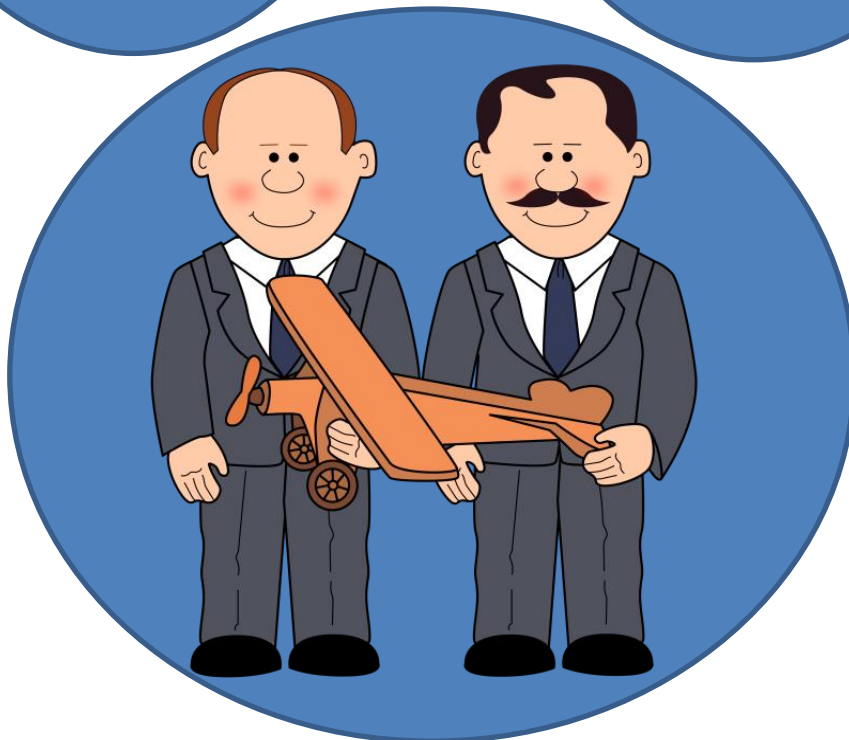
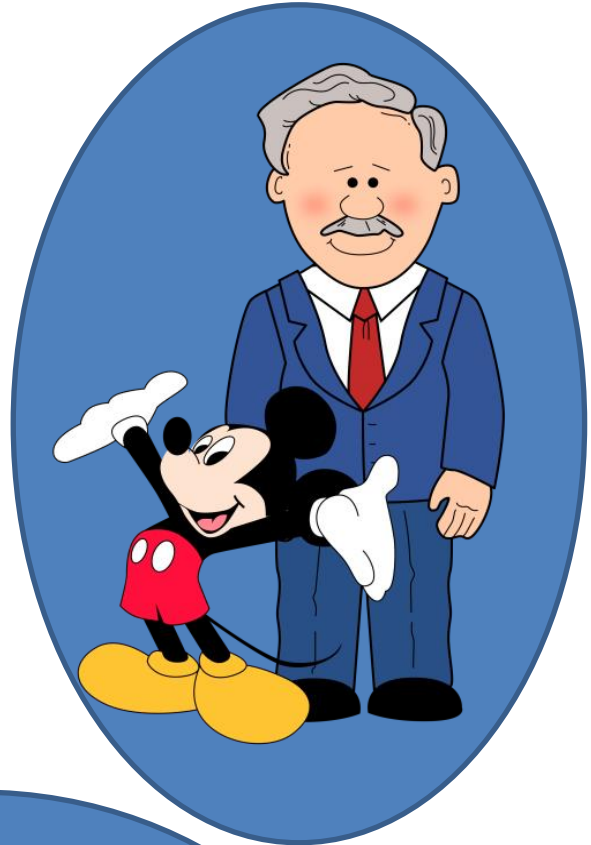
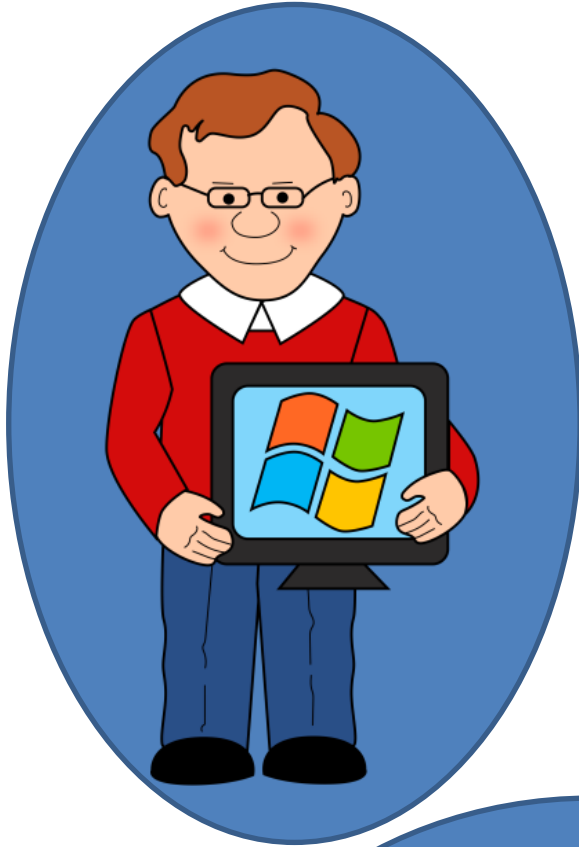
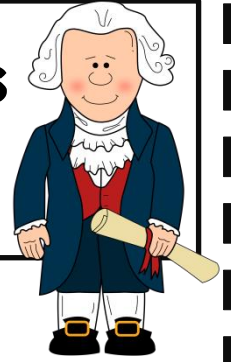


Writing a Biography



Mini-Lesson: How to Teach Students to Write a Biography



1. Introduce What a Biography Is

- Begin by explaining that a biography tells the story of a real person's life. It includes important facts, but it also explains *why* the person mattered.
- A kid-friendly definition you can include:
“A biography is the true story of someone’s life. It explains who they were, what they did, and why people remember them.”

2. Explain the 5 Parts of a Biography

Use the universal outline to introduce the structure.

Students need to know that biographies follow a predictable pattern.

The 5 Essential Parts:

1. **Early Life** – childhood, family, where they grew up
2. **Important Events** – major moments that shaped their life
3. **Contributions / Achievements** – what they are famous for
4. **Challenges / Obstacles** – problems they faced and overcame
5. **Legacy** – why they are remembered today

This structure gives students confidence and prevents the “random list of facts” problem.

3. Model How to Take Notes Using the Outline

Choose any famous person. This could include someone simple and familiar such as Rosa Parks, Neil Armstrong, Jane Goodall, etc.

Project the outline and model how to fill in each section:

- Read a short passage.
- Pause
- Ask: “Where does this information belong on the outline?”
- Write short notes, not full sentences.

This teaches students how to sort information instead of copying everything they read.

4. Show Students How to Turn Notes Into Paragraphs

Once the outline is filled in, demonstrate how to turn each section into a paragraph.

Use simple transitions:

- first
- later
- after that
- finally
- as a result

Explain that each paragraph should focus on *one* part of the outline.

This is where your paragraph-writing guide fits perfectly.

5. Teach Students How to Write an Introduction

Students often struggle with the first paragraph.

Give them a simple formula:

Introduction = Hook + Name + Why They Are Important

Examples of hooks:

- an interesting fact
- a question
- a surprising detail

This makes the introduction feel manageable.

6. Teach Students How to Write a Strong Closing

The final paragraph should explain:

- Why the person is remembered
- What we can learn from them

This ties the biography together and reinforces the idea of legacy.

7. Use the Checklist for Revision

Before students write their final draft, have them use the checklist:

- Did I include all 5 parts?
- Are my paragraphs in order?
- Did I use complete sentences?
- Did I check spelling and punctuation?

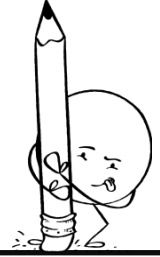
This step builds independence and improves quality.

8. Show Students Finished Examples

<https://bookunitteacher.com/american-history/colonial-america/colonial-biographies.htm>



Universal Biography Outline



1. Early Life

- When and where was the person born?
- What was their family like?
- What were they like as a child?
- Important early experiences?

2. Important Events

- What major events happened in their life?
- What choices or actions shaped their future?
- What turning points helped them become important?

3. Contributions / Achievements

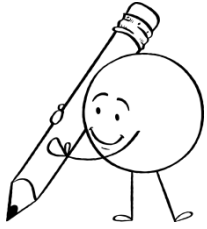
- What did this person do that made them well-known?
- What did they create, discover, lead, or change?
- How did they help others or make a difference?

4. Challenges / Obstacles

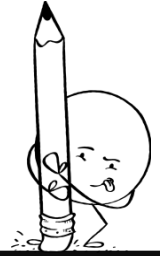
- What problems or difficulties did they face?
- How did they overcome these challenges?
- What does this show about their character?

5. Legacy / Why This Person Matters

- Why is this person remembered today?
- How did their actions affect the world?
- What lasting impact did they leave behind?



Universal Biography Outline



I. Early Life

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

II. Important Events

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

III. Contributions / Achievements

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

IV. Challenges / Obstacles

A. _____

B. _____

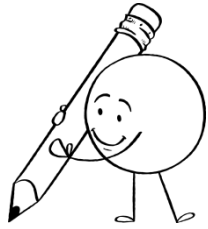
C. _____

V. Legacy / Why This Person Matters

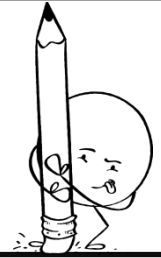
A. _____

B. _____

C. _____



Biography Writing Checklist



Content

- I included the person's early life
- I explained important events in their life
- I described their contributions or achievements
- I included challenges or obstacles they faced
- I explained why this person is remembered today

Writing

- My paragraphs are in chronological order
- I used complete sentences
- I used transition words (first, next, later, finally)
- I checked spelling and punctuation
- I wrote a clear opening and closing sentence

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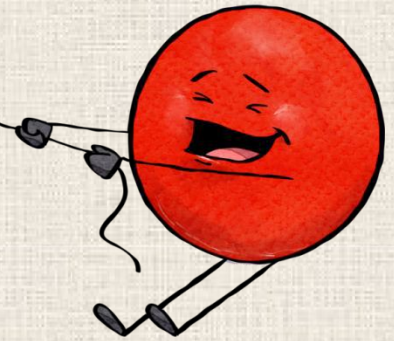
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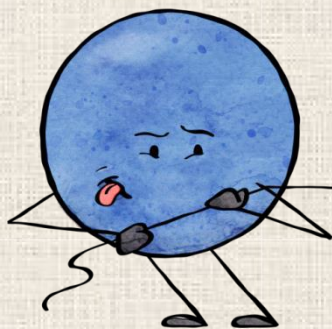


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