

## Understanding the text

### Get ready

Read the whole text and answer question 1.

1. Read the following phonetic transcriptions aloud and write the words they correspond to (in the order of the text). If you are not sure of their meaning, translate them with the help of a dictionary.

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| a. [sə'saɪətɪ]: .....   | e. ['neɪkɪd]: ..... |
| b. [ə'kʌmpənist]: ..... | f. [tɪə]: .....     |
| c. ['devɪ]: .....       | g. [mɑ'æmɪ]: .....  |
| d. [wɪəd]: .....        | h. [ɪn'taɪə]: ..... |

### Part 1 (from the beginning to l. 21)

2. Use the context to match each of the following words with its definition. (Write the corresponding number in each blank.)

- |                                   |                               |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. <i>right off</i> (l. 5): ..... | c. <i>lone</i> (l. 16): ..... | e. <i>catch on</i> (l. 17): ..... |
| b. <i>spell out</i> (l. 6): ..... | d. <i>clap</i> (l. 16): ..... | f. <i>while</i> (l. 17): .....    |
| 1. unaccompanied                  | 3. period of time             | 5. applaud                        |
| 2. immediately                    | 4. make clear                 | 6. become popular                 |

3. Choose the correct translations of the following expressions. (several possible answers)

- a. *like the devil* (l. 11):  *comme Satan*  *avec le diable*  *comme une folle*  *très dur*  
 *comme une diablesse*  *comme le diable*
- b. *put / get across* (l. 12):  *mettre en travers*  *mettre de côté*  *faire comprendre*  
 *ranger*  *communiquer*  *traverser*  *faire passer*

4. True or false? Circle the correct answer and justify by quoting from the text.

- a.  T  F The poem reminded Billie Holiday of the way her father had died.  
 .....
- b.  T  F She did not believe that people would understand what the song meant to her.  
 .....
- c.  T  F The first time she sang the song, people were not moved at all.  
 .....

5. Why did Billie Holiday go on singing the song? (Quote from the text.)  
 .....

### Part 2 (from l. 22 to the end)

6. Choose the best title for this part of the text.

- The song of freedom  A committed (*engagé*) singer  Various experiences

7. Use the context to find the meaning of the following sentences.

- a. *[I] headed [...] for the bathroom.* (l. 28)  
 I rushed to have a bath.  I went to the lavatory.  I came back home.
- b. *I had come off the floor running...* (l. 32)  
 I had rushed on stage...  I had rushed offstage...  I had gone out...
- c. *"You can still hear a pin drop out there."* (l. 34)  
 The people there are still applauding.  The patrons (*clients*) are too silent today.  
 There is not the slightest (*moindre*) noise in the room.
- d. *I was in no mood to be bothered...* (l. 36)  
 I did not feel like being disturbed...  I refused to face the situation...  
 I did not want to do something difficult...  I was afraid of being interrupted...

8. Fill in each blank with one of the linkwords from the following list.

however - since - as a result - for fear that (*de peur que*) - in spite of

..... the public request, Billie Holiday refused to sing the song  
 ..... it might create trouble as usual, .....  
 the club was in the South. ...., as people insisted, she agreed to sing it.  
 That night, her performance was powerful, convincing and intense. ....,  
 people were so moved that they went on clapping interminably.