

Who's Who: A Study of Biography



ELA & READING

2

GRADE 2

This guide links the *Who's Who: A Study of Biography* unit to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for second graders. *Who's Who* is an English language arts and social studies unit that allows students to explore and gain knowledge about famous people and how they use their gifts and talents. *Who's Who* also has interdisciplinary connections to mathematics and science. For example, students will discuss attributes of famous people by category, allowing them to use patterns to describe relationships and make predictions, as described in the Mathematics TEKS. They will also use information and critical thinking to make decisions, as described in the Science TEKS. The following document includes the applicable TEKS and the details of the *Who's Who* unit. The final section of this document presents the applicable Texas College and Career Readiness Standards adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on January 24, 2008.

Description of Unit

In this interdisciplinary/language arts unit, students explore and gain knowledge of famous people and how they used their gifts and talents to overcome challenges and become successful. Students will first read and compare/contrast biographies of several people. In their research, they will choose a figure to study and create a timeline of that person's life.

Goals

Students will meet these goals in their explorations:

- Develop the essential skills of logical thinking, creative problem solving, intellectual risk taking, and communicating
- Ask questions and explore theories
- Have opportunities to generate new ideas
- Become familiar with famous people and characteristics of their lives
- Learn about different kinds of giftedness

Who's Who: A Study of Biography (Grade 2)

Phase I. Learning Experiences

1. Brainstorm famous people from different areas, such as entertainment, sports, or literature. You can use examples from Attachment #1, Famous People. Students may continue to add to the list throughout this unit.
2. Categorize the famous people from the brainstorming session. Use categories such as athlete, artist, musician, politician, inventor, or entertainer.
3. Discuss attributes of the famous people by category. What attributes do they have in common? How are they different?
4. Discuss definitions of giftedness and how people have different talents. Helpful websites include:
<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-923/defining.htm>
<http://giftedkids.about.com/od/gifted101/p/gifteddef.htm>
5. Gather biographical information about one person from each of the categories. For each person, talk about these questions:
 - What were the person's attributes and areas of strength?
 - What challenges did the person overcome?
 - How did he/she use strengths to overcome those challenges?
 - What were the person's gifts and talents? How did he/she use them?
 - What episode or story from the person's life best characterizes him or her?
 - What did the person contribute to others?
6. Have students compare and contrast the people they discussed.

Phase II. Independent Research

A. Research process

1. Selecting a topic. Each student chooses a famous person to investigate.
2. Asking guiding questions. Once students have selected a topic, each student should think of three to five guiding questions, such as:
 - When did this person live?
 - How did the person reflect the time period in which he/she lived?
 - What are the person's attributes?
 - What are the person's gifts and/or talents?
 - What challenges did the person face?
 - How did the person use his gifts and/or talents to overcome those challenges?
 - What did the person contribute to others?

While these examples are general, the student’s questions should be specific to the person they study. The questions should lead the student to form individual research-based findings. The student should develop a hypothesis or some possible answers to the questions.

3. Conducting the research. After you have approved student proposals, each student will begin to use the resources he/she has identified and others he/she may encounter. During this stage, the student will need to keep a log, note cards, and/or resource process sheets for all the sources he/she uses and what he/she learns from each one.
4. Summarizing. Each student should create a timeline of key events in the person’s life.

B. The product

Each student will create an original form of biography—the student will tell about the person in a genre that is appropriate for that person (e.g., a student who studied an artist may create a piece of art that reflects the artist’s life). Have the student explain why he/she chose the form of biography and why it is appropriate for the person.

C. Communication

Students present their biography to the class. The presentation should be long enough for classmates to understand the person’s gifts and/or talents and should end with a question-and-answer session.

D. A completed project includes:

1. Description of reasons student chose the form of biography and why it is appropriate for the person
2. Research log, note cards, and/or research process sheets
3. Biography, including references or works cited
4. Timeline of person's life
5. Videotape or audiotape of the class presentation, including the Q&A session

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

The unit may address the following TEKS:

English Language Arts and Reading:

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|------|--|
| 2.1 | Understands how English is written and printed |
| 2.2 | Uses the relationships between letters and sounds, spelling patterns, and morphological analysis to decode written English |
| 2.3 | Comprehends a variety of texts, drawing on useful strategies as needed |
| 2.4 | Reads grade-level text with fluency and comprehension |
| 2.5 | Understands new vocabulary and uses it when reading and writing |
| 2.12 | Reads independently for sustained periods of time and produces evidence of their reading |

Who’s Who: A Study of Biography (Grade 2)

- 2.13 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provides evidence from the text to support their understanding * (Testable on the Grade 3 Reading STAAR, Reporting Category 3)
- 2.17 Uses elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text
- 2.18 Writes literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas
- 2.21 Understands the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing
- 2.24 Asks open-ended research questions and develops a plan for answering them
- 2.26 Clarifies research questions and evaluates and synthesizes collected information
- 2.28 Uses comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings
- 2.29 Speaks clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language

Mathematics:

- 2.1 Uses mathematical processes to acquire and demonstrate mathematical understanding
- 2.2 Applies mathematical process standards to understand how to represent and compare whole numbers, the relative position and magnitude of whole numbers, and relationships within the numeration system related to place value
- 2.6 Applies mathematical process standards to connect repeated addition and subtraction to multiplication and division situations that involve equal groupings and shares
- 2.7 Applies mathematical process standards to identify and apply number patterns within properties of numbers and operations in order to describe relationships
- 2.9 Applies mathematical process standards to select and use units to describe length, area, and time
- 2.10 Applies mathematical process standards to organize data to make it useful for interpreting information and solving problems

Science:

- 2.3 Knows that information and critical thinking, scientific problem solving, and the contributions of scientists are used in making decisions
- 2.8 Knows that there are recognizable patterns in the natural world and among objects in the sky

Social Studies:

- 2.3 Understands how various sources provide information about the past and present
- 2.4 Understands how historical figures, patriots, and good citizens helped shape the community, state, and nation
- 2.18 Applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology
- 2.19 Communicates in written, oral, and visual forms
- 2.20 Uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

This unit may address the following Texas College and Career Readiness Standards:

English Language Arts:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| I.A.1 | Determines effective approaches, forms, and rhetorical techniques that demonstrate understanding of the writer's purpose and audience |
| I.A.2 | Generates ideas and gathers information relevant to the topic and purpose, keeping careful records of outside sources |
| II.A.1 | Uses effective reading strategies to determine a written work's purpose and intended audience |
| II.A.2 | Uses text features and graphics to form an overview of informational texts and to determine where to locate information |
| II.A.3 | Identifies explicit and implicit textual information, including main ideas and author's purpose |
| II.A.4 | Draws and supports complex inferences from text to summarize, draw conclusions, and distinguish facts from simple assertions and opinions |
| II.A.5 | Analyzes the presentation of information and the strength and quality of evidence used by the author and judge the coherence and logic of the presentation and the credibility of an argument |
| II.A.6 | Analyzes imagery in literary texts |
| II.A.9 | Identifies and analyzes the audience, purpose, and message of an informational or persuasive text |
| II.A.10 | Identifies and analyzes how an author's use of language appeals to the senses, creates imagery, and suggests mood |
| II.B.1 | Identifies new words and concepts acquired through study of their relationships to other words and concepts |
| II.B.2 | Applies knowledge of roots and affixes to infer the meanings of new words |
| II.B.3 | Uses reference guides to confirm the meanings of new words or concepts |
| II.C.1 | Reads a wide variety of texts from American, European, and world literatures |
| II.C.3 | Analyzes works of literature for what they suggest about the historical period and cultural contexts in which they were written |
| III.A.1 | Understands how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts and influences the listener's understanding |
| III.A.2 | Adjusts presentation (delivery, vocabulary, length) to particular audiences and purposes |
| III.B.1 | Participates actively and effectively in one-on-one oral communication situations |
| III.B.2 | Participates actively and effectively in group discussions |
| III.B.3 | Plans and delivers focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning |
| IV.A.2 | Interprets a speaker's message; identify the position taken and the evidence in support of that position |
| IV.A.3 | Uses a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension |

Who's Who: A Study of Biography (Grade 2)

- IV.B.1 Listens critically and responds appropriately to presentations
- IV.B.2 Listens actively and effectively in one-on-one communication situations
- IV.B.3 Listens actively and effectively in group discussions
- V.A.1 Formulates research questions
- V.A.2 Explores a research topic
- V.A.3 Refines research topic and devise a timeline for completing work
- V.B.1 Gathers relevant sources
- V.B.2 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- V.B.3 Synthesizes and organizes information effectively
- V.B.4 Uses source material ethically
- V.C.1 Designs and presents an effective product
- V.A.1 Formulates research questions

Mathematics:

- VI.B.2 Selects and applies appropriate visual representations of data
- VI.B.4 Describes patterns and departure from patterns in a set of data
- VIII.A.1 Analyzes given information
- VIII.B.1 Develops and evaluates convincing arguments
- VIII.B.2 Uses various types of reasoning

Science:

- III.D.1 Uses search engines, databases, and other digital electronic tools effectively to locate information
- III.D.2 Evaluates quality, accuracy, completeness, reliability, and currency of information from any source
- V.C.1 Recognizes patterns of change

Social Studies:

- I.A.2 Analyzes the interaction between human communities and the environment
- I.A.3 Analyzes how physical and cultural processes have shaped human communities over time
- I.A.5 Analyzes how various cultural regions have changed over time
- I.B.2 Identifies and evaluates sources and patterns of change and continuity across time and place
- I.B.3 Analyzes causes and effects of major political, economic, and social changes in U.S. and world history
- I.E.1 Identifies different social groups and examine how they form and how and why they sustain themselves
- I.E.2 Defines the concept of socialization and analyzes the role socialization plays in human development and behavior
- I.E.3 Analyzes how social institutions function and meet the needs of society
- I.F.1 Uses a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly

- II.B.1 Explains and evaluates the concepts of race, ethnicity, and nationalism
- II.B.2 Explains and evaluates the concept of gender
- II.B.4 Evaluates how major philosophical and intellectual concepts influence human behavior or identity
- II.B.5 Explains the concepts of socioeconomic status and stratification
- II.B.6 Analyzes how individual and group identities are established and change over time
- IV.A.1 Identifies and analyzes the main idea(s) and point(s) of view in sources
- IV.A.2 Situates an informational source in its appropriate contexts
- IV.A.3 Evaluates sources from multiple perspectives
- IV.A.4 Understands the differences between a primary and secondary source and uses each appropriately to conduct research and construct arguments
- IV.A.5 Reads narrative texts critically
- IV.A.6 Reads research data critically
- IV.B.1 Uses established research methodologies
- IV.B.3 Gathers, organizes, and displays the results of data and research
- IV.B.4 Identifies and collects sources
- IV.C.1 Understands/interprets presentations critically
- V.A.1 Uses appropriate oral communication techniques depending on the context or nature of the interaction
- V.A.2 Uses conventions of standard written English
- V.B.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and authors

Cross-Disciplinary Standards:

- I.A.1 Engages in scholarly inquiry and dialogue
- I.D.1 Self-monitors learning needs and seeks assistance when needed
- I.D.2 Uses study habits necessary to manage academic pursuits and requirements
- I.D.3 Strives for accuracy and precision
- I.D.4 Perseveres to complete and master tasks
- I.E.1 Works independently
- I.E.2 Works collaboratively
- I.F.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and people
- I.F.2 Evaluates sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance
- II.A.3 Identifies the intended purpose and audience of the text
- II.A.4 Identifies the key information and supporting details
- II.A.5 Analyzes textual information critically
- II.A.6 Annotates, summarizes, paraphrases, and outlines texts when appropriate
- II.A.7 Adapts reading strategies according to structure of texts
- II.A.8 Connects reading to historical and current events and personal interest
- II.B.1 Writes clearly and coherently, using standard writing conventions

- II.B.2 Writes in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes
- II.B.3 Composes and revises drafts
- II.C.1 Understands which topics or questions are to be investigated
- II.C.2 Explores a research topic
- II.C.3 Refines research topic based on preliminary research and devises a timeline for completing work
- II.C.4 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- II.C.5 Synthesizes and organizes information effectively
- II.C.6 Designs and presents an effective product
- II.C.7 Integrates source material
- II.C.8 Presents final product
- II.D.1 Identifies patterns or departures from patterns among data
- II.D.2 Uses statistical and probabilistic skills necessary for planning an investigation, and collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
- II.D.3 Presents analyzed data and communicate findings in a variety of formats
- II.E.1 Uses technology to gather information
- II.E.2 Uses technology to organize, manage, and analyze information
- II.E.3 Uses technology to communicate and display findings in a clear and coherent manner
- II.E.4 Uses technology appropriately

Attachment #1: Famous People

Eric Carle
Chris Van Allsburg
Dr. Seuss
Tomas di Paola
Jim Henson
Sherri Lewis
Frank Oz
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Ray Charles
Elvis Presley
Dolly Parton
Lucille Ball
Oprah Winfrey
Aaron Spelling
Albert Einstein
Rachel Carson
Marie Curie
Bill Gates
Mary Kay
Hilary Rodham Clinton
Walt Disney
Pablo Picasso
Edith Head
Mark Spitz
Nadia Comaneci
Wilma Rudolph
Connie Chung
Edwin Abbott
Hans Christian Andersen
Louisa May Alcott
Roald Dahl
J.R.R. Tolkien
Eugene Debs
Ang Lee
Scott Joplin
Sammy Davis Jr.
Sammy Sosa
Cesar Chavez
Vladimir Horowitz
Yo Yo Ma
Luciano Pavarotti
Robin Williams
Tia Carrere
Stephen Hawking
Ansel Adams