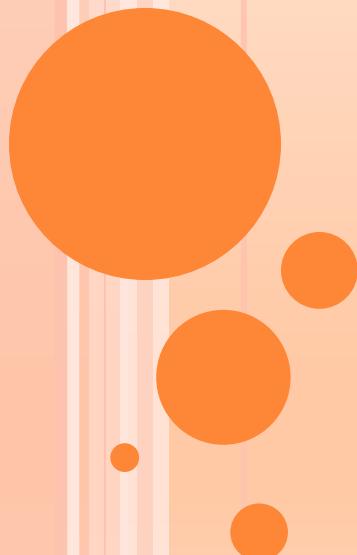


# WRITING A BIOGRAPHY

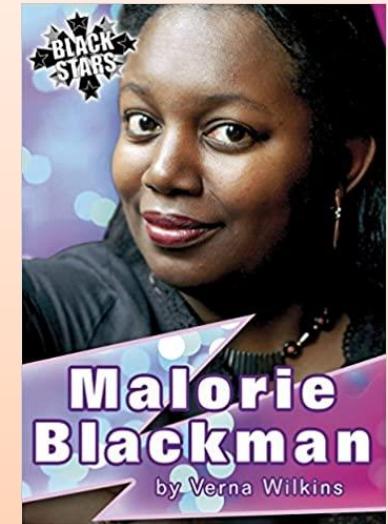
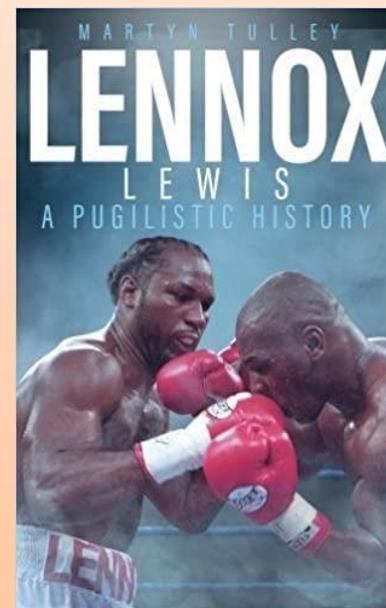
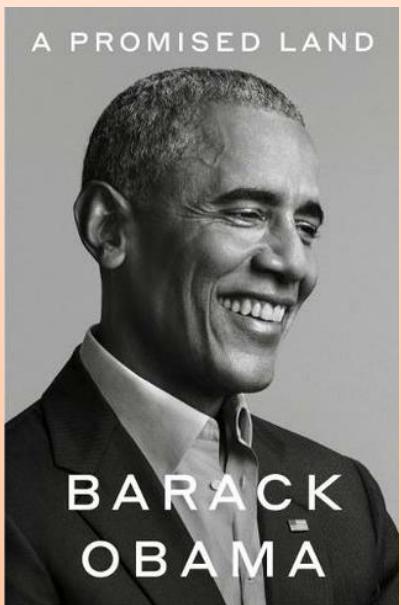


# WHAT IS A BIOGRAPHY?

- Biographical writing is about someone else's life. It is about a real person but written by someone else.
- A biography highlights the key events that have happened in their life, sometimes talking about their childhood.
- A biography can be written about someone who is dead or alive.



# SOME EXAMPLES OF BIOGRAPHY BOOK COVERS



Monday 2nd November 2020

Learning Objective: To use similar writing models for my own writing.

Learning Outcome: I can identify the features of a biography.

○ There are lots of features in biographical writing:

- Title
- Past tense
- Third person
- Engaging opening paragraph
- Rhetorical question
- Paragraphs with sub-headings
- Life events in chronological order of date
- Time conjunctions
- Quotes from others about what they think
- Conclusion - how they will be remembered

## BIOGRAPHY EXAMPLE

Read the biography of Mae Jemison. How many of the biographical features can you identify?





## Mae Jemison: Space Star

Have you ever dreamed of flying freely through outer space, surrounded by a sea of stars? Mae Jemison fulfilled that dream. On September 12, 1992, aboard the spaceship Endeavour, she became the first African-American woman to blast into outer space. This was not the only time, however, that Jemison had reached for the stars and realised her dreams.

### Early Life

Born on October 17, 1956, in Decatur, Alabama, Jemison grew up in Chicago, Illinois. There were not many prominent African-American female role models while she was growing up but Mae Jemison did not let that stop her from following her dreams.



## Education

As a young child, Jemison was especially interested in anthropology (the study of mankind) archaeology (history) and astronomy (space). Encouraged by her parents, she pursued her interests and their encouragement drove her on to success. She graduated from high school at the age of sixteen and continued on to earn degrees in chemical engineering and African-American studies at Stanford University. Later, she also graduated from Cornell University's medical school. No challenge was too great for Jemison to take on.

## Into Space

Jemison's accomplishments did not end there. In 1981, she joined NASA's space program in Houston, Texas. A few years later in 1988, Jemison realised her biggest dream: she finally became an astronaut. Just four years later, she was named 'Science Mission Specialist' (another NASA first) on an Endeavour flight. Neil Armstrong stated, "I am so proud of Mae. She well and truly deserves this magnificent achievement for all her hard work in science."

Today, Jamison encourages young people—especially women and girls—to study science. Her life example teaches us to follow our dreams, no matter how great they might seem



Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Learning Objective: To vary the way that sentences are structured.

Learning Outcome: I can write sentences which begin with a verb.

Changing the way that we build our sentences helps to keep the reader engaged. Today, we are going to look at how we can vary the structure of our sentences by beginning some of our sentences with a verb.

Let's look at these sentences.

Jemison's parents encouraged their daughter. She achieved two degrees from Stanford University.

With your partner, identify the verbs in these two sentences. Can you change the sentences to form one new sentence which begins with a verb?



Jemison's parents encouraged their daughter. She achieved two degrees from Stanford University.

This could become one new sentence.

Encouraged by her parents, Jemison achieved two degrees from Stanford University.

Notice the new use of the comma.

Highlight the verbs in the sentences below and then try to change the sentences so that they form one sentence which begins with a verb.





Jemison was born in Alabama. She grew up in Chicago.



Jemison enjoyed nature and human physiology at school. She used her observations to learn more about different elements of science.



Jemison graduated from Stanford University. She studied chemical engineering as well as African-American studies.



Jemison earned a medical degree from Cornell University. She went on to be a doctor for the Peace Corps in Liberia and Sierra Leone.



Jemison recorded almost two hundred hours in space. She orbited the earth more than a hundred times.



Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Learning Objective: To consider and discuss the composition of writing.

Learning Outcome: I can look at models of writing and consider these to plan my own writing.

# LOOK AT EXAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS

Look at these introductions. Which of them are most effective and why?



Have you ever imagined competing against the fastest runners in the world? Have you ever dreamed that you might one day be decorated with an Olympic medal? This is not imagination or a dream for Mohammed Farah, Great Britain's long-distance running champion. Mo Farah, as he is widely known, has won an incredible four Olympic gold medals on the athletics track: a feat never before achieved by a British runner. This is his story.



Ashley Modurotolu Banjo (born 4 October 1988) is an English street dancer, choreographer and actor. He is the leader of dance troupe Diversity who won the third series of Britain's Got Talent. Ashley was a judge on the ITV show Britain's Got Talent in 2020

# EXAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS



Malorie Blackman OBE is a British writer and one of the most successful female authors of the modern age. She held the prestigious position of Children's Laureate from 2013 to 2015. She primarily writes literature and television drama for children and young adults.



In the world of sport, Lennox Lewis is one of the most successful British sportsmen of all time and his name is known all over the world. He was a boxer who won 41 of his 44 professional fights, which is an amazing record. Lewis announced his retirement from the sport in 2004, after his final fight on 21 June 2003 against the Ukrainian boxer Vitali Klitschko.

# EXAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS



Marcus Rashford MBE (born 31 October 1997) is an English professional footballer who plays as a forward for Premier League club Manchester United and the England national team. Rashford has also served as an activist on the issue of child food poverty in the United Kingdom. For his efforts, he was recognised as a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 2020.



Can you imagine hurtling around a track at more than two hundred miles per hour in a car worth millions of dollars? This is the life for racing car driver Lewis Hamilton who has won the World Championships in Formula One a record-breaking six times. Crashes and smashes are part of everyday life as he travels around the world to compete on the international racing circuit.

# INTRODUCTION

An introduction is very important if you want to catch the reader's attention. A rhetorical question or a metaphor in your opening really helps to engage the reader.

An opening should introduce your person without going into too much detail. Think about including the answers to these questions within your opening.

- Who is the person? - their name (real name also if their birth name is different)
- What do they do?
- What are they famous for?
- What have they achieved?



# PLAN AN INTRODUCTION

Choose a person who you would like to write a biographical opening about. If you are stuck for ideas, you could use one of the least effective openings which we have examined and make it better.

Using your planning sheet, briefly answer the questions about your celebrity. Plan how you will use a technique to engage the reader - a rhetorical question, alliteration or metaphor, maybe?

Swap with your partner. Have they answered the questions accurately? Give the plan a tick if they have.

<u>Who is the person?</u>
<u>What do they do?</u>
<u>What are they famous for?</u>
<u>What have they achieved?</u>
<u>My way of engaging the reader.</u>



Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Learning Objective: To consider the composition of writing.

Learning Outcome: I can write an opening to a biography which uses techniques to engage the reader.

# WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

Today, we would like you to use your planning sheet to write an effective introduction.

Remember to use at least one technique to engage the reader - a rhetorical question, alliteration or metaphor, maybe?

