace of Games. The day before, the sign had seemed so jovial and inviting. This time, that wasn’t the case. This time, it seemed dull and silly. Anthony turned to Javon. “I only brought enough quarters for one game, Javon,” Anthony said.

Javon looked surprised. “What?” he exclaimed. “Why? How are we going to get better if we don’t keep trying?”

“I don’t know,” Anthony said. And the truth was he didn’t really care.

“Well, if you came to play, let’s at least play,” Javon said. The two boys walked into the arcade.

The Mega-Baseball 2006 game was vacant, so the boys ran over to the machine. “Same as yesterday,” Javon said. “We’ll play as a team. We’ll be the Monarchs, and we’ll take on the Barons.”

“Whatever,” Anthony said. The boys each put their three quarters in. And do you know what? The same result as yesterday occurred. Neither of the boys could score against the computerized pitcher. Neither boy could strike out the computerized batters. Before they knew it, their first three quarters were gone, and the game was over.

“Well, I’m out,” said Anthony.

“No, man!” Javon exclaimed eagerly. “I’ve got more quarters. Let’s keep playing!”

“Dude, that’s a waste of your money, don’t you see that?” Anthony said, somewhat angrily. “We’re no good at this game, and it’s stupid anyway. I don’t want to play this game anymore.”

“Fine, be a quitter,” Javon said, and Anthony could hear indignation in his voice as well. “But I’m going to keep playing, even if I have to play by myself.” With that, Javon turned his back to Anthony and put three more quarters in the machine’s slot.

Anthony stood behind Javon, trying to think of something to say. But he couldn’t. For just a few moments, Anthony watched Javon’s first two batters strike out on the screen. Anthony didn’t want to watch anymore.
Anthony decided that he’d walk around the arcade a bit. As upset as he was with the baseball game, he was still curious about what was so appealing to all these kids. “Why do they want to waste their coins?” Anthony thought to himself. He wandered down the rows and rows of virtual games. He walked past the bangs and booms of the action and adventure games—Gear-Tech Sector 18. Star Strike. Planet Attack. Jungle Mission Re-Con. Anthony couldn’t believe the names of some of these games.

Then he walked around the rows of the virtual sports games. He saw Franco playing Street-Court Basketball Jams. He saw Tyrone hooting and hollering as he played Gridiron Pro Football 7. As Anthony watched them play, he thought about how much fun it looked like Terrell was having out there on the real softball field. In a strange way, Anthony felt a little bit of pity for these kids, playing these unreal games. Of course, he also felt a bit stupid himself, having come back to this arcade a second time.

Anthony walked farther toward the back of the arcade. He saw a computerized putting green. That didn’t make sense to him at all. “The point of golf is to be outside, enjoying the outdoors,” he said to himself. “Why would someone want to practice golfing indoors?” Then, all of sudden, Anthony stopped dead in his tracks. Through the crowd, Anthony saw his brother, Terrell. What could he be doing here?
CHAPTER 10

Anthony walked up to Terrell. “Hey, Terrell,” he said, barely loud enough for his brother to hear him over the sounds of the arcade. Terrell turned around to face him.

“Hey, little bro! What’s shakin’?” Terrell asked Anthony, giving him a pat on the shoulder.

Anthony was confused. “What are you doing here, Terrell? This place is stupid. All the games are dumb, especially the virtual sports games. Plus, they’re all a big old waste of money.”

Terrell chuckled and mussed up his little brother’s hair. “That’s right, bro,” he said, laughing. “Those virtual sports games and the action and adventure games are really silly. And they’re not good for you either. They hurt your eyes. They even rot your brain. I heard of this one kid, about your age, who spent so much time playing some fake football game, staring at a screen, that he forgot how to speak to other people! He forgot how to use language!”

“Really?” Anthony exclaimed, thinking about Tyrone, Franco, and Javon.

Terrell laughed. “No, not really. I made that up. But those games aren’t good for you.”

“So what ARE you doing here, then, big brother?” Anthony asked. He was really confused at this point.

“Well, I was headed over to the batting cages,” Terrell said.

“What are batting cages?” Anthony asked. He was so confused now, he had no idea what was going on.

Terrell smiled. “Just follow me,” he said.

Anthony followed Terrell all the way to the back of the arcade to a door that read Outdoor Arena. Terrell opened the door for Anthony, and they walked outside. Anthony couldn’t believe what he saw out there. He saw rows and rows of these cages. Each one was almost big enough to put a small house into. On one side of each cage was a home plate, just like on a real baseball or softball field. On the other end of the cage was a machine. It looked like a cannon. In most of the cages, people would stand holding aluminum bats. The cannons would shoot baseballs or softballs at the batter. Real, actual balls! Not fake, computerized, or virtual balls, but real ones!

The batter would then swing at the approaching ball, just as if it were in an actual game. The batter might hit the ball on the ground. The batter might swing and miss. If the batter hit the ball hard enough, the ball would slam against the far side of the cage. Anthony thought it was very cool. It seemed much neater than the computer games back inside.
Terrell led Anthony toward one of the cages farthest in the back. A group of people whom Anthony recognized were clustered around one of the cages. It was Terrell’s softball team.

“Hey, guys,” Terrell said as they approached the group. “This is my little brother, Anthony. You remember our cheering section yesterday? That was him.”

A chorus of “Hey, Anthony, what’s up” and “How’s it going, man?” came from the group. Terrell introduced Anthony to everybody, though Anthony had trouble remembering so many names.

Then Terrell said, “Anthony’s going to practice with us today.”

“That works for me,” said one of the girls on the team, a girl who Anthony believed was named Maggie. The girl smiled at Anthony. Anthony smiled back.

“Really?” Anthony said, looking at his brother.

“Sure, why not?” Terrell said.

“That would be awesome!” Anthony exclaimed.

CHAPTER 11

Anthony and Terrell sat on a bench and watched the others take turns batting in the batting cages. Anthony noted that the girl, Maggie, could really hit. On her first swing, she hit the softball so hard that it rocketed toward the far end of the cage.

Bang! The ball struck the wall of the cage and dropped to the ground.

“Holy cow!” shouted Anthony.

“Hey, nice hit, Mags!” shouted Terrell.

“Thanks, T!” she shouted back. “I’m no frail chick!”

Even before he had a chance to bat, Anthony realized that he was having a great time. “This is much cooler than those games inside,” he said to Terrell.

“Yeah,” Terrell said. “The field we play games on is often booked, and sometimes even overscheduled, so we routinely don’t get enough practice time in. This is a tolerable solution.”

“Is it expensive?” asked Anthony.

“Nah, it’s not too bad,” said Terrell, “especially when you split the cost between so many people.”

“And it’s not a waste of money, is it?” asked Anthony.

“No way,” said Terrell. “First, it’s exercise. You’ll notice that when it’s your turn to bat. You’ll be exercising your arms. And, you’ll build up skills that are much better than the ones you get from just standing in front of a computer screen. Besides many people play softball their whole lives. So the skills you get from these practices will
help you for a long time. Although some people do keep playing video games as they
grow up, most people eventually give them up as they grow older.” Terrell stood up,
grabbed a shiny plastic batting helmet and aluminum bat, and said, “Now watch
a real master at work.” He smiled as he said it.

“Knock ’em out of the park, bro!” Anthony said.

With Terrell’s first pitch, he swung as hard as he could. Anthony expected to hear the
BANG of the bat against the ball, followed by the sound of the ball against the far end
of the cage. But what he instead heard was the THUD of the ball hitting the mat behind
Terrell. He had swung and missed! “Nice work, bro!” Anthony yelled, laughing.

Terrell looked up at him and smiled. “Like I say, that’s what practice is for!”

CHAPTER 12

Finally, it was Anthony’s turn. He had to admit to himself that he was nervous.
For some reason, he really wanted to impress his brother and his brother’s friends way
more than he even cared about impressing Javon with that silly video game. Carrying
a bat, Anthony walked through the gate into the batting cage.

Maggie ran over to the other end of the cage, where the cannon was. She knelt by the
machine and yelled, “Have you ever done this before, Anthony?”

“No, never once!” Anthony yelled back.

“Okay!” she responded. “I’ll slow the machine down a bit, so the balls don’t come
at you so fast.”

Anthony held the bat just like he had watched so many professional players do
on television. He dug his feet into the dirt and waited. Soon the softball came hurtling
out of the cannon right at him. Anthony waited, for just a second, and then swung as
hard as he could.

THUD! The ball hit the mat behind him. “That was fast!” he yelled.

One of Terrell’s friends laughed and said, “You swing like your brother!”

“Very funny, Joe!” said Terrell, though he was laughing too. For some reason, Anthony
knew that they were just laughing and having a good time. They weren’t making fun of
him. Then Maggie ran over to Anthony’s end of the batting cage.

She said, “I just paused the cannon for a minute. Okay, listen to what I say. Choke up
on the bat. That means hold it a little higher up the handle. It’ll give you more control over
your swing. Keep your eye on the ball. You don’t have to be a slugger. Don’t try to hit a
home run. Just try to make solid contact with the ball. Just try to be a consistent hitter.
You ready?”

Anthony was a bit nervous. “Uh, I think so,” he said. He changed his grip on the bat.
Then Maggie ran back to the cannon and flipped the switch. In just a moment, the softball
came hurtling out of the cannon. Anthony watched it approach. When it came near him, Anthony swung. He didn’t swing as hard as he could. He just swung a little bit.

PONG! He hit the ball. The ball sailed toward the back end of the cage. It didn’t make it all the way, but landed on the ground and rolled about 10 feet!

“All right!” shouted Joe.

“Way to go!” shouted Maggie.

“That’s a base hit!” shouted Terrell. “Good work!”

Anthony was incredibly proud of himself. “Mind if I try a few more?” he asked the group.

“Go for it!” they all yelled. Anthony practiced for a while longer. He didn’t hit every pitch, but he hit most of them. Some didn’t go very far, but quite a few did. One even went far enough that the ball rolled up against the far wall of the cage.

Anthony was having the time of his life. “This is way better than that stupid Mega-Baseball 2006,” he said to himself. Then he thought about Javon. He wondered if Javon was still playing that game.

After a dozen pitches or so, Terrell called to him. “All right, little bro, let someone else have a shot.”

Anthony gladly sat down and watched the rest of the team practice.

CHAPTER 13

On the way home, Anthony sat in the back seat of Joe’s car. Maggie sat in the passenger seat. Terrell had offered him a ride home, but Anthony had to remind him that their dad didn’t like Anthony riding on the back of the motorcycle. Anthony had offered to take the bus home. He didn’t want to be a pest, the annoying little brother that didn’t know when to leave.

“Forget about it,” Joe had said. “I’ll give you a ride. Your house is on my way. Hop in!”

Anthony thought about all the fun he’d had hanging out with Terrell and his friends. He’d thought about how much fun it was to practice in the batting cages. He was smiling as he rode. He looked behind him through the rearview window. Terrell was riding his motorcycle right behind them. Anthony smiled through the window and gave Terrell the “thumbs-up” sign. Terrell smiled and gave it right back.

When Anthony got home, his dad was in the garage working. Anthony ran into the garage, shouting, “Dad! Dad! Guess where I was?”

His dad put down his tools and said, “You were probably at that video arcade, throwing all of your coins into that electronic wasteland, weren’t you?”
Anthony Johnson Leaves the Arcade

Terrell followed Anthony into the garage. “No, Pops,” Terrell said. “Well, yes, but not playing video games. He was at the batting cages with me. Anthony’s got some skill and talent with a softball bat.”

Anthony’s dad looked at both boys. “How’d you get home? On Terrell’s motorcycle?”

“No, Dad,” Anthony asserted. “Terrell’s friend Joe gave me a ride…in a car.”

“Oh, good,” his dad said. “So, batting practice, eh? It’s better than those silly video games, isn’t it? Now, have a seat and tell me all about it. You think you’re ready for the major leagues?”

“Well, I don’t think I’m THAT good,” Anthony said, blushing and laughing. As he told his dad all about the batting cages and how well he did, he saw his dad look up at Terrell and mouth the words thank you. Then Anthony saw Terrell wink at their dad, as if to say no problem.

CHAPTER 14

The three-day weekend was over. The next day was a Tuesday, and Anthony had to go back to school. All day, from the bus ride through his classes, Anthony kept thinking about how much fun he’d had at the batting cages. He couldn’t focus on Mrs. Miniver’s math class or Mr. Seiborg’s science class. He thought about nothing but the batting cages. In fact, during lunch, he listened to Tyrone and Franco talk about Street-Court Basketball Jams and Gridiron Pro Football 7. As he listened, he thought to himself, “These guys don’t know what they’re missing.” Anthony knew, he just knew, that he’d had a better time than the other guys. But, he figured, what they didn’t know wouldn’t hurt them.

When the final bell rang, Anthony and Javon were getting ready to go. As they walked toward the bike racks so Javon could get his bike, Javon said, “Hey, let’s go back to the arcade and work on Mega-Baseball 2006 some more. What do you say?”

Anthony said, “Nah, man. That’s kids’ stuff. I’ve got the real deal going on.”

“Kids’ stuff?! What are you talking about, man? That game is awesome! Besides, what do you have better to do? Huh? C’mon, tell me.”

Anthony knew that Terrell had a softball game this afternoon, after Terrell got off work. So Anthony said, “I’ve got a real, actual softball game to play.”

As they reached Javon’s bike, Javon said, “What? You don’t have any softball game to play. What are you talking about? You’re lying.”

“I am not,” said Anthony.

“Whatever, dude,” Javon said. Then he unlocked his bike and rode away toward the arcade.
Anthony ran to catch the #5 cross-town bus. He made it just in time. When he neared the softball field, he pulled the little yellow rope that told the bus driver to stop at the next stop. The bus stopped, and Anthony got off. Anthony saw that Terrell and the rest of the team were just about ready to start the first inning. Anthony ran up to them.

“Hey, guys,” he said, panting.

Joe said, “What are you doing here, little man?” Anthony was confused. He was here to play, of course, so he said so.

Terrell laughed a short laugh. Then he said, “You’re not on the team yet, little bro.”

Anthony couldn’t understand what was happening. “But I did so well in practice! We all had a good time! I thought because I did so well, I’d be on the team!”

Terrell looked at him and said, “Bro, you haven’t practiced enough yet. You haven’t practiced fielding or throwing. You’ve only practiced hitting. Know what I mean?”

Anthony didn’t know what to say. He was crushed. He could feel tears welling up in his eyes. Maggie could see it, and she kindly put her hand on his shoulder. “Oh, Anthony,” she tried to say. But before she had the chance, Anthony knocked her hand away. He ran the rest of the way home.

CHAPTER 15

When Anthony got home, his father was already home from his day shift. His father saw Anthony run into the yard. “Hey, slugger! What’s up!” he yelled before he saw how upset Anthony was.

“I don’t want to talk about it, Dad!” Anthony shouted as he ran through the front door. He slammed it shut behind him and ran up the stairs to his room. He turned on some loud music and flopped down onto his bed.

Anthony lay there for quite a while, thinking about what had happened. He kept asking himself questions. “Why did I tell Javon that video games were ‘kids’ stuff’?” “Why didn’t Terrell let me play in the game? Why did I think they would?” He sat there in the afternoon light until he heard his brother come home on his motorcycle. Anthony opened the window and peered down at the lawn. He watched his brother pull up and then saw Terrell and their dad talking. Anthony couldn’t hear what they were saying. He watched his dad point up at Anthony’s window. He watched his brother shrug his shoulders as if to say, “I don’t know what happened, Dad!”

All of a sudden, Anthony decided what he’d do. With all of his determination, he decided that the next day, he would take out all of his coins from his lumberjack bank and go with Javon to Lightsmith’s Funhouse and Palace of Games. With Javon as his
teammate, Anthony would become the best Mega-Baseball 2006 player the world would ever know. That would show Terrell! Who cares if he got rid of all of his coins?


Anthony apologized for what he’d said to Javon earlier. “Listen, man, let me make it up to you. Let’s go to the arcade tomorrow and conquer that game. I’ll bring all the coins. I’ve got more than fourteen dollars!”

“Whoa! Dude!” Javon said. “That’s sounds like a plan. I’m totally down with that idea.”

CHAPTER 16

The next day, before class, Javon and Anthony met in the hallway. “Man, this is going to be so awesome! We’re going to totally rule with that game! I’m so psyched!”

Anthony tried to be as excited as he had been before. But it was difficult. “Yeah,” he said, without much enthusiasm, “it should be fun.” Although when he said it, he wasn’t sure he meant it. He felt all the coins jiggling around in his backpack. Was he beginning to regret what he was doing?

Things didn’t get much better at lunch. Anthony and Javon sat down with Tyrone and Franco. Javon said, “Check this out, guys. After class, Anthony and I are going to the arcade. We’re going to win Mega-Baseball 2006! I guarantee it!”

Tyrone laughed. “Man,” he said, “I’ve seen how bad you are at that game. You couldn’t win that game if you played it for a week straight!”

Javon said, “No, check it out! We’ve got so many quarters, we’ll be unstoppable! Anthony’s got like fourteen dollars!”

“Wow!” said Tyrone. “That’s a lot of quarters! You guys just might do okay! I’ll be sure to watch.”

“You’d better,” Javon said, “because it’s going to be awesome.” Anthony just sat in silence. He didn’t know what to think anymore.

When the school day ended, Anthony and Javon walked out of school together.

“Tell you what, man,” Javon said. “I’ll just leave my bike here, and you and I can walk over to the arcade together.

“Whatever,” Anthony said. Then all of a sudden, Anthony heard a familiar horn honking. It was his dad’s truck, pulling into the school’s drive. But his dad wasn’t
driving it. Terrell was behind the wheel. The truck pulled up next to the two boys. Terrell rolled down the window. “What do you want?” Anthony said, angrily.

“I've got something for you,” Terrell said, and then reached onto the seat next to him. He pulled out an old paper sack and tossed it to Anthony. Anthony caught it and opened it. Inside was an old, worn, and weathered softball glove.

“What’s this?” Anthony asked.

“It’s Dad’s old softball glove. He said he wanted you to have it,” Terrell said. He continued, “You’re going to need it. We’ve got fielding practice in 15 minutes.”

“Seriously?” Anthony exclaimed. He couldn’t believe it.

“Yep, hop in,” Terrell said. Anthony walked over to the truck until he heard Javon clear his throat.

Javon! What was Anthony going to do? He turned to face Javon. “Uh,” he began.

Javon cut him off. He said, “Man, get in the truck. The video game can wait.” Anthony could see that Javon was upset, but Anthony knew Javon was just trying to do the right thing.

“Are you sure, man?” Anthony asked.

Javon wiped his eyes with his sleeve and said, “Yeah, man, I’m sure. Get out of here.”

“Thanks, man,” Anthony said as he hopped in the truck. Then he thought for a minute. “Do you want to come?” he asked Javon.

Javon thought for a minute. “Nah,” he finally said, “that’s all right. You guys go on ahead.”
Anthony and Terrell motored over to the softball field. The rest of the team was there. “Nobody was scheduled to use the field today, so we thought we’d get some fielding practice in. You down with that?”

“You bet I am!” said Anthony gleefully.

Then Terrell said, “Now listen, Anthony. This doesn’t mean you’ll be on the team. This is just a chance to practice with some good players. You can learn a lot about hitting at a batting cage, but you can’t learn fielding and throwing until you get out on a field. Maybe someday you’ll be on the team, but not necessarily right now. Okay?”

Anthony realized that he never should have assumed that he’d be on the team. He wasn’t nearly good enough. “That’s fine, bro,” he said. “I’m just happy to be out here.”

As they got out of the truck, Terrell said, “Now try on that glove. Dad said he had it when he was your age, so it should fit.” Anthony tried it on, and it felt wonderful. It felt comfortable, like a second skin.

“It feels great!” he said.

He followed Terrell out onto the field. Maggie was up to bat. Terrell said, “Okay, now when the ball comes to you, just scoop it up and throw it to me. Then he yelled “Hey, Mags! Hit some toward Anthony!”

“You got it!” she yelled back. Maggie threw the ball up and hit it with the bat. Sure enough, the ball soared through the air and then bounced about twenty feet in front of Anthony.

Anthony sprinted forward and scooped up the ball with his mitt. Then he grabbed the ball with his bare hand and fired it over to Terrell. Terrell caught it and said, “Nice play, little bro!

“Yeah, nice play!” yelled Joe from the sidelines.

“Thanks, guys!” Anthony and the rest of the gang practiced fielding and throwing until the early evening. Anthony learned to grab the ball as it rolled. He learned how to catch the ball in the air. Anthony learned that as much as he liked batting, he liked fielding even more.

As Anthony and Terrell drove home, Terrell said, “You’re going to make the team some day, little brother. I guarantee it.”

“Really?” said Anthony.

“Yeah,” said Terrell. “Why don’t you come out and support the team for tomorrow’s game?”

“I’ll be there,” said Anthony. “You can count on it.”
Anthony Johnson Leaves the Arcade
CHAPTER 18

The next day came. Javon met Anthony at school. Anthony said, “Hey, are we cool about yesterday?” He hoped they were.

“Yeah, man, we are. In fact, I found three quarters in my backpack, so I went to the arcade. I tried to play that baseball game again. That game just isn’t any fun. Plus, I’m just no good at it. Forget that game, man.”

So Anthony said, “Why don’t you come watch my brother’s softball game today?” Javon agreed that that would be fun. So after school, they rode the bus over to the softball diamond. There was actually quite a crowd there, but Javon and Anthony found two seats together, about three rows up.

“Go Terrell!” shouted Anthony when he saw his brother. He saw Maggie, too. “Go Maggie!”

Maggie and Terrell looked up in the stands and waved. “Go team!” shouted Javon. “This is fun,” he said to Anthony. “It sure is,” Anthony agreed.

The game was a close one. By the seventh and final inning, Terrell’s team was up three runs. There was just one out left in the game. However, the opposing team had the bases loaded. A runner was on first. A runner was on second, and there was also one on third. Terrell’s team just needed to get one runner out, and they would win. But if three runners scored, the game would be tied. If more than three runners scored, Terrell’s team would be behind.

The opposing batter stepped to the plate. She dug her heels in. Maggie was the pitcher. She got ready to throw the ball. WHOOSH! She threw the ball. PONG! The batter swung and struck the ball. It was a line drive, right toward Terrell in center field. Terrell leaped to catch it. But he leaped too far. The ball ricocheted off Terrell’s shoulder and fell to the grass. Terrell stood up, grabbed the ball, and threw it toward home plate, but it was too late. Two runners had scored. Although Terrell’s team still needed only one out, they were only up by one run.

Then Anthony watched Terrell call for a time out. Something was wrong with his shoulder. He couldn’t straighten his arm. Even from the stands, Anthony could see that Terrell was in some pain. The umpire called “Time out!” Terrell jogged over to the umpire. Terrell couldn’t hear what they were saying, but it was clear that Terrell couldn’t play anymore. He was in too much pain. Anthony didn’t know what would happen next. Who would take his place?

Then the umpire and Terrell pointed into the stands. But they weren’t just pointing into the stands. They were actually pointing at Anthony! The umpire yelled up into the stands. “Anthony Johnson, come down here!” Anthony looked around, wondering if they meant some other Anthony Johnson. But no, his brother was motioning him to come down.
Anthony ran on to the field. “This is my little brother,” Terrell said. “He’s going to play the rest of the game for me. Is that okay?”

The umpire said, “Sure, if he’s up for it. Are you up for it, son?” he said, looking at Anthony.

Anthony looked at his brother. His brother nodded. “Well, sure,” Anthony said. “I’m up for it.”

“Then get out there!” Terrell said, handing his mitt to Anthony. “Just remember what you practiced, and you’ll do fine.”

Anthony took the mitt from Terrell. I can do this, he said to himself. I can do this. As he ran past Maggie, she gave him the thumbs up sign. Anthony flashed it right back. Then he took his place in center field. “C’mon, Anthony!” he heard Terrell shout from the stands.

The time had come. The batter dug in at the plate. Maggie got ready to pitch. She wound up and WHOOSH! The ball soared to the plate. PONG! The batter swung and hit the ball. It soared into the air. Anthony looked up and saw that it was coming right toward him. If he caught it, the game would be over. If he dropped it, his team would be behind. My team needs me, he thought to himself. He raised his mitt into the sun. The ball came closer and closer and closer…

THE END
All That Jazz!

American Music, American Musicians

By Tanya Jackson
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INTRODUCTION:
Where Today’s Music Comes From

Most young people like a certain type of contemporary music. For some, it might be rock and roll. Some really get into rhythm and blues. For others, it might be country and western. For still others, it might be rap, or maybe rap’s more poetic cousin, hip-hop. Regardless, people listen to the music they like. Listening to popular music is enjoyable. It helps you relax, and it can take your mind off things. It’s also something that you can do with your friends, as you all listen and enjoy music together.

However, did you know that modern music doesn’t come from thin air? In other words, it has to come from somewhere. All music is an outgrowth of music that came before it. All of today’s music has some elements of music that came earlier. Not that new music sounds the same as old music, but if you know the history of music, you’ll be able to tell how new music connects with old music. And one of the more popular and long-lasting musical styles of the 20th and 21st centuries is a style called jazz. Let’s learn a little about this musical form, including some of the more famous men and women who made jazz the lasting musical force that it has been for so long.

Words to know:
contemporary (adj): Modern, current. Contemporary music is the music that people enjoy today.
THE HISTORY OF JAZZ

Let’s start with the history of jazz. Many American musical experts and historians believe jazz is the ultimate American musical creation. That’s because jazz is the first music to come from America. African American communities in the early 20th century developed this musical art form. Jazz music comes from the African American experience. The earliest roots of jazz were found in the proud spirituals sung by African American slaves during the period of American slavery.

After the civil war, as African American communities began to grow in the south and east, these communities began to develop their own musical forms. Ragtime came out of the Midwest. Its fast rhythms and improvisational styles became very popular, especially for dancing. Out of the plantations of the south spiritual hymns and blues songs arose. African Americans began combining these forms of music in their churches, adding instruments to the songs. This was the beginning of the jazz movement. Small public dance halls and music clubs began to open, and people would come to meet and perform. Jazz was born. The music was different in every city, which is one of the best, most interesting things about jazz: it came from so many different places at the same time. New Orleans, New York, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Baltimore all had their own early forms of jazz.
In the early 20th century, advances in technology made it possible for people to hear recorded music from all over the country. Musicians would play their music and record it, and people could hear it on the radio and on early records.

Some cities had musical styles that were more popular than others. New Orleans, for example, gave the art form some of its most famous early jazz musicians. But the more people heard jazz, the more it excited them. People started playing it all over the country. Some of these people would not be famous for long. Others would become some of the most beloved and cherished musicians in all of American history. Let's learn about some of those more famous musicians.

First, we'll learn about early jazz musicians, whose popularity spanned the 20th century, and then we'll learn about some contemporary jazz musicians.

**Know Your Jazz:**
Instruments like the clarinet, saxophone, piano, guitar, and trumpet were all popular jazz instruments in the early 20th century. They still are to this day.
LOUIS ARMSTRONG:
What a Wonderful World

Let’s start with perhaps one of the most famous and beloved jazz entertainers in history—Louis “Satchmo” Armstrong. Born on August 4, 1901, Louis Armstrong was raised in New Orleans. Armstrong learned to play the cornet, his most famous instrument, at a correctional school. The headmaster of the correctional school believed that playing music would help keep his pupils out of trouble. As Armstrong grew up, he started playing his cornet, and later his trumpet, in a number of bands that traveled on riverboats up and down the Mississippi River.

In 1922, Armstrong’s career exploded. A famous Chicago jazz musician named Joe “King” Oliver had seen Armstrong play and invited Armstrong to join his band. Armstrong left New Orleans for Chicago. As he grew in popularity, Armstrong moved all over the country, playing with different bands everywhere. In New York City, Armstrong started his own jazz band, the Hot Five (which eventually grew to become the Hot Seven). Soon after, Louis Armstrong became perhaps the most famous jazz musician in the world.

Armstrong’s methods of playing the trumpet changed the face of jazz. He enjoyed improvisation, or the making up of music, as he played. He developed the idea of the improvised solo, in which one musician would play during a break in the song, perhaps only

Know Your Jazz:
Louis Armstrong earned his nickname, “Satchmo,” because of the way he played his trumpet. He would puff his cheeks out really wide, so each cheek looked like a satchel, or bag. So people started calling him “Satchel Mouth,” which was soon shortened to “Satchmo.”
accompanied by the drums. Armstrong taught jazz musicians that they could be bold and expressive during their solos. The solo is a standard part of jazz music today.

Armstrong was not just a trumpet player. He also became known for his deep, raspy singing voice. He recorded hundreds and hundreds of songs. Many he sang by himself, and many he recorded as duets with other famous musicians. The title of his most famous song, “What a Wonderful World,” explains a lot about Armstrong and his popularity. Those who knew Armstrong said that he was one of the kindest, happiest, and most hard-working jazz musicians in the world. For the rest of his long musical career, Armstrong would often play more than 200 gigs a year. He continued this hardworking career until his death in 1971. Most experts believe that jazz music would not be as popular as it is without Louis Armstrong.

**Words to know:**

**gig (n):** A paid musical performance. Louis Armstrong played thousands of gigs throughout his life.
At a time when mostly men performed popular music, nobody expected to come across Ella Fitzgerald, also known as “Lady Ella” or the “First Lady of Song.” Fitzgerald was born in Virginia in 1917 and moved to New York City as a young girl. Her singing debut was at the world-famous Apollo Theater in 1934. She sang at one of the Apollo’s early amateur nights, at which unpaid and often unknown musicians and singers would take the stage and strut their stuff.

Fitzgerald wasn’t unpaid or unknown for long once famous bandleader Chick Webb heard Fitzgerald sing. Her scat style of singing impressed him. Scat is a style of singing in which the singer doesn’t sing words, but makes his or her voice sound like a brass horn. You may have heard a singer sing something like “zip-a-dee-doo-dah” or “be-bop-shoo-bop.” That’s scat. Webb knew that the
addition of Fitzgerald was just what his already-famous band needed. His band agreed, and they immediately hired her.

Fitzgerald became famous not only for her scat singing, but also for the way she brought many different styles of music into her singing. She brought gospel, blues, and even Christmas carol styles into her music. That’s one of the many reasons Fitzgerald is so important to jazz. Just as jazz came from many different styles, Ella Fitzgerald brought many styles of music into her jazz.

Fitzgerald became perhaps the most popular female jazz musician of the 20th century. She became one of the first female musicians to tour not only the United States, but all over Europe as well. As her career grew, Fitzgerald became known for her acting. She played a musician in a number of films.

Many female musicians of today, including country stars, blues singers, and jazz musicians, consider Ella Fitzgerald to be one of the most culturally important jazz figures in history. In fact, the Society of Singers Lifetime Achievement Award, given out once a year, was renamed the Ella in 1989. During her lifetime, she recorded over 200 albums and around 2,000 songs. Fitzgerald died in 1996.

Know Your Jazz:
Ella Fitzgerald was also popular for being an excellent mimic. She could perfectly imitate many of the famous singers of her day. Audiences loved Fitzgerald’s imitations of both Louis Armstrong and Marilyn Monroe.
Perhaps one of the most famous jazz composers in history was Edward Kennedy Ellington, also known as “Duke” Ellington. Ellington was born in Washington, D.C., in 1899. Ellington’s father worked in Washington for the Navy, but both he and his wife were amateur musicians. As a result, Ellington began taking piano lessons at age seven. As a boy, he became more and more attracted to the arts in general. Ellington chose to attend a school devoted to commercial art. There, Ellington spent much of his time listening to old-time pianists. This made him realize that he wanted to be a full-time musician.

Like the other musicians we’ve learned about, Ellington learned tricks and found guidance from an older, more established musician. Ellington traveled to Philadelphia and sought out the pianist Harvey Brooks. After learning from Brooks, Ellington formed his first band, Duke’s Serenaders, in 1917. In 1923, the band moved to New York City and renamed their group The Washingtonians as a salute to Ellington’s hometown. Ellington conducted the band from his piano stool, which sat on the front of the stage with the band behind him.
The Washingtonians traveled up and down the East Coast, playing in clubs in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. The band got its first big break in 1927. Then the famous Harlem Cotton Club hired the Washingtonians as their house band.

So many famous musicians traveled through the Cotton Club, and the Washingtonians played with all of them. Being part of the house band allowed Ellington to focus more time on composing music. He would eventually be known as one of the most famous of all American composers.

Ellington started composing jazz for all types of musicians. He became involved in experimental dance music, and he wrote music for movies and plays. Ellington and his band still occasionally toured, however, and played music all over the United States and Europe. Many experts say that for a time, Duke Ellington was the most famous African American celebrity on the planet. Duke Ellington brought so much to American composing that in 1969, President Richard Nixon awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the highest honor that an American civilian can achieve. France also awarded him their highest honor, the Legion of Honor, in 1973. Ellington died in 1974.

**Jazzy Phrases:**

**House Band** *(n):* The band that plays regularly at one club, rather than touring and playing gigs in various cities. The Washingtonians were the house band at the Cotton Club.
Now let’s turn to another famous jazz pianist, a man who was also one of the most important. His name was Thelonious (thuh-LONE-ee-us) Monk. Monk was born in North Carolina in 1917. But like many jazz musicians, Monk was raised in New York City; his family moved there shortly after he was born.

Also, like many great jazz musicians, Monk started playing piano at an early age. Monk started playing at age six, essentially teaching himself to play. After leaving high school as a teen to pursue music, Monk found work playing the piano, or tinkling the ivories, in local clubs and restaurants in New York City. In 1941, Monk was hired as the house pianist at Minton’s Playhouse, the then-legendary jazz club in Manhattan. It was there that Monk perfected his unusual style of improvisation. Monk enjoyed playing the works of musicians who had come before him, as well as the music of other musicians that he admired and
respected. Monk especially enjoyed playing the music of Duke Ellington, while adding his own special tricks to the songs.

Monk also began recording with the Coleman Hawkins Quartet, a then-famous jazz group. By 1947, Monk’s unique style identified him as the band’s leader and defined the quartet’s style for the rest of their short history. Monk eventually left the band and recorded on his own. Some of the songs he recorded were songs he had written; others were his versions of classics. One of his best-known songs is called “Mysterioso,” which features him on the piano accompanied by a xylophone player. The title fits the song because Monk’s improvisation makes the song sound deep and mysterious.

Monk became one of the most well-respected musicians in the industry in the 1950s and 1960s. He didn’t produce much music in the 1970s, and he passed away in 1982. But his improvisational style is still a major part of jazz music today.

If you were to go to a jazz concert today, you’d notice that during a song, each musician would take turns improvising and adding his or her own flair to the song itself. Much of that is due to the legacy of Thelonious Monk, the improvisational king of the ivories.

Words to know:
improvisation (n):
The art of diverting from a musical score while playing, or making things up. Thelonious Monk was known for adding improvisation to popular jazz tunes.

Know Your Jazz:
During the 1992 American presidential election, it became well known that the soon-to-be president Bill Clinton was a jazz musician. Clinton claimed that one of his major influences was Thelonious Monk.
Now let’s turn to a famous jazz saxophonist: one of the most famous jazz saxophonists in history. In fact, John Coltrane might be one of the most famous and best musicians in American history. John William Coltrane was born in September 1926. Like Monk, Coltrane was born in North Carolina, and like many other jazz musicians, Coltrane moved to the big city when he and his family moved to Philadelphia in 1943.

Coltrane became a musician as a way to express himself and his grief, for as a young man he lost three family members in just one year. Playing music helped him deal with those losses. He first learned to play the clarinet, but as he became more and more interested in jazz, he turned to the saxophone. Coltrane even played the saxophone in the U.S. Navy for a brief time.
Coltrane was playing music here and there in the 1940s and early 1950s. He made a few recordings now and then, but his big break came in 1955. That summer, he was playing in a few clubs when he received a phone call from a man who had heard him play. That man was Miles Davis. Davis invited Coltrane to join the quintet he was about to form. Coltrane jumped at the chance, and together the band recorded one of the most popular jazz records of all time.

Although Coltrane didn’t play with the quintet for very long, his work with Miles Davis influenced the dozens and dozens of records he made. Coltrane became known for taking Thelonious Monk’s ideas of improvisation a step further. Coltrane helped develop something called free jazz. The difference between free jazz and improvisation is that in improvisation, musicians just add their own tricks to a written song. In free jazz, musicians don’t follow any rules. The songs appear to have no structure or form; rather, the musicians just freely express themselves through the music they play. Like improvisation, free jazz is still a big part of contemporary jazz music.

John Coltrane passed away in 1967.

Know Your Jazz:
One of John Coltrane’s most famous songs is a remake of the song “My Favorite Things,” which is from the classic movie *The Sound of Music.*
Miles Davis: The Prince of Darkness

Let’s look at one more jazz musician from the past before we briefly turn to the jazz of today. Our next musician was, like all the others, one of the most important jazz artists of his time. His name was Miles Davis. Davis was born in a small town in Illinois in 1926. He and his family moved to a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri in 1927. He started playing music at a very early age, learning both the trumpet and the violin by the time he was seven years old. At sixteen, Davis’s father, a dentist, arranged for Davis to take trumpet lessons from a well-known trumpeter of the time named Elwood Buchanan. Elwood Buchanan taught Davis the tricks and skills he would need to make a great career out of jazz music.

Davis moved to New York City. He told his parents that he planned to attend a music school, but when he arrived in New York, he immediately met a trumpeter named Charlie “Bird” Parker. Parker, impressed by Davis’s skills, hired Davis to join his band. Davis’s career exploded from there.
After serving his time as a side man in someone else’s band, Davis set out on his own. It became immediately clear to all that Davis was unlike any other musician. Davis would hire people who played unusual instruments, such as the tuba and the French horn, to play with him. His compositions were excellent, and his skills as a trumpeter were unmatched. Jazz experts agree that Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong were Davis’s major influences. However, experts also agree that Davis was better at playing and composing than either of the other two men had ever been.

Davis was also known as much for his image as for his musical abilities. Davis was one of the first jazz musicians to insist on dressing well, in a suit and tie, every time he performed. Also, because many of his compositions were dark and somber, Davis became known in the industry as the “Prince of Darkness.” They called him “Prince” because of his attire, and the “Darkness” was because of his sound.

Of the musicians we’ve learned about, Miles Davis had the longest career. Despite a series of illnesses that kept him from playing music in the early 1980s, Davis bounced back and continued playing in his band. He even recorded an album in early 1991, shortly before his death. During the last years of his life and career, Davis brought jazz to an even wider audience, playing and recording with musicians from all types of music. Miles Davis’s influence will continue to affect musicians for years to come.
Present-Day Jazz

Some people believe that jazz had its heyday, or most popularity, in the 20th century. But others believe that jazz, that most American of musical forms, is still alive and well. Jazz clubs still exist in most cities in the United States. Some famous musicians of the early 21st century, like John Legend, Kenny G, and the Black-Eyed Peas have heavily jazz-influenced sounds. Other people believe that jazz is still a major part of all types of American music. They believe that we wouldn’t have rock and roll, hip-hop, or country and western if jazz hadn’t come first.

Of all American music, jazz is the most widely researched and discussed. You can find scores of books about jazz at your library. Some libraries even let you borrow jazz records, so you can take them home and listen to them. Also, there are hundreds of jazz-related websites on the Internet. And who knows? Maybe some person in your family was at one point really into jazz. Learning about jazz doesn’t just help you learn about an interesting musical form. In a way, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, and Miles Davis, among hundreds of others, help us learn about all American music.
Australia AND New Zealand:
The Crowns of Oceania

BY Adrian Mathenia
Deep in the Southern Hemisphere, between the Indian and Pacific oceans, there is a region called Oceania. It is a group of remote islands with stunning landscapes, fascinating cultures, and beautiful cities large and small. Beaches serve up surf and sun. Exotic rainforests shelter prehistoric animals. There are war cries, shark hunters, and entire civilizations built out of dreams. Approximately 25,000 islands make up Oceania, most of them very small. But three of the largest islands make up the two nations that we will explore. Australia and New Zealand are neighbors in Oceania and have a lot in common, but it is their differences that make them interesting to explore, so we will take a trip down under.
Australia: THE Land Down Under

The hot sun beats down on the red dirt of the Outback. A great wind sweeps sand across the arid mountains and down into the dusty valleys. A few miles away, a hard rain pours down on a coastal village settled amid tall green grass and thick woods. The continent of Australia is vast and wild with variable temperatures and weather. Finding crops suitable for the climate, tolerating hot days and freezing nights, and finding reliable sources of fresh water are a challenge. But considering the majestic scenery and plentiful natural resources, the challenge is more than worthwhile.

Captain James Cook of England explored Australia in 1770. Eighteen years later, the British began to use the island as a penal colony. That means they shipped their prisoners to Australia, then called New Holland, to get them out of the homeland. Then settlers who were not convicts or military arrived to start new lives in Australia. On January 1, 1901, Australia became an independent nation, which means the British government no longer ruled the land and the Australian people governed themselves.

Australia has a wide array of terrains and climates. On the northern end of the island, there are tropical climates, including rainforest. There are two mountain ranges: the Great Dividing Range on the east coast and the MacDonnell Ranges in the center. On the southeastern coast, the climate is temperate because the winds bring rain to the region. Because of the temperate climate, most of the nation’s development is in the southeast in Sydney, Melbourne, and the nation’s capital Canberra. Other than the small mountain range, the interior of the island is made up mostly of grasslands and deserts. These harsh terrains are famously referred to as the Outback.

temperate: adjective – Not subject to extremely hot or cold weather.

The Outback is a wild, arid, and harsh environment.
The Great Barrier Reef: Cities of Coral

Off the northeastern shore, the coastal waters house a natural treasure known around the world. A reef bursts with bright tropical coral surrounded by clear blue water and sparkling white sand. It is summer time, and the water is a warm 80 degrees. Thousands of fish and other aquatic creatures swim in the reef environment. The peculiar flatworm crawls across the ocean floor, its blue and orange body moving in ripples like a wave to propel it forward. A nudibranch [new-duh-brank] slides atop a tall branch of coral, displaying its bright red skin as a warning to predators that it is carrying some powerful poison. A yellow triggerfish with black spots burrows into the sand, squirting water from its mouth to dig up a crab for breakfast. With so many layers of beauty and life, this is a scuba diver’s paradise.

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the natural wonders of the world and the world’s largest structure created by living organisms. The reef structure is made of living coral and algae that help each other survive and grow. It includes 133,000 square miles of reef and 900 islands, making it so large it is visible from outer space. There are 2,900 separate reef structures within the Great Barrier Reef, and it continues to grow slowly each year. When the reef is growing, it is healthy and it is adding to the marine habitat.

Across its vast expanse, the Great Barrier Reef exhibits a full range of tropical colors. Where does the color come from? Microscopic algae live on the coral and convert sunlight into sugars. This process is called photosynthesis and feeds the algae and the coral and gives the coral its vibrant colors. Each kind of coral reacts to photosynthesis in a different way, causing the colors to vary. There are more than one hundred kinds of coral in a single acre, which makes a wide variety of colors such as red, orange, purple, and blue.
Life in the Great Barrier Reef is not limited to just coral and algae. The reef is one of the world’s largest and most diverse ecosystems. It is home to 1,500 species of tropical fish, 4,000 species of mollusks, 200 species of birds, and 20 species of reptiles. Every day, scuba divers and snorkelers come face-to-face with extraordinary marine life. One characteristic of the reef that helps it thrive is the way different species interact and help each other survive. The colorful clownfish, for example, makes a unique home with the sea anemone. Because of a mucus on its skin, the clownfish is immune to the anemone’s poisonous sting. During the day, the clownfish eats parasites that would be deadly to the anemone. In return, the anemone protects the clownfish and its eggs at night by providing it with a shelter that is poisonous to any predators.

The world views the Great Barrier Reef as one of nature’s most valued treasures. Australia works very hard to preserve the reef and its life forms so the whole world can enjoy its wonder. In 1994, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority created a twenty-five-year strategic plan to preserve and better the reef. The plan includes greater education about the reef, continual monitoring, and new legislation that prohibits mining the area.

**ecosystem:**

*noun—* A system formed by the interaction of organisms with their environment.
The Daintree Rainforest: Precious Land

Under the dark cover of the forest canopy the sunlight barely hits the ground. A sly python slithers carefully and quietly through the dense vegetation looking for a meal. A tree kangaroo spots him and hops from tree to tree, keeping a safe distance. The dark blue waters of Cooper Creek trickle over mossy stones as a little kingfisher dips into the water twitching his feathers and splashing to clean himself. In northern Australia the warm tropical climates feed a precious rainforest.

The Daintree Rainforest is the oldest rainforest in the world. It houses many rare animals, prehistoric plant life, and native Aborigine tribes. The rare animals that call the Daintree home are vital to the survival of the rainforest because they maintain the food chain and help spread the seeds of the important plant life. Many of the plants and animals in the Daintree are found nowhere else in the world. The Australian government works very hard to preserve the flora and fauna of the Daintree Rainforest so generations to come can enjoy their rare beauty. But long before the government became involved, Australia’s rainforests were protected by the Wujal Wujal people, an Aboriginal tribe that lives in the rainforest and are traditional owners of the land.
The best way to see the Daintree Rainforest up close is to take a tour guided by a member of the Wujal Wujal tribe. They take tourists deep into their beautiful homeland and teach the tourists how they have survived for thousands of years in such a challenging environment. The Wujal Wujal welcome visitors so they can educate people on the importance of keeping the rainforest healthy. It is a great way to learn about the Wujal Wujal culture and lifestyle and to see one of the most beautiful and important rainforests in the world.

The Daintree Rainforest is important to Australia for several reasons. This particular rainforest is unique in its flora and fauna, and Australia carries the responsibility of preserving it. They use the money earned from tours to pay for careful scientific monitoring of the rainforest. The rest of the world still has much to learn from the rare life forms that call the Daintree home. Also, the Wujal Wujal tribe is a unique branch of Aboriginal culture that lives differently from the rest of the tribes. Australia works to protect their culture by heeding their direction on the care and maintenance of the rainforest and educating other Australians on the history of the Wujal Wujal tribe.

Many rare and colorful plants grow in the lush Daintree Rainforest.

**flora:**
noun – The plants of a particular region.

**fauna:**
noun – The animals of a particular region.

**The southern cassowary…**
- is the second largest bird in the world,
- has a natural helmet called a casque,
- can be aggressive toward humans and deadly with its powerful legs and sharp claws,
- cannot fly, but runs and swims very well, and
- can grow to be nearly six feet tall.

**The amethyst python…**
- is the largest snake in Australia,
- has infrared receptors on its face that detect prey,
- is not aggressive toward humans and tries to avoid them,
- can move swiftly on the forest floor and through the trees, and
- can grow to be nearly twenty-eight feet long.
Indigenous Australia: Aborigines

A mother and her son gather fresh riberryes from a dense bush on the edge of the rainforest. The berries are small, about the size of a peanut, and colored pinkish-red. The boy has never seen them before, but he knows his mother is an expert at finding good food growing in the wild. The tart berries are part of their healthy dinner this evening. As the sun goes down, the family gathers together to eat, and everyone listens quietly as the father tells a story about hunting in the rainforest; it is one of the boy's favorites.

The first inhabitants of Australia were the Aborigines. They are the oldest culture on the planet. Before European colonization, Aborigines had more than 300 clans and they spoke about 250 different languages. The Aborigines have remained a very strong culture through powerful storytelling and songs that are passed down through the generations. Their songs and stories tell about traditions that are thousands of years old.

The Aborigines have always been creative and invented some very useful tools throughout history. They were the first civilization to use ground stone edges as cutting tools. They invented the woomera as a hunting weapon.

A woomera is a wooden device used to throw spears harder and farther. They were mostly used in hunting large game like kangaroos. The most famous Aboriginal invention is another hunting weapon. The boomerang is an ingenious v-shaped throwing weapon.

Most toy boomerangs are harmless, but original boomerangs used for hunting had sharpened edges and were thrown at large prey like kangaroos. The most fascinating variety of the boomerang is the returning boomerang, which is used for recreation rather than hunting. If thrown properly, it changes direction midflight and returns to where it was launched.

Living on the main island of Australia thousands of years before modern transportation meant walking over harsh terrain. The Aborigines were hunter-gatherers who constantly moved around the country to find fresh food sources. They became very good land navigators by writing songs with lyrics that served as maps to good hunting grounds. By traveling great distances to hunt and gather, tribes had to become used to the shifting weather patterns of Australia's many climates. The Aborigines proved to be a very resilient people who fit well with the natural world around them.
Sydney: Big City Life

The white wake carves lines in the blue harbor waters as a motorboat cruises through. The mighty Harbor Bridge stands tall and proud above the bustle of the waters below. A tourist takes a picture of his family standing at the water’s edge with the Sydney Opera House and the city skyline in the background. The beautiful harbor is just one of many reasons Sydney is Australia’s most populated and most visited city.

As Australia’s population grew, small communities turned into major cities. Sydney, the largest city in Australia, is located on the southeastern coast and wraps around a beautiful harbor sandwiched between stunning beaches. The long, smooth beaches along the coast contrast with the rocky, winding edges of the harbor that reach deep into the middle of the metropolis. Sydney has a lot in common with other major cities in the world. There are bustling business districts, high-rise apartments, and crowded streets. The city skyline is packed tight with skyscrapers. And, like in other cities, there are a few must-see attractions.

Two great attractions are right next door to each other: the Sydney Harbor Bridge and the Sydney Opera House. The bridge is the widest long-span bridge in the world with eight lanes for cars, two train lines, a walkway, and a bicycle lane. For many years it was the tallest structure in Sydney. The bridge opened in 1932, and it remains a source of pride for the people of Australia. On a small peninsula beside the bridge is the Sydney Opera House. This masterpiece of modern architecture became Sydney’s trademark and the most recognizable building in Australia. The greatest achievement of the building’s design is the large vaulted roof shells that give the building its unique and recognizable shape. The interior contains two parallel auditoriums, one for opera and one for symphony concerts.
Sydney’s Bondi (bon-die) beach is the most popular beach in Australia. On a typical summer day, beach towels, picnics, and volleyball games nearly cover the wide, sandy beach. The beach is often associated with surfing because many professional surfers got their start riding the reliable Bondi waves. There are world-class surf shops up and down the beach that cater to everyone from the beginners to the experienced pros.

Today Australia has developed into a nation that guards its precious landscape, encourages its ancient cultures, and embraces modern society. The largest and most populated portion of Oceania is a wonderful place to live, visit, and study. Moving farther east and south through Oceania is a much smaller, but equally exciting, island nation called New Zealand.

Did you know?
Sydney hosted the 2000 Summer Olympics. The Beach Volleyball tournament was held on Bondi Beach.
Early in the morning, heavy dew settles on the steep, grassy hills and glistens in the sunlight. A shepherd guides his sheep carefully down the slope into the valley so they can drink from the brook. Far on the other side of the hills, waves crash against a rocky shore. The ocean mist sprays onto the deck of the fishing boats as sailors ready their craft for an early start on a day’s work. The mountains in the distance are still covered in morning fog, but soon the clouds will break and the mountains will emerge to stand proud over the cities below.

Southeast of the main island of Australia is its much smaller neighbor, New Zealand. Captain James Cook came to New Zealand on the same journey during which he reached Australia. Whalers and traders from Europe settled around the coastal regions shortly after. It became an independent nation in 1907 and joined the British Commonwealth in 1926. Being part of the commonwealth meant New Zealand governed itself, but shared the interests and goals of the other nations in the commonwealth.

Like in Australia, the terrain of New Zealand varies greatly. While there are no desert areas, New Zealand does have rugged mountains, peaceful sandy beaches, tropical rainforests, and grassy plains. Major blockbuster movies have been filmed in New Zealand because of its captivating scenery. Some of the mountainous areas are home to active volcanoes, crater lakes, and dangerously narrow passageways.
Tongariro National Park: A Harrowing Journey

A charred tree stands alone on the side of a steep cliff marking the path of a lava flow. A skilled climber grips tightly to a secure rock as he tries to pass along the narrow ledge. One hundred feet below him, jagged rocks lie in piles after tumbling down the steep slope. Though it sounds like an adventure movie, it is a common scene in this wild region of New Zealand.

As a testament to New Zealand’s varied terrain, Tongariro National Park is home to some of the harshest and some of the most peaceful land in all New Zealand. Visitors looking for the more challenging trek through the wild landscape embark through the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. The trail winds around steep cliffs, steaming volcanoes, and even lava flows. The trail ends at the top of Mount Tongariro, at a dizzying height of 6,188 feet.

The geothermal activity through this region is its main appeal. Steam resulting from volcanic explosions rises from crevices and craters all around the trail. Over time rain has filled some of the craters and created lakes. The Maori believe that Blue Lake, the largest crater lake, is sacred, so swimming or eating near the lake is forbidden. Smaller crater lakes, called Emerald Lakes, have a vibrant blue-green color. The color is so opaque, you cannot see into the water at all. The lakes get their color from minerals that leak from the volcanic craters.

One of the more popular attractions at Tongariro National Park is the Katetahi Hut Track. On this more accessible path, hikers of all ages can enjoy beautiful scenery without worrying about the treacherous passes of the Alpine Crossing. The trail covers the grassier, hillier slopes of Mount Tongariro. At the end of the trail is the Katetahi Hut, a twenty-six-bunk cabin where hikers can stay and rest. From the balcony on the back of the hut, hikers can look down on the trail they have just hiked for a breathtaking view of Blue Lake. A peninsula of rolling hills cuts into part of the lake nearest the hut. The back shores of the lake are lined with thick forest and volcanic mountains that appear almost the same color blue as the water.

New Zealand has made Tongariro a national park in an effort to preserve its beauty and integrity. Through its status as a national park, it is protected from development and deforestation. The government funds programs that monitor the land and ensure its durability. The people of New Zealand understand the importance of maintaining such a valuable landscape so they keep Tongariro’s beauty intact.
Poor Knights Marine Reserve: Underwater Playground

As scuba divers descend into the water at the Poor Knights Marine Reserve, they notice the stunning proximity of the marine life. Giant snapper playfully swim repeatedly through divers’ legs. A silver drummer brushes against a facemask on his way to snag a tasty crab. Tall stalks of green and brown kelp wave back and forth with the ocean’s current. Schools of fish in bright blues and yellows dart back and forth in sudden, jerky motions. As the divers approach a stone archway, several stingrays swim through it, appearing to fly in slow motion.

The Poor Knights Marine Reserve was founded in 1981 and is a very special place for scuba divers. Because it is a reserve, no one can take fish from its waters. With no one fishing the area for about thirty years, the fish see humans as friendly visitors. They swim around divers like pets hang around their owners. The fish are often playful and completely unbothered by the human visitors. This gives researchers and tourists alike a chance to see how the fish behave when they are not afraid of humans or predators.

The reserve is located around the Poor Knights Islands. Fishing is forbidden anywhere within 800 meters (about 2,624 feet) of the two main islands and the smaller islands in-between. From top to bottom, the reserve is approximately five and a half miles long. The waters are open to divers, but they are not allowed to go ashore of any of the islands. Boats are allowed to navigate the waters, but not land on the islands because they are protected nature reserves. The strict protection and large size makes for incredible amounts of unchallenged marine life.

Like the Great Barrier Reef of Australia, the marine reserve bursts with bright blues, reds, and yellows. But the colors of the reserve come from the coral and the fish. Many of the fish, like the Blue Maomao and the Lord Howe coralfish, glide through the waters of the reserve showing off their vibrant blues, reds, and yellows. Some areas of the ocean floor boast large amounts of coral, while others are grassy fields of green kelp.

The Poor Knights Marine Reserve is not the only reserve in New Zealand. For thirty-five years, the government worked very hard to protect the incredible marine life that lives off their shores and built sixteen reserves. This great undertaking resulted in a brand new way for New Zealanders to experience their oceans and the life they harbor.

kelp: noun – Very large seaweed that grows on the ocean floor.
Indigenous New Zealand: Maori

In the light of a full moon, an intimidating face stares out at the ocean, sticking out its tongue. The face is carved out of a dark red log, driven into the sand and standing tall over the beach. The artist crouches in the sand beside it, carefully carving his creation with a sharp stone. His neighbor paddles ashore in a long canoe toting several fish on the end of his spear. They walk together through the dark forest back to the village where the large fire pits crackle and smolder, and the villagers wait for the fish the men carry.

Before Captain James Cook sailed to New Zealand, an entire group of people had come to New Zealand already and made it their new home. The earliest inhabitants of New Zealand are the Maori. Unlike the Aborigines of Australia, the Maori have lived in New Zealand for about one thousand years. They most likely came to the island by canoe somewhere between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. Where exactly they came from is still a mystery. They are widely thought to have originated in China and traveled from island to island all the way down to New Zealand. They speak only one language, called Maori. Today the culture of the Maori, called Maoritanga, is preserved by efforts to teach young Maori children their native language. Like the Aborigines, the Maori use storytelling to pass on their history. But the main way that their heritage and traditions are passed on is through their carefully crafted artwork.

The Maori are very skilled craftsmen. They incorporate beautiful carvings on their tools, weapons, and artwork. Each carving has an important meaning, and many are used to tell stories or trace genealogies. Only those raised in Maori culture know how to interpret the meaning of the carvings. Subtle details, like patterns and the shape of the head, are important in communicating specific information.

Ouch!

Tattooing, called Ta Moko by the Maori, is a longstanding Maori tradition. Young men reaching adulthood receive ornate tattoos, or mokos, across their entire face!
The skills of the Maori as master woodworkers pay off in making effective weapons. All of their weapons are made of wood, and they are usually a form of club or spear. The patu is a club-like weapon used in hand-to-hand combat. Most patus are made of strong, heavy woods and were powerful in warfare. Some are made of whale bone or jade, a beautiful green stone. The spear, or taiaha, is a more common Maori weapon. It is usually shorter, thicker, and stronger than Aboriginal spears because it did not need to be thrown. The Maori used it less like a javelin and more like a fighting staff.

For the Maori, getting from place to place around New Zealand was easier by water. Coming possibly all the way from China, they already had plenty of expertise in traveling by boat. In fact, the Maori are excellent ocean navigators. They build impressive canoes that can hold approximately forty men. Two rows of men paddle the canoes long distances. The Maori had a very early advanced understanding of how to use the stars as a map when navigating the sea. Many painted the maps of the stars on the rafters of their huts to share with others and to teach their children.

**War Tactics:**
Intimidation was a big part of warfare among tribal groups in the South Pacific. The idea was to make some sort of aggressive display to show your enemy that you were not afraid of them or the battle. The Aboriginal tribes used white paint to make designs on their bodies and shields. They screamed out war cries as they approached their enemies to scare them. The Maori did not use paint, but instead had tattoos on their faces. Before battle, they would perform a dance called the Haka to scare the approaching enemy. The Haka is a powerful display in which the Maori dance and chant in unison, make wild facial expressions, and stick out their tongues. Today, the professional New Zealand rugby team, the All Blacks, has popularized the Haka by performing one in front of the opposing team to begin every match.
Big City Life: Auckland

Traffic slows to a crawl near the water’s edge in Auckland as residents hurry for some evening sailing after a long day of work. Already a few dozen boats have made it into the harbor, raising blue, yellow, and white sails. Farther downtown a group of boys play a game of rugby in an empty lot between two apartment towers. They kick up big plumes of dust and tear away at the little bit of grass remaining, fighting for the ball. A clothes line strung between the buildings bows with the weight of heavy wet clothes, tossed back and forth by the strong ocean winds.

On New Zealand’s North Island is the nation’s largest city. Auckland sits on a narrow strip of land connecting the North Island to its long peninsula. The land is so narrow that Auckland reaches from shore to shore. The city skyline does not have as many skyscrapers as skylines of other major cities, but it certainly is not lacking in scenic beauty. The hills in the distance provide a beautiful backdrop. In the foreground, the towers reflect off Waitemata Harbor. The harbor is a great place to get a taste of the Auckland lifestyle. Auckland loves sailing the way Sydney loves surfing. In fact, Auckland is called the City of Sails. Nearly every day, the gorgeous blue waters of the harbor are dotted with white sailboats. The harbor is home to many sailing companies that offer visitors a variety of sailing experiences. Guests can sign up for a relaxing tour of the bay or take part in a challenging race and help operate the boats.

Though Auckland is much smaller than Sydney, it is not short on stunning architecture. The Auckland Ferry Building is a prime example. It was built in 1912 as the hub of the city’s ferry system. Its waterfront location and incredible Edwardian-Baroque architecture have made it a staple of Auckland history. For a more contemporary design, downtown Auckland boasts Sky Tower. The tallest structure in New Zealand, Sky Tower reaches 1,076 feet. It was built as a telecommunications and broadcasting tower, but it also has an observation deck near the top with lots to do. Visitors can view the beautiful New Zealand landscape through telescopes all around the deck. Or they can dine at Orbit, a restaurant at the top of the tower that slowly rotates, allowing guests a 360 degree view of Auckland and the surrounding area while they eat.
New Zealand provides the Oceania region with a lot to see and do in one small group of islands, and with an exciting history and culture that have shaped it into the nation it is today. Many come to Oceania to see New Zealand’s majestic scenery and to experience the vibrant indigenous culture of the fascinating Maori people. Whether braving the wild Tongariro or taking a peaceful sail around Auckland’s Waitemata Harbor, visiting New Zealand gives guests a memorable taste of Oceania.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population: 21,262,641</td>
<td>4,213,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: 7,741,220 square miles</td>
<td>267,710 square miles</td>
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<td>Languages: English, Aboriginal languages</td>
<td>English, Maoritanga</td>
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<tr>
<td>National sport: Cricket</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National animal: Kangaroo</td>
<td>Kiwi</td>
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**Conclusion**

Though Oceania seems remote to the rest of the world, the people of Australia and New Zealand call it home. The warm waters, sparkling beaches, and rugged terrains are part of the daily experience of its people. Whether it is the islands of the Great Barrier Reef or the mountains of Tongariro, both nations have the joy of waking up to exhilarating scenery unique to their homeland. And both embrace and encourage their native peoples, for a deep-rooted source of culture. But alongside these similarities, their individuality as two wonderfully different nations makes them the true crowns of Oceania.
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