

# Brenda Lee: DYNAMITE

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## EXHIBIT GUIDE FOR FAMILIES



### EXHIBIT OPEN AUGUST 2009–JUNE 2010

Brenda Lee is one of the most beloved entertainers in the world. She made her television debut at age six. Throughout her career, she has sung many styles of music, including country, rock & roll, and gospel. Some of her biggest hits, including

“I’m Sorry” and “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” were recorded in Nashville. Use this guide to learn more about Brenda Lee and this special exhibit. It’s helpful to have a pencil or pen. Note that some activities in the guide can be completed at home.

## *What's in This Special Exhibit?*

This exhibit contains artifacts (important objects that help tell a story) belonging to Brenda Lee, including record albums, awards, dresses, and gifts from famous friends. Listen to Brenda sing some of her most popular songs. Watch video clips of Brenda throughout her career, performing on the stage and on television.

### *1. Listen to Brenda Lee*

Look for the listening station just outside the exhibit entrance and listen to songs performed by Brenda Lee. Listen to the song "Dynamite" and answer the following questions. Try to come up with your own responses before looking at the answers in parentheses.

How old do you think Brenda was when she recorded this song?

(She was 13.)

Do you like this song? Why or why not?

Listen carefully to the words. What do you think this song is about? Explain.

(This song is about love.)

What instruments do you hear? Describe her voice.

(This song features drums, upright bass, electric guitar, and saxophone.)

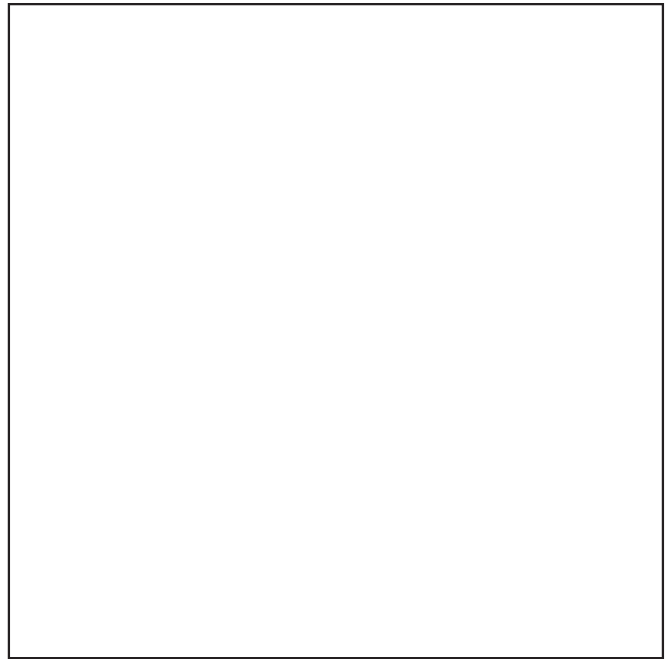
Many people call Brenda "Little Miss Dynamite." Why do you think she has this nickname?

(Brenda was given this nickname both because of her song "Dynamite" and because she has a lot of energy when she performs.)

## 2. Design an Album Cover

Look at the walls on both sides of the exhibit entrance. What do you see? The walls are covered with pictures and album covers from Brenda's career. Do you notice anything about the pictures on your left? Brenda traveled all over the world, singing for people who speak different languages. Do you recognize any of the languages printed on the wall?

In the space to the right, design an album cover for yourself or one of your favorite singers or musicians. Incorporate what would you want a listener to know about you or the featured performer.



## 3. Find Each Artifact

This exhibit is filled with artifacts that tell a part of Brenda's life story. Look for each of the following artifacts in the exhibit and each descriptive label nearby. Read the descriptions below and match the artifact to its description.

- |                           |       |   |
|---------------------------|-------|---|
| a. Suede coat             | _____ | 1. This object was given to Brenda Lee by Jimmy Durante, a famous comedian she used to imitate. He even autographed the bottom of it for her! |
| b. Purple flower painting | _____ | 2. Brenda has many hobbies. This artifact represents one of her favorite hobbies.   |
| c. Fedora hat             | _____ | 3. Brenda has acted in several movies and plays. She wore this onstage at Opryland in a show called <i>Music, Music, Music</i> .              |
| d. Ruby red slippers      | _____ | 4. When Brenda's house burned down, she saved this artifact. It was a gift from her husband, Ronnie.  |

(1.c, 2.b, 3.d, 4.a)

## 4. Write a Letter

At the end of the exhibit, find a pair of sunglasses worn by Elton John. He sent these sunglasses to Brenda Lee along with a letter. What does the letter say? When you get home, write a letter to a friend, pen pal, or family member about what you saw and learned during your museum visit.

## 5. Holiday Songs

Brenda Lee sings a famous song about Christmas called "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree." Have you heard this song before? Do you like it? Why or why not? Do you have a favorite holiday? Is there any music that you listen to during that time?

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Right: Brenda performing at the Biltmore Hotel in Atlanta, 1954.



## 6. How Do You Help Out?

Brenda grew up in a family that didn't have much money. She earned money for her family by performing for the public. How do you help your family? Are there certain jobs you have around the house? How do other members of your family help out? In the chart below, list the names of several members of your family, how they are related to you, and their family responsibilities.

Name	Relationship	Jobs/Contributions

## Helpful Resources

### CDs

Lee, Brenda. *The Definitive Collection*. MCA Nashville 004738.

Lee, Brenda. *Anthology (1956-1980)*. MCA Nashville 10384.

Available in the Museum Store.

### Web Sites

[www.countrymusicHalloffame.org](http://www.countrymusicHalloffame.org)

[www.brendalee.com](http://www.brendalee.com)

### Children's Literature

Read these books to learn more about young people who have made a difference—like Brenda Lee—in their community or the world.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *The Secret Garden*. Signet Classics, 2003.

D'Amico, Carmela and Steven. *Ella Sets the Stage*. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2006.

Freedman, Russell. *Out of Darkness: The Story of Louis Braille*. Sandpiper, 1999.

Holabird, Katharine. *Angelina Ballerina*. Viking Juvenile, 2006.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*. Dragonfly Books, 1995.

Isadora, Rachel. *Young Mozart*. Puffin, 1999.

Kerley, Barbara. *What to Do About Alice?: How Alice Roosevelt Broke the Rules, Charmed the World, and Drove Her Father Teddy Crazy!* Scholastic Press, 2008.



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