

| What you need to know about: | | Biographies | Big Picture |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Key Concept | Related Concepts | Global Context | Through studying biographies, we explore how lives are shaped by time, place, and relationships, and how telling those stories helps us understand identity. |
| Perspective | Genre, Context | Identities and relationships | |

| Strategies to show character in nonfiction writing | | |
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| Strategy | Guiding Question | Example |
| Selective Quotes | What has the person said that reveals personality or belief? | "I would rather fail doing something bold." |
| Complexity & Contradictions | How is the person inconsistent, surprising, or human? | A peace activist who sometimes lost his temper |
| Character Arc | How has the person grown or changed? | From quiet protester to global spokesperson |
| Relationships | Who shaped this person's values or decisions? | Her mentor taught her to use her voice for justice |
| Actions | What does the person <i>do</i> that shows who they are? | Stayed in the lab until dawn, perfecting the vaccine |
| Reputation & Legacy | How is the person remembered or judged? | "The poet who spoke for the voiceless" |

| Features of Good Biographical Writing | |
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| Details | Consider what details are most important in the subject's life, and what details are most intriguing or entertaining for the reader. |
| Figurative Language | Using similes, metaphors, symbolism, and other figurative language makes writing more interesting, even in non-fiction. |
| Sentence Variety | Don't only use short sentences, but also, don't only use long, complex sentences. Using a variety of sentences keeps the reader focused |
| Structure | Will you write about the subject's whole life, or just one period of their life? Will you just include only facts? Will you include what they might have felt? |
| Theme | What makes the person special, or what they represent. A famous artist might represent the human need to create. A leader might represent a hunger for power. |
| Tone | A biography can be dry and factual, creative and poetic, or funny, or tragic. Does your choice of words match the subject of the biography? |
| Register | The word choice and tone of voice that make writing casual, formal, etc. |

| How to Analyze a Biography | | |
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| Identify the subject → Identify the writer's focus → Examine how language and structure shape our view → Connect to context → Explain the message about identity or human experience. Remember: Don't just ask what happened — ask how the writer wants you to see the person and why. | | |

| Type of Framing | Description | Example |
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| Heroic frame | Emphasizes greatness, perseverance, and moral strength | Biographies of scientists, leaders, or reformers |
| Tragic frame | Focuses on failure, loss, or injustice | Artists who suffered/ died young |
| Victim frame | Portrays subject as harmed by society or circumstances | Figures oppressed due to gender, race, or politics |
| Transformational frame | Shows how subject changes or grows | Stories of redemption or discovery |
| Critical frame | Questions or revises public reputation | Modern biographies that "rethink" historical figures |

| Forms of Biography | | |
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| Books, magazine features, newspaper profiles, documentaries, podcasts, biopics (films), graphic novels, social-media mini-biographies, obituaries, photo essays, and museum exhibits | | |