1. A Biography

1. Who is it?

<http://abrahamlincolnartgallery.com/archivepg4pic19.htm>

2. True or False?

Abraham Lincoln spent his childhood in Washington D. C.

He came from a rich family.

He was a lawyer.

A. L. never married.

A. L. had 4 daughters.

A. L. was the 16th president of the USA.

He was elected twice.

He was never interested in human rights.

3. Read the following biography and find out more.

*Abraham Lincoln*

*Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the USA. He was born in 1809 in Kentucky. His father was a Kentucky frontiersman and the family was really poor. His mother died when he was ten and young Lincoln had to struggle for both living and learning.*

*Lincoln made extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge while working on a farm, splitting rails for fences, and keeping store at New Salem, Illinois. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War then he spent eight years in the Illinois legislature and gained experience in the circuit of courts. He was ambitious and extremely hard working person. He married Mary Todd, and they had four boys, only one of whom lived to maturity. In 1858 Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for Senator. He lost the election, but in debating with Douglas he gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination for President in 1860.*

*He served the country during the hardest time since the Civil War began in 1861. As President, he built the Republican Party into a strong national organization. Further, he rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever freedom to slaves within the Confederacy. He was re-elected in 1864 as Union military triumphs heralded an end to the war. In his planning for peace, the President was flexible and generous, encouraging Southerners to lay down their arms and join speedily in reunion. The spirit that guided him was clearly that of his Second Inaugural Address, now inscribed on one wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C.: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds.... ". He helped to push through Congress the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which finally freed all the slaves nationwide in 1865. On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington by John Wilkes Booth, an actor, who somehow thought he was helping the South. The opposite was the result, for with Lincoln's death, the possibility of peace with magnanimity died.*

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/abrahamlincoln>

4. What is the structure of biographies? Find the individual parts in the text about Abraham Lincoln.

5. Write the last (missing) paragraph of Abraham Lincoln´s biography.

**Biography SUMMARY:**

**1. Introduction:** *Where and when a person was born; his/her job; what he/she is known for – basic facts; his/her early life*

**2. Body:** *A summary of his/ her later life; life now; achievements*

**3. Conclusion:** *Writer´s opinion of the person – positive or negative, reasons*

Paragraphs: *usually 3 or 4*

**Useful tips:** *Past tenses are used to describe a person who is dead; a variety of tenses is used to describe a person who is alive (present perfect tense; present tenses to speak about the present day). Summarize at the and you may include your opinion.*

*Formal style is the most common since similar texts appear usually in magazines, newspapers or books.*

6. What are the individual steps to take when writing biography? Where can you find more examples? Read the following link and find out.

<http://www.infoplease.com/homework/wsbiography.html>

7. Who are these people?

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/slideshow/photos-queen-elizabeth-ii-young-fashionable-16424247>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Gates>

<http://hy.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D5%8A%D5%A1%D5%BF%D5%AF%D5%A5%D6%80:Ernest_Hemingway-Karsh.jpg>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000229/>

8. Choose a personality, try to find out the most interesting details about his/her life. Take notes.

9. Your teacher asked you to write **a biography** about a famous personality from an English speaking country for the school magazine. Use your notes and write the text (**120 to 150 words)**.

You should:

* **include the basic information about the person**
* **mention their achievements**
* **present your opinion of this person and explain why you think so**

*Write a biography in an appropriate style and form.*

**References and Bibliography:**

Evans V., Successful Writing, Express Publishing, 1998

Harmer J., English Language Teaching*, chapter 18 Writing*, Longman, 2001

Hedges T., Writing, Oxford University Press (OUP), 2005

Hornby A. S., Oxford Advanced Learner´s Dictionary 8th edition, OUP, 2010

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Biography>

<http://www.infoplease.com/homework/wsbiography.html>

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/slideshow/photos-queen-elizabeth-ii-young-fashionable-16424247>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Gates>

<http://hy.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D5%8A%D5%A1%D5%BF%D5%AF%D5%A5%D6%80:Ernest_Hemingway-Karsh.jpg>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000229/>

Answer key:

1. Abraham Lincoln

2. Abraham Lincoln spent his childhood in Washington D. C. FALSE

He came from a rich family. FALSE

He was a lawyer. TRUE

A. L. never married. FALSE

A. L. had 4 daughters. FALSE

A. L. was the 16th president of the USA. TRUE

He was elected twice. TRUE

He was never interested in human rights. FALSE

3. Your own answers.

4. What is the structure of biographies? Find the individual parts in the text about Abraham Lincoln.

Introduction – 1st paragraph of the text – basic facts childhood

Body – 1st paragraph – early life

2nd paragraph – later stage of life

Conclusion – the last paragraph – evaluation, this part is missing

**Biography SUMMARY:**

**1. Introduction:** *Where and when a person was born; his/her job; what he/she is known for – basic facts; his/her early life*

**2. Body:** *A summary of his/ her later life; life now; achievements*

**3. Conclusion:** *Writer´s opinion of the person – positive or negative, reasons*

Paragraphs: *usually 3 or 4*

**Useful tips:** *Past tenses are used to describe a person who is dead; a variety of tenses is used to describe a person who is alive (present perfect to speak about unfinished actions, present tenses to speak about the present day). Present your opinion.*

*Formal style is the most common since similar texts appear usually in magazines or newspapers.*

5. Write the last (missing) paragraph of Abraham Lincoln´s biography:

*Abraham Lincoln was an exceptional politician. He was hardworking, frank, and modest and with values and life philosophy that is really rear these days. He started a process which changed lives of millions of Americans. I personally think that these days’ politicians especially the Czech ones should look for some inspiration in his personality.*

6. What are the individual steps to take when writing biography? Where can you find more examples? Read the following link and find out.

#### To write a biography you should:

1. Select a person you are interested in
2. Find out the basic facts of the person's life. Start with the encyclopaedia and almanac.
3. Think about what else you would like to know about the person, and what parts of the life you want to write most about. Some questions you might want to think about include:
   * 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?
4. Do additional research at your library or on the Internet to find information that helps you answer these questions and tell an interesting story.
5. Write your biography. See the [Tips on Writing Essays](http://www.infoplease.com/homework/writingskills2.html) and [How to Write a Five Paragraph Essay](http://www.infoplease.com/homework/wsfivepara.html) for suggestions.

<http://www.infoplease.com/homework/wsbiography.html>

6. Who are these people?

Elizabeth II – the queen of the UK; Bill Gates – a founder and owner of Microsoft; Ernest Hemingway – an American writer, Steven Spielberg – American film director

7. Your own answers.

8. Your own answers.