

Biographical texts

Key features of biographical writing

Purpose:

- To give an account of someone's life

Structure:

- Introduce the subject, and explain why he/she is known
- Significant events are ordered chronologically
- Closing statement explains how this person will be remembered, and sometimes gives the writer's opinion

Language Features:

- Refers to named individuals
- Contains dates linked to specific events
- Written in the past tense
- Can include direct and indirect speech and quotes from other sources
- Written in 3rd person
- Includes time connectives to link ideas
- Events are anecdotal in style (rather than lists of facts), and engage the reader

Checklist

Use a question or interesting opening statement to hook the reader	
Medium/Hot: Summarise the main events of the person's life in the first paragraph	
Write in the past tense	
Use third person pronouns	
Write about key events in the person's life	
Medium/Hot: Write about key influences in the person's life	
Hot: Use the passive voice	
Link sentences and paragraphs using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repetition • adverbials 	
Medium/Hot: Used parenthesis appropriately to include additional information	
Write in organised paragraphs	
Write in chronological order	
Medium: Include key vocabulary (see lesson slides)	
Hot: Include technical / subject specific words	
Used a range of organisational features to help the reader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • headings • sub headings • bullet points • pictures • interesting layout 	
Medium/Hot: Include other relevant information (your questions)	
In conclusion, summarise the person's life by mentioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their main achievements • personality (hot) • how he or she will be remembered • your opinion or personal comment 	