

## **GENRE: BIOGRAPHY**

### **Definition:**

The true story of a notable person's life written by another person.

### **Common Characteristics:**

1. Describes the person's surroundings.
2. Shows how the person affects other people.
3. Provides examples that demonstrate the person's behavior.
4. Supplies details that illustrate the person's individuality.
5. Implies or notes how the writer feels about the person.

## **Story Element Emphasis: Character**

### **Definition:**

The people or individuals portrayed in a story.

## **Godly Character Trait Emphasis: Responsibility**

### **Definition:**

Being accountable to God and to others as you carry out your duties or obligations in a faithful way.

### **Subqualities:**

1. cautiousness
2. diligence
3. initiative

**Teacher Directed**

**All Levels Together**

**Focus:** Genre Kickoff

**Preparation:**

1. The goal of the kickoff is to introduce students of all ages to the upcoming genre in a fun and entertaining manner.
2. Decide how much time you want to spend on the kickoff. You can spend one normal reading class period, several hours, or even a whole day. After the kickoff, you begin with day 1 in the teacher's plans.
3. Read through the list of ideas below and choose those that interest you for this genre's kickoff. You are welcome to add your own ideas that fit within this genre. Refer to the cover page for a definition and common characteristics for each genre. Introduce the name and definition of the genre to begin the kickoff.

**Possible Kickoff Ideas:**

1. Brainstorm a list of biographical questions as a group from the following categories: facts about you, facts about your family, facts about where you live, important memories. Interview your assigned partner using the questions the group listed. Write down your partner's answers.
2. Look through family photographs and instruct each student to choose 2 or 3 photographs that show an important time in their own lives. Have students share the photographs and explain why they selected them.
3. Hand each student a sack or a box. Give students a limited amount of time to find 5 items to put in their sack or box that tell something about themselves. Have students share their items and explain their reasons for choosing each item.
4. Sit in a circle and have students take turns finishing the following sentences:
  - a) *I'll always remember the time when . . .*
  - b) *One of my happiest memories is . . .*
  - c) *I worked very hard at . . .*
  - d) *I felt the saddest when . . .*
  - e) *I hope people remember me as . . .*
5. If you have any information about your family history or family tree, explore the information to discover your relatives' pasts.

## Biography - Prior to Day 1

6. Cook a family recipe that has been passed down for several generations. Discuss what you can learn about your family heritage from the ingredients in the recipe, the name of the dish, the occasions when it was used, the person who passed it down, and the culture from which the dish came.
7. Select pictures of several family members or relatives that show their personalities, hobbies, interests, and environment. Show the pictures to the group or give each student several pictures and have them discuss what they can discover about each person from looking at the photographs.
8. Visit the historical home of a person that is no longer living. Discuss what you can discover about the person from that environment.
9. Choose biographical facts to read about various individuals. Post a list of names of people that the facts could match. Have students guess which fact matches which person on the list.
10. Tour your own house as a group and note what you discover about each family member from looking at their rooms or environment. Remember: During a tour, you may not touch anything. You may only make observations.
11. Have students make their own scrapbook page with biographical information about themselves.

### **Questions to discuss at the end of the kickoff:**

1. What is a biography? (Refer to the definition on the cover page for this genre.)
  2. What can we find out about a person by reading a biography?
  3. What is the difference between a biography and an autobiography?
  4. What did you learn about biographies from today's activities?
  5. Why do we read biographies, or what is the purpose?
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**Teacher Directed**

**All Levels Together**



**Focus:** Prereading Activity - Secret Passages

**Preparation:**

1. Prior to meeting with the students for day 1, follow the directions for *Getting Started* listed in the back of this guide.
2. Have the first book and one *Assigned Reading Calendar* ready for each student.
3. You will need a folder or barrier of some sort between you and the students, so you can hide the covers of the books with the passages for today's lesson. If you have only 1 student, you will need to have several books from this genre beside the book he or she will be reading.

**Lesson:**

1. Say, *Today we will be doing a prereading activity to help you think about the next book you will be reading.*
2. Set out the books the students will be reading, but do not tell them who will be reading which book. Allow the students to briefly look at the titles, covers, and illustrations for a few minutes.
3. Say, *I will be reading several sentences from one of these books to you. Your job will be to guess which book has that passage.*
4. Hide all the books behind your "barrier" and read a few sentences from one of the books. Then, set out the books in front of the students and have them guess which book had that passage. Have students give reasons for their choices.
5. After each student has guessed, show students which book contains the passage.
6. Continue steps 3, 4, and 5 until you have read several parts from each book.
7. Give students the books you have chosen for them. Allow them time to carefully read the title, look at the front cover, read the synopsis, and look at the illustrations.

## Biography - Day 1

9. Discuss the following questions with your students:
    - a) *What question(s) would you like to ask the person in your book?*
    - b) *What made you think of that question?*
    - c) *What makes your book a biography?*
  
  10. Have students open their *Student Books* to the *Assigned Reading Calendar* for this genre. Help each student fill in the page numbers to be read for days 1-5.
  
  11. Have students read the assigned pages for day 1 on their own.
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**Teacher Directed**

**Level 2/3**



**Focus:** Story Discussion and Optional Phonics or Vocabulary Work

**Preparation:**

1. You may choose to have students at this level review phonics or complete a vocabulary assignment. Use your own program for the phonics review. Refer to the Appendix for a reproducible vocabulary assignment. The lesson on this day is much shorter to compensate for the additional time you may spend on phonics or on vocabulary work.

**Lesson:**

1. Optional phonics or vocabulary work
2. Listen to your students read the assigned pages out loud to you. Use the Reading Strategies list and the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
3. Discuss the following questions with your students:
  - a) *How would you describe this person?*
  - b) *What problems does this person have up to this point in the biography?*
  - c) *Where is this story taking place? Describe the place.*

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**Independent / Teacher Directed**

**Level 4/5**

**Focus:** Story Element Instruction - Character Web

**Lesson:**

1. Tell the students to read the assigned pages on their own, leaving 3-4 pages to read aloud to you.
2. Listen to your students read several pages. Use the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
3. Work with the students to complete the Character Web on day 2 in the *Student Book*. List at least 3-4 examples for each category on the web. You may want to write answers on a marker board as you discuss them, so the students can copy them. Then, the students can concentrate better on the discussion.
4. Discuss the following question with your students:
  - a) *How are you similar to the person in this biography?*

Biography - Day 2

**Independent**

**Level 6/7/8**

**Focus:** Vocabulary Builder - Prediction Practice

**Preparation:**

1. Have a dictionary available.

**Lesson:**

1. The students complete the activities in the *Student Book* and read the assigned pages for day 2 on their own.
  2. The directions instruct students to come and show you the completed Prediction Practice vocabulary assignment.
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**Teacher Directed**

**Level 2/3**

**Focus:** Story Element Instruction - Character Traits

**Lesson:**

1. Listen to your students read part or all of the assigned pages out loud to you. Use the Reading Strategies list and the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
2. Work with the students to complete the Character Trait Web on day 3 in the *Student Book*. On the lines, write a quality describing the character. Then, give an example from the book that illustrates that quality. You may want to write the answers on a marker board as you discuss them, so the students can copy them. Then, the students can concentrate on the discussion rather than on spelling and capitalization.
3. Discuss the following question with your students:
  - a) *How are you similar to the person in this biography?*

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**Independent**

**Level 4/5**

**Focus:** Story Element Extension - Character Profiles

**Lesson:**

1. Tell the students to read the assigned pages for day 3 on their own.
2. Tell them to complete the Character Profiles on day 3 in their *Student Books* when they finish reading.
3. The directions instruct students to come and show you the completed assignment.

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**Teacher Directed / Independent**

**Level 6/7/8**

**Focus:** Story Element Discussion - Character Attributes

**Lesson:**

1. The students read the assigned pages for day 3 on their own.
2. The students meet with you to discuss the following questions:
  - a) *Describe the physical traits of the person in this biography.*
  - b) *Describe this person's feelings and any actions that portrayed those feelings.*
  - c) *How is this person similar to you?*
  - d) *How is this person different from you?*

### Biography - Day 3

3. Introduce Character Attributes in the *Student Book* under day 3.
  4. Have the students work to complete Character Attributes on their own.
  5. The directions instruct students to come and show you the completed assignment.
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**Teacher Directed**

**Level 2/3**



**Focus:** Godly Character Traits - Examples

**Preparation:**

1. Think of examples you can share from your own life for each of the following traits: *responsibility* and *diligence*. (Definitions are listed in the lesson below.)

**Lesson:**

1. Introduce the following definition and scripture passage for *responsibility*:
    - a) *Responsibility is being accountable to God and to others as you carry out your duties or obligations in a faithful way.*
    - b) *Key Scripture verse: Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*
  2. Share an example of *responsibility* from your own life.
  3. Help the students think of an example of *responsibility* from their own lives.
  4. Introduce the following definition and scripture passage for *diligence*:
    - a) *Diligence is continuing to work at something without giving up.*
    - b) *Key Scripture verse: Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galations 6:9*
  5. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the trait *diligence*.
  6. Instruct your students to search for examples of *responsibility* and *diligence* as they read part or all of the assigned pages out loud to you. Use the Reading Strategies list and the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
  7. Discuss the following questions with your students:
    - a) *How does this character show responsibility? Or diligence?*
    - b) *Did the character show the opposite traits of irresponsibility and slothfulness? Explain.*
    - c) *What could the character do differently to be more responsible or diligent?*
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Biography - Day 4

**Independent / Teacher Directed**

**Level 4/5**

**Focus:** Godly Character Traits - Examples

**Lesson:**

1. Tell the students to read and complete the Godly Character Sheet on day 4 in the *Student Book* on their own.
2. The students need to silently read the assigned pages for day 4, leaving 3-4 pages to read aloud to you.
3. The students should come and show you when both are completed.
4. Review the Godly Character Sheet on day 4 in the *Student Book*, so the students and you will know what traits you are searching for in the biography. (*responsibility, diligence, and initiative*)
5. Listen to your students read 3-4 pages aloud. Use the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
6. Discuss the following questions with the students:
  - a) *How did the characters show responsibility?*
  - b) *How did the characters show diligence?*
  - c) *How did the characters show initiative?*
  - d) *Did the characters show the opposite traits of irresponsibility? Or slothfulness? Or unresponsiveness? Explain.*
  - e) *What might Jesus have done differently if He had been the character in the book?*

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**Independent**

**Level 6/7/8**

**Focus:** Godly Character Traits - Examples

**Lesson:**

1. The students complete the activities in the *Student Book* and read the assigned pages for day 4 on their own.
  2. The directions instruct students to come and show you the completed Godly Character page.
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**Teacher Directed / Independent**

**Level 2/3**

**Focus:** Comprehension Check - Personal Points

**Lesson:**

1. Go over the directions for Personal Points on day 5 in the *Student Book*. Students complete this assignment on their own after reading the assigned pages.
  2. Listen to your students read part of the assigned pages out loud to you. Use the Reading Strategies list and the Qualities of Good Reading list provided in the Appendix to help you know what to emphasize.
  3. The students finish the assigned reading and complete Personal Points on their own.
  4. The directions instruct the students to come and show you the completed assignment.
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**Independent**

**Level 4/5**

**Focus:** Comprehension Check - Biographical Collage

**Preparation:**

1. Have magazines available for this level's assignment, unless you plan to have the students draw the pictures instead.
2. You may choose to have a large sheet of paper for this level's assignment.

**Lesson:**

1. Tell the students to complete the Biographical Collage on day 5 in the *Student Book* on their own.
  2. The students also silently read the assigned pages for day 5 on their own. You may choose to have the students leave 3-4 pages to read aloud to you.
  3. The directions instruct the students to come and show you the completed assignment.
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Biography - Day 5

**Independent**

**Level 6/7/8**

**Focus:** Comprehension Check - Memorable Moments

**Lesson:**

1. The students complete the activities in the *Student Book* and read the assigned pages for day 5 on their own.
  2. The directions instruct students to come and show you the completed Memorable Moments assignment.
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