

Mastering the Art of Biography with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand the structural and linguistic features of a biography and to identify the purpose of non-fiction life writing.

Read the front of the flashcard to test your knowledge of biographical writing. Flip to check your answer. Use these to help Ellie the Elephant recount the stories of historical figures!

What is a biography?

A detailed description or account of a person's life written by someone else, documenting their achievements and experiences.

What does it mean to write in 'chronological order'?

Presenting events in the exact sequence they happened, from the earliest to the most recent.

What is the 'subject' of a biography?

The specific person whose life story is being told throughout the text.

Explain why biographies are usually written in the third person.

It allows the author to maintain an objective and professional perspective while observing the subject's life from the outside.

What is an 'anecdote' in the context of a biography?

A short, interesting, or amusing story about a real incident or person, used to bring the subject's personality to life.

What is a 'legacy'?

The long-lasting impact or influence that a person leaves behind after their life or career has ended.

What is the difference between a primary and a secondary source?

A primary source is an original document or object from the time (like a diary), whereas a secondary source interprets or analyses primary sources.

Why must a biographer use formal language and factual evidence?

To ensure the account is credible, accurate, and respectful to the subject's historical contribution.

What is the purpose of a 'conclusion' in a biography?

To summarise the subject's achievements and explain their lasting influence or importance to the world today.

How do headings and sub-headings help a reader?

They organise information into logical sections, making it easier for the reader to navigate through different stages of the subject's life.