

## Biography

A biography is simply the story of a life. Biographies can be just a few sentences long, or they can fill an entire book—or two.

### Biographies

- tell a good story.
- analyze and interpret the events in a person's life.
- find connections,
- make arguments about the significance of the person's accomplishments or life activities.
- are usually about famous, or infamous people,
- of an ordinary person can tell us a lot about a particular time and place.
- often about historical figures, but they can also be about people still living.

Many biographies are written in chronological order. Some group time periods around a major theme (such as "early adversity" or "ambition and achievement" ). Still others focus on specific topics or accomplishments.

Biographers are made up of primary and secondary sources:

- Primary sources:
  - letters, diaries, or newspaper accounts.
- Secondary sources:
  - biographies,
  - reference books,
  - or histories that provide information about the subject of the biography.

To write a biography you should:

- Select a person you are interested in
- Find out the basic facts of the person's life.
- Think about what else you would like to know about the person
- what parts of the life you want to write most about.
- What makes this person special or interesting?
- What kind of effect did he or she have on the world? other people?
- What are the adjectives you would most use to describe the person

- What examples from their life illustrate those qualities?
- What events shaped or changed this person's life?
- Did he or she overcome obstacles? Take risks? Get lucky?
- Would the world be better or worse if this person hadn't lived? How and why?
- What was going on during this time period?
- Do additional research at your library or on the Internet to find information that helps you answer these questions and tell an interesting story.

excerpt from [www.infoplease.com/homework/wsbiography.html](http://www.infoplease.com/homework/wsbiography.html)