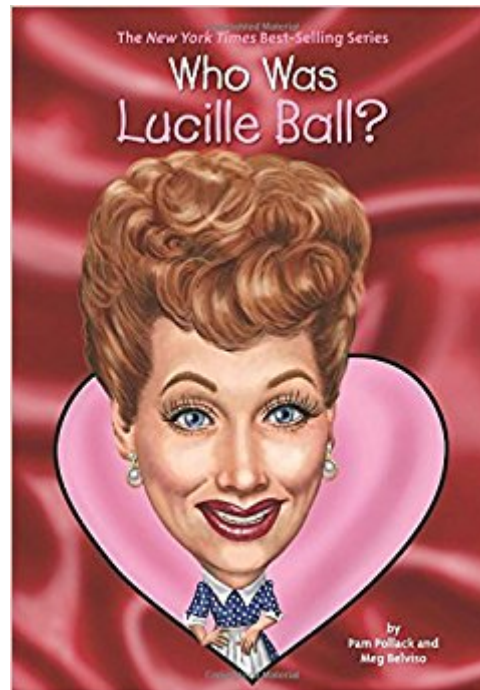




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# Who Was Lucille Ball?



## Synopsis

Who doesn't love Lucy? The legendary actress, producer, and comedian steps into the Who Was? spotlight. Much like her hit TV show, *I Love Lucy*, Americans in the 1950s fell in love with Lucy. Born in New York in 1911, Lucille Ball was always a natural performer. She danced in the chorus of Broadway shows and acted in small parts in Hollywood movies. But Ball's true gift was comedy. She found a way to showcase her gifts in 1951 when CBS gave her the chance to star in a sitcom. She based the show on her life and called it *I Love Lucy*. Over sixty years later, it is still one of the most loved television shows of all time. Lucille Ball became the first woman to run a major television studio, Desilu, and her comedic genius has kept people laughing for generations.

## Book Information

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Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Pamela Pollack and Meg Belviso are authors of several books in this series, including *Who Is George Lucas?* and *Who Was Susan B. Anthony?*

*Who Was Lucille Ball?* In the spring of 1952, cities across America experienced a mysterious drop in the water pressure every week between 9:30 and 9:35 p.m. In New York City, it seemed impossible to get a taxi on a Monday night. All the cabbies were off duty. And in Chicago, a

department store changed its business hours because it seemed like no one was shopping on Monday nights anymore. Â What was going on? Â It turned out that it was all related to a TV show! A half-hour comedy. Â On Monday nights, Americans from coast to coast rushed through their dinner. Kids finished their homework as fast as they could. Â By nine oâ™clock everyone gathered in front of their televisions. And waited. In the 1950s, TVs took a while to warm up. Finally a big heart appeared against a satin background. The theme song of I Love Lucy began, and America was watching. It turned out that the viewers across the country were all waiting for the show to be over before using the bathroom. Toilets all flushing at the same time had caused the water pressure to drop throughout one city! No one wanted to miss a minute of Lucy. Â Lucille Ball, the star of the show, was the most beloved woman on television. Whatever trouble she was in, Lucy could make it seem like the funniest thing anyone had ever seen. All over the country, people couldnâ™t stop laughing. Â How did Lucille Ball become one of Americaâ™s first big TV stars? It wasnâ™t easy. She worked for years in Hollywood, making movies before she got a chance to show TV viewers how funny she could be. But she wasnâ™t afraid of hard work. And she wasnâ™t afraid to take a pie in the face or fill her pockets with eggs or her mouth with chocolates, all to make people laugh. I Love Lucy was the name of her show, and how could you not? Â Â Chapter 1: Lucyball Â Â Lucille Desiree Ball was born in Jamestown, New York, on August 6, 1911. Although she always preferred Lucille, her family nicknamed her Lucyball, and the world came to know and love her as Lucy. Her father, Henry, worked for Bell Telephone, putting up phone lines all over the country, so he, Lucy, and Lucyâ™s mother, Desiree, moved around a lot. Â When Lucy was three and her mother was pregnant, Henry died of typhoid fever. Lucy and her mother, who was known as âœDeDe,â • moved in with DeDeâ™s parents, Frederick and Florabelle Hunt. The family lived in Celoron, New York, not far from Jamestown. There, Lucyâ™s brother, Fred Ball, was born in 1915. Other relatives came to live at the house in Celoron, too, including Lucyâ™s young cousin Cleo. Â Grandpa Fred took Lucy to the theater to see the live vaudeville shows in Jamestown on Saturdays and to the silent âœflickersâ • (movies) shown outside in the park during the summer months. Â Even though she was still very young, Lucy was a responsible girl. After her grandmother died, she looked after her younger cousins. From the time she was ten, she took any odd job she could find. She sold hot dogs at the local boardwalk, and she worked at an ice-cream shop until she was fired for always forgetting to put the banana in the banana split. Â By the time she was a teenager, Lucy was very independent. She was the first girl in town to bobâ™ or cut shortâ™ her hair, which was very shocking in the early 1920s. She was a âœflapperâ • â a slang word for the rebellious young women who wore makeup and short skirts. Â Lucy liked it when people in town talked about her.

She loved the attention. What she really wanted was to be onstage like the performers in the vaudeville acts or in the flickers. There werenâ™t a lot of ways to become famous in Celoron. So Lucy started to think about where else she might follow her dream. New York City wasnâ™t that far away. Many of the theaters in America were right there on Broadway. Â Lucy had never really tried to act before. She couldnâ™t sing or dance, but she thought she could learn. If she just worked hard enough, Lucy was sure she could become a star. And she had never been afraid of hard work. Â By age fifteen, Lucy had convinced her mother to let her attend acting school in New York City. Even though money was tight, DeDe agreed to pay for Lucy to go for a six-week trial period. Lucy did her best at the school, but her teachers didnâ™t think she had any talent. At the end of the six weeks, the school sent Lucy home with a note telling DeDe that she was wasting her money. They said Lucy would never be an actress. Â But Lucy didnâ™t care what the school thought. If they didnâ™t want her, she would make it in New York on her own.

My daughter loved this book and was a great way to introduce her to Lucille Ball. We plan to watch the old reruns of I love Lucy together.

I purchased this book for my 5th grader and she loved it! Great way to introduce the younger generation to the old legends of Hollywood without all of the scandal or gossip.

This book was great! We loved reading it and watching I Love Lucy reruns on TV. This book has good information about the life of Lucille Desiree Ball. I give it four stars! Really great book.

GREAT BOOK

This story is so good I like to read books like this know.I want have my own story S.E

8 yesr old loved it

Very fun to read!!!!

Great book! My 5th grader enjoyed reading it; also my father-in-law!

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