

Read a biography with students and guide them through the process of note-taking, drafting, revising, proofreading, and creating a final copy for publication. Write four paragraphs, one focusing on the person's childhood, one on their adulthood (personal life) and two about the reason(s) for which they are famous.

Help students to select a subject for their biographies. Make sure they choose a person for whom they can find a biography written at their reading level.

You may wish to have students use both a biographical book, as well as an encyclopedia entry, for their research.

1. Have students use the planning page to enter information they come across as they read their biographies. Have students name two main things for which their person is famous, or if only one reason, divide it into two subsections. Reading an encyclopedia entry before reading the biography can greatly help with this as many students will write down every single detail about the person's life otherwise. Emphasize how to write in note-form and not in full sentences. This not only saves time, but prevents students from copying word-for-word from the text.
2. Have students use the planning page to write a first draft, placing information in the correct paragraph. Some children may benefit from cutting out each line of the planning chart and physically moving their order around to place each one in the correct paragraph, and in a chronological order within each paragraph. Instruct students to skip the lines with X as they will be used for writing corrections. Remind students to place two fingers on the line before starting their second, third, and fourth paragraphs. Some students may benefit from tracing their fingers, as a way to remember this, as well as to make it easier to find where their new paragraphs begin (since most students have trouble keeping all other lines at the start).
3. Have students read their first draft to you, the class, a partner or a small group to get feedback. Ask three questions about things that don't make sense. Have students write these questions and their answers to them. Guide them to add or delete information and move sentences around if needed. Students should use their red pencils to mark changes.
4. Circle misspelled words for students. Instruct them to look the words up in the dictionary and write the correct spelling underneath the circled word. Have students complete the checklist for proofreading, showing you their work each time they check off a box. Some students may benefit from proofreading their work backwards, word-by-word, as reading it forward they can become wrapped up in the story and forget to look for specific mistakes. If needed, struggling students can have the correct spellings written for them on the line below.
5. Give students nice paper (or use the one provided) for creating a final draft, including the corrections made during proofreading. Guide them how to cross out each word of their proofreading stage as they copy it, in order to ensure they have not left anything out. Have students include a picture. You may wish to consider consolidating all biographies (after they have been sent home and returned) to create a class book for your classroom library, and then distributing them again at the end of the year.

Stages of Writing:

1. Planning: Bad Writing

Just get your thoughts out. Your words don't need to be spelled correctly. Your sentences don't need to make perfect sense. They don't even need punctuation on the end! As long as you can read what you wrote, your handwriting doesn't need to be perfect.

2. Drafting: Okay Writing

Write proper sentences. Make sure you are writing in paragraphs and that your reader can understand what message you are trying to make.

3. Revising: Good Writing

Move sentences around to make sure your writing flows well. Replace some every-day words with more interesting words. Ask someone to read what you wrote and tell you if anything doesn't make sense. Add more information if needed. Take out information that makes your writing too long or boring.

4. Proofreading: Great Writing

Check for misspelled words. Make sure you have all the punctuation you need. Make sure the first letter of each sentence, proper nouns, and the word I begin with a capital letter. Make sure no other words have capital letters.

5. Publishing: Awesome Writing

Copy your corrected writing onto nice paper. Use your very best handwriting. Take your time, and make sure that each word and punctuation mark are copied exactly as they should be. To help keep track of what you have copied, cross out a word on your proofreading page each time you copy it onto your final draft.

Biography Writing Rubric

Name: _____

Writing Process	Points
Planning: completed planning chart.	/6
Drafting: wrote the first draft.	/6
Revising: improved the content of the first draft.	/6
Proofreading: used proofreading marks.	/6
Publishing: corrected mistakes found during proofreading and made a neat final copy.	/6
Writing Process Total	/30

Published Copy	Points
Wrote title with correct capitalization.	/1
1 st Paragraph: Introductory sentence.	/1
1 st Paragraph: Gives details about childhood.	/6
1 st Paragraph: Events are in order.	/2
2 nd Paragraph: Tells about adulthood.	/6
2 nd Paragraph: Events are in order.	/2
3 rd Paragraph: Gives details about 1 st reason person is famous.	/6
3 rd Paragraph: Events are in order.	/2
4 th Paragraph: Gives details about 2 nd reason person is famous.	/6
4 th Paragraph: Events are in order.	/2
Began each sentence with a capital letter.	/6
Ended each sentence with the correct punctuation mark.	/6
Used capital letters correctly within sentences.	/6
Began each paragraph with an indent.	/6
Began all other lines without an indent.	/6
Followed spelling corrections.	/6
Published Copy Total	/70
Total Score=Writing Process + Published Copy	/100

Step 1: Planning



Book Title:	
Page #	Write at least 3 facts about the person’s childhood:
	Write at least 3 facts about the person’s <i>personal</i> life as an adult here:
	First reason this person is famous (at least 3):
	Second reason this person is famous (at least 3):

Step 2: First Draft

Name: _____

Person _____ By: _____

- First Paragraph:
 - ☐ Introductory Sentence
 - ☐ Childhood
 - ☐ Events in Order
- Second Paragraph:
 - ☐ As an adult...
 - ☐ Events in Order
- Third & Fourth Paragraphs:
 - ☐ Is famous because...
 - ☐ Events in Order

Step 3: Revision

Use a red pencil to:

- ☐ add missing info
- ☐ cross out unnecessary info
- ☐ move sentences to different lines with arrows



X

X

X

X

X

X

X

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

Step 3: Revision

What Wasn't Clear? Questions from my Teacher/Class/Partner

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Step 3: Revision

Name: _____

Person: _____ By: _____

➤ Copy your report with the corrections you made in revision here.

Step 4: Proofreading

Use a red pencil to:

- ☐ ≡ mark letters to capitalize (first letter in sentence, pronouns, all important words in title, the word I)
- ☐ ^ add missing punctuation
- ☐ lc mark letters that should be lowercase
- ☐ → mark paragraphs that need to be indented
- ☐ write the correct spelling of circled words ***on the line below them***



X

X

X

X

X

X

X

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

x

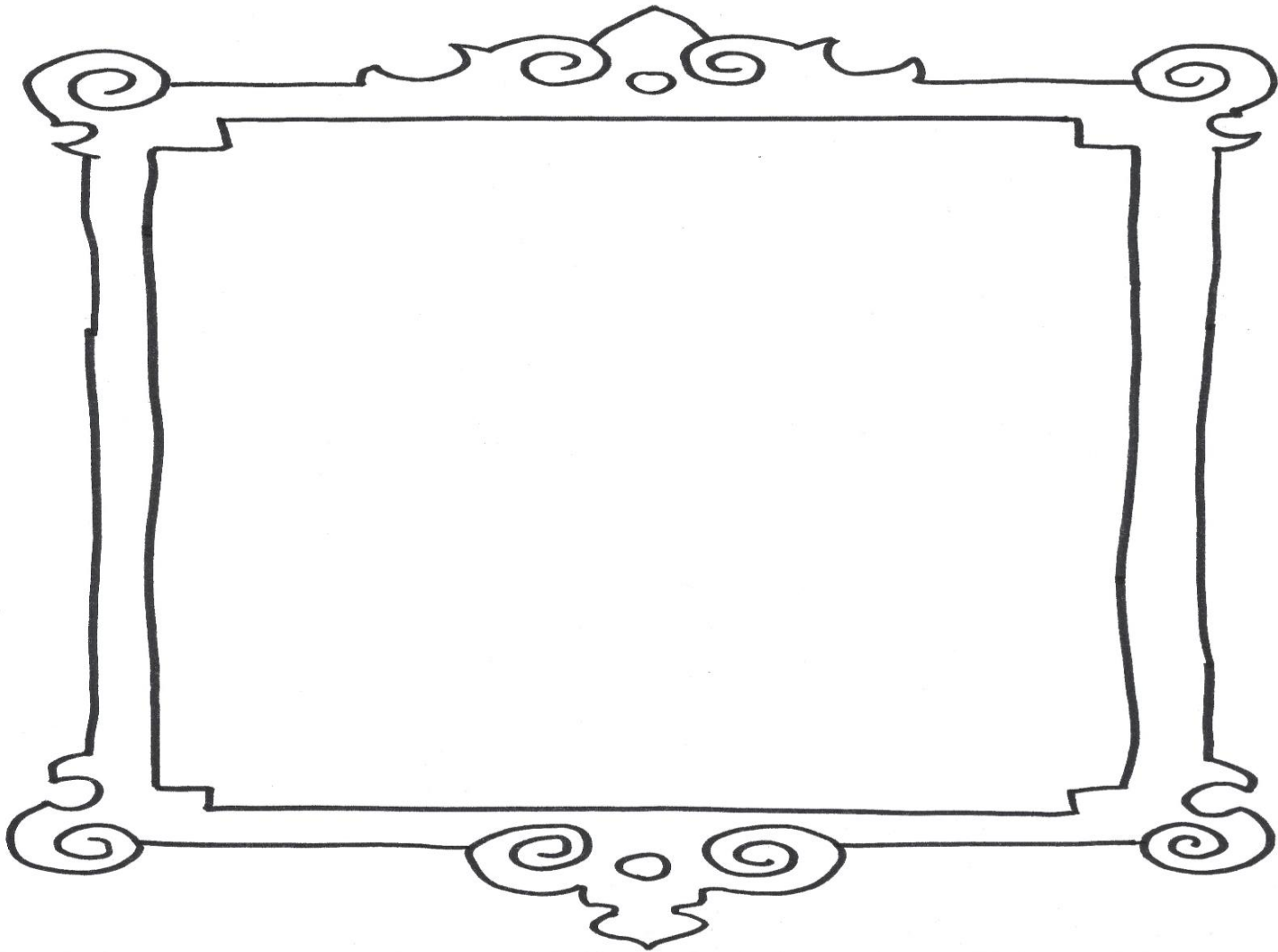
x

x

x

Biography Research Report

By: _____



A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of 20 evenly spaced lines across the page.