


Writing task: Biography

Suggested SPAG: Time conjunctions, Chronology


A biography tells us the key facts about someone's life.

Features of a Biography

Purpose:
to give an account of someone's life.



Tense: <ul style="list-style-type: none">written in the past tenseClosing statements may use present/future tense	Structure: <p>Opens with an attention grabbing introduction that summarises the main events of the person's life and makes the audience want to read on.</p> <p>Key events are written in chronological order.</p> <p>Early life, family, home and influences help the audience to understand the person.</p> <p>Use relevant images and captions for interest.</p> <p>Concludes with what they are doing now, or how they are/will be remembered.</p>			
Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">information about their personalityspecific facts about achievements, influences and significant people	Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">their feelings about different points and events in their lifequotes from the person themselves, or other key people	Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">third person pronouns, such as: he, she, they, himself, herself, it, their, them	Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">adverbials, such as: accordingly consequently therefore hence	Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">ellipses, repetition, and time conjunctions to link sentences and paragraphs, such as: then, after that, this, firstly, whenever

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Task 1:

Read the biography of J.K. Rowling below. What have you learnt about her life? Can you spot any of the features mentioned above?

Biography

Going from having no job to being a multi-millionaire in the space of 5 years, J.K. Rowling's story is almost as amazing as Harry Potter's! She is the best-selling living author in the UK and her books are popular all over the world. Rowling has named Jane Austen and C.S. Lewis as a few of her favourite writers.

She was born Joanne Rowling on 31st July 1965, in Gloucestershire. Joanne enjoyed writing fantasy stories from an early age, reading them to her younger sister. Having graduated from university, she moved to London to work as a researcher for Amnesty International, an organisation which works to protect human rights around the world. Rowling also lived and worked in Manchester.

It was in 1990, when she was on a delayed train journey from Manchester to London that the idea for a series of books came into her head. Sadly, during the writing of the first Harry Potter book, her mother died. Rowling decided to introduce more detail about the loss of the main character's parents as she knew how it felt. Joanne used her own life as inspiration for many other ideas in the book, for example, her parents met at Kings Cross Station which is where Harry Potter catches the train to school.

After living and working as an English teacher in Portugal, Rowling moved to Edinburgh with her daughter. Those early days of living in Scotland weren't easy for Joanne as she had no job. She gave her spare time to finishing her book. When the story was finally complete, it was sent to 12 different publishing houses, all of which turned it down. In 1997, the book was finally published by Bloomsbury under the name J.K. Rowling. As Joanne didn't have a middle name, she used her grandmother's name, 'Kathleen' in her initials. Shortly after, the book won its first award and proved to be very popular. She later released the next book, 'Harry Potter and

Name:

Joanne Rowling

Born:

31st July 1965

Place of birth:

Gloucestershire, UK

Occupation:

Writer, Author



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the Chamber of Secrets', followed by 'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban'. The next book in the series, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, broke sales records in both the UK and America. Rowling was also named Author of the Year at the 2000 British Book Awards and awarded an OBE for writing such popular children's books.

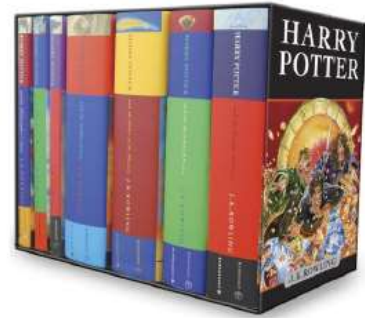


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The final book in the series, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, was released in 2007 and became the fastest-selling book in history. Since the last Harry Potter book, Rowling has written other books linked to the original Harry Potter series. She has also written stories for adults and continues to write more new material.

Today, original copies of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone sell for around £20,000 and the series has been translated into 65 languages. The books were also made into very successful films.

Task 2:

Decide who you will write a biography on. In school, we looked at Bear Grylls. You could use another famous person or you could even use someone in your family. Find out as much as you can about that person, you might want to write some questions before you ask them.

For example:

When were you born?

Where were you born?

What was your favourite subject at school?

What was your first job?

Task 3:

Organise the information that you have collected into the biography planning sheet below. This will help you to know what to write about.

Biography planning page

Title - _____

Intro - 5 W's

1. Who is the person? - _____
 2. What are they famous for? _____
 3. When did it happen? _____
 4. Where did it happen? _____
 5. Why are they famous today? _____
-

Key Events that happened

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |
-

Time openers I'd like to use

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| 4. | 5. | 6. |
-

WOW words-

Connectives -

Conclusion - Have they taught us anything? _____

Why will they always be remembered? _____

Task 4:

Create an interesting biography about your person. Try to remember to write in chronological order and use time conjunctions. You could even decorate your biography with a picture of the person or something that they like.