



Function practised: Writing a biography  
 Key structures: - Mixed past tenses  
                   - Time expressions expressing sequence.  
                   - Lexical areas: - somebody's life  
                   - Essential vocabulary: impossible to specify in advance.

**A biography** is the story of a person's life. It includes details of the person's life  
 It generally follows a specific chronological order:

- 1.- **General Background**
- 2.- **Childhood / adolescence**
- 3.- **Education**
- 4.- **Family life**
- 5.- **Career ( achievements, failures, events, setbacks )**
- 6.- **(end of life and death)**
- 7.- **Conclusion**

In order to show the **chronological sequence**, we often give the actual dates of events and use time expressions such as **before, after, at the same time, while, for, since, later, during this period.**

Linking words are also useful to show the relationship between events or factors that have influenced a person's life. **Connectors** such as *although, despite, as well as, besides, not only.. . but also, therefore, because, as a result, etc,* can be used to improve the quality of the biography you write.

**FREQUENT PHRASES AND STRUCTURES.**

**1.- General background.-**

- He/she was born in .....(place), on..... (date, ordinal)  
 "Malvin Wetey was born in Wales on the third of April 1989"  
 "Melissa Badley was born in Merridon, Scotland in 1995"
- He/she belonged to a - *rich/wealthy family # poor/humble family.*  
                                   - *family of humble origins. / of noble lineage*  
                                   - *big/large family / small family.*
- He/She was part of a - *working class / middle class/ ruling class family*  
                                   - *cultured # ignorant / illiterate family.*
- He/She was brought up - in an urban/ country/ context  
                                   - in very harsh conditions / priviledged conditions  
                                   - by a ..... family.

**2.- Childhood / adolescence**

- At a very early age, he/she starting working hard in a quarry
- At the age of 4, Mozart played the piano perfectly.
- When she turned 18, she left home to start a new life by herself.
- During his childhood Amstrong was riding his bike for 5 hours every day
- By the time she was 18, Sara had already travelled to 14 different countries

### 3.- Education

- He went on with his/her studies at school/university.
- Sam was a(n) lazy/hard-working/brilliant/average student.
- He was very good at Art and Literature
- Barbara was skilled in Mathematics.
- She always got the highest/lowest marks in the class
- Ralph went successfully through his studies and graduated in Sociology.
- His academic performance was very satisfactory / outstanding # poor
- Sandra got a degree in Law

### 4.- Family life

- When he was 34 he got married and had 5 children.
- She decided to stay single and lead her own life.
- Phil married the girl of his dreams, but after a few years of happy marriage things started to go wrong.
- Before she married Adam she had dated many other men.
- After having her first baby, she became far more understanding.
- He shared his life with his wife and their 3 children.

### 5.- Career ( achievements, failures, events, setbacks )

- Kelly Load had one of the most exciting/fascinanted lives I have ever been told about / I have ever read
- He spent a lot years of his life fighting for the human rights.
- During his lifetime, he did his best to improve the living standard of poor people
- He devoted much of his time to travel to different places and to know other cultures.
- After a long period of happiness and success, he suddenly had to experience pain and hardships, as .....
- His/her life was full of achievements, although he also experienced some serious setbacks
- She was the kind of person who never gave up until she got what she wanted
- He was having a wonderful life until his brother's death changed the course of his life
- He became well known all over the world due to his/ because of
  
- His main ambition in life was .....
- He was enthusiastic about .....
- very fond of .....
- very keen on .....

### 6.- End of life and death.

- He died at the age of .....
- He died of natural causes/ of a ..... (disease, heart attack, for instance).