

Monday 28th March 2022

LO: To write a biography about
Roald Dahl

Biography Writing

A biography is a description of a person's life.

A biography can be about somebody from the past or a person who is still alive today.

The person might be important or famous.

When somebody writes about their own life, it is called an autobiography.

Why do we write biographies?

Biographies can be written for different reasons.

To inform...

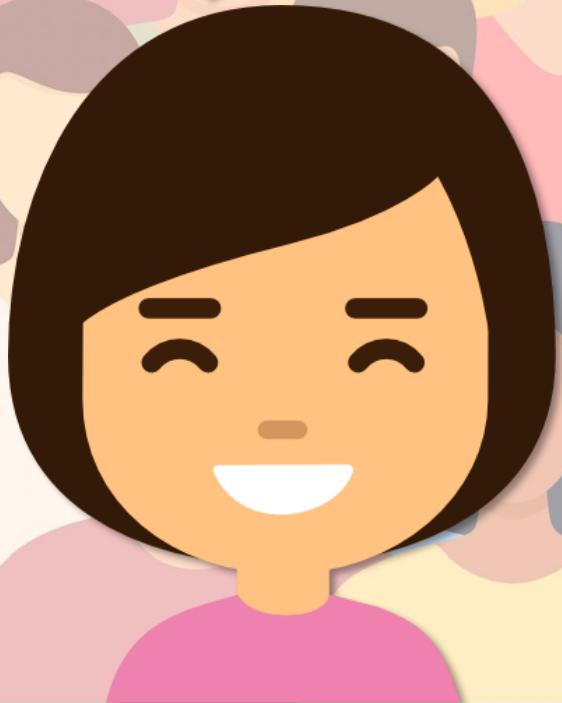
When we read a person's biography, we can learn about their life, experiences, achievements and struggles.

To entertain...

Biographies can be interesting, inspiring and sometimes funny too. The reader usually wants to learn about the person's life.

To tell a story...

A person writing their own autobiography may want to tell the story of their life and share their own experiences with others.



The Parts of a Biography

Biographies might be divided into these sections.

Introduction

The opening sentence should outline the person's main achievement. It should be interesting and exciting to make the reader want to continue reading and learn more about the person's life!

Childhood

When and where were they born? Who did they live with? What was their early life like? What interests did they have at a young age?

Adult Life

What jobs did they have? What skills or talents did they have? How did their experiences lead to their main achievements?

Main Achievements

What did they achieve? When, where and how did they do this? Did other people help them? What obstacles did they have to overcome? What was the impact of their achievements?

Legacy

How has this person influenced life today? Why are their achievements significant? How do people remember them?



The Features of a Biography

Chronological Order

A biography is usually told in time order, so the story of the person's life is told in the order in which the events happened.

Quotes

Has the person said anything interesting or entertaining?
What have others said about this person?

Past Tense

A biography is mainly written in the past tense.

Facts

Can you find out any relevant facts?

Your biography may include these features.

Action Verbs

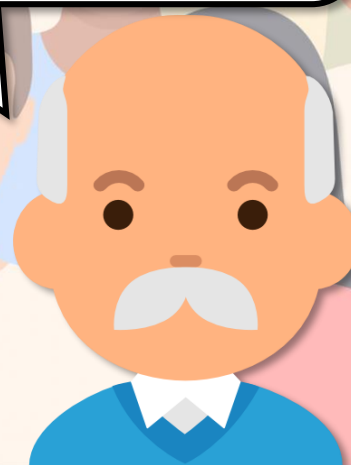
You will often be writing about things the person did, so you may need to use verbs (e.g. *painted*, *invented*, *discovered*).

Third Person

Biographies are written about another person, so use the pronouns 'he', 'she' or 'they'.

Pictures

Photographs and illustrations can help you to tell the story.



Chronological Order

Write the events of the person's life in the order they happened.

Stephanie Kwolek was born in America in 1923.



She developed a keen interest in Science as a child when she spent lots of time exploring the natural world with her father.

In 1946, she began working at Dupont, a chemical company.

While working for Dupont, Kwolek invented Kevlar. This high-strength material has been used to make tennis rackets, car tyres, ropes, cables and bullet-proof vests.

Kwolek died in 2014, aged 90.

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When you are planning your biography, it may help to make a timeline of the person's life.

Third Person

Biographies are written about somebody else, so they are usually written in the third person.

Third Person



Francis developed a love of painting as a child, and he went to The Glasgow School of Art when he was eighteen. His first exhibition was in Edinburgh, where his painting 'Infinite Futures' sold for over £20,000.

First Person



I developed a love of painting as a child, and I went to The Glasgow School of Art when I was eighteen. My first exhibition was in Edinburgh, where my painting 'Infinite Futures' sold for over £20,000.

If you are writing an autobiography, you are writing about yourself so you can use the first person.

Past Tense

You need to use the past tense to describe the things that have already happened in a person's life.



Mary Anning

Here is an example...

Mary Anning was a famous fossil hunter. She was born to a poor family in the seaside town of Lyme Regis, Dorset. As a child, Mary collected fossils with her father to make extra money for their family.

When Mary was twelve, she made her first major discovery with her father. They found a strange 5.2 metre long skeleton. They realised it was an ancient species and named it Ichthyosaurus. Mary also discovered the first-ever Plesiosaur skeleton, the Pterodactyl and coprolites (fossilised poo)!

If the person that you are writing about is still alive, (or if their work and achievements influence life today), you may need to use the present tense sometimes.

Today, John Clark lives with his partner in Cardiff. He regularly visits schools, teaching children how to draw.

Zoe Hill's amazing inventions are used by people around the world every day.

Roald Dahl

Your task is to record facts about Roald Dahl's childhood under the following headings:

When and where were they born?

Who did they live with?

What was his hobbies?

Interesting facts

Action Verbs

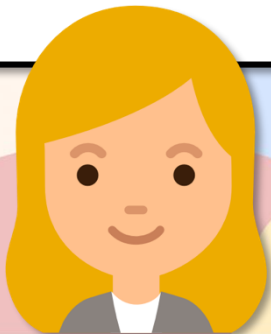
Biographies often describe the things that a person has done. How many of these verbs could you use in your writing?

Achieved	Gained	Painted
Built	Helped	Persuaded
Completed	Identified	Planned
Connected	Illustrated	Predicted
Created	Implemented	Produced
Designed	Improved	Published
Developed	Introduced	Reached
Discovered	Invented	Researched
Engineered	Launched	Started
Examined	Learned	Succeeded
Experimented	Lived	Taught
Explained	Measured	Trained
Explored	Navigated	Travelled
Flew	Operated	Won
Found	Organised	Wrote



Helpful Phrases

- When he was young...
- As a child...
- When she...
- In the 1920s...
- In August 2004...
- Many years later...
- While this was happening...
- Even though...
- Despite these challenges...
- Eventually...
- Unfortunately...
- Sadly...
- Luckily...
- He went on to...
- She believed that...
- She worked tirelessly...
- As he grew older...
- Her determination led to...
- His greatest achievement was...
- Her efforts were rewarded when...
- She will be mostly remembered for...
- Towards the end of his life...
- In her final years...



Some of these phrases may be useful when you are writing a biography.

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Write one or two paragraphs using your notes all about Roald Dahl's early life.

Remember to keep all handwriting neat!