

Unit 2

Writing - Biographical writing (place, people) - Process descriptions (general/specific) -
Definitions - Recommendations – Instructions

Activity 1 - Biographical writing

A biographical sketch is the facts of a person's life presented in the form of a story. Biographical writing cannot be done off hand. It needs some time and research.

- The first step in biographical writing is deciding on the person who can be written about. Usually the subject of a biographical sketch is chosen based on prominence, contribution to a particular field, extraordinary or unusual deeds or achievements, potential to inspire and so on.
- After the choice of subject has been made, you should develop a series of questions like
 - When was the person born?
 - Where was he/she born?
 - Where did he/she grow up?
 - Which school did he/she attend?
 - Who were the members of his/her family?
 - How was his/her childhood?
 - ...
- The next step is to identify sources of information. These could consist of
 - Family members, friends, colleagues, neighbours
 - Books, newspaper reports, articles about the person
 - Files, papers maintained by the person or about the person
 - Interviews with the person or his/her associates
 - Websites, films, documentaries about the person or his/her work
- From these and any other sources you can collect the answers to all the questions that you have developed about the person and make extensive notes.
- Once you think you have collected all the necessary information, you can start writing the biographical sketch. You can follow chronological order in your biographical sketch. Although this is the most common way in which biographical sketches are organised, you could also start with the most significant event, incident in the person's life and move backward in time to look for motivation, inspiration in the person's past.

