***Biographical Unit***

*Definition: Provides factual information in a narrative style about all or part of a person’s life. A biography is written in third person. An autobiography is written in first person. A memoir is an autobiography narrowed to a specific event in the author’s life.*

Nonfiction Texts

Narrative Structure Non-Narrative Structure

Biographical Text Expository Procedural Persuasive

Biography Narrative Sequence How-To/ Argument

Autobiography Nonfiction Interview Directions Discussion

Memoir Report Essay

Article

**Elements of Literature Include (*these questions are not meant to be answered by you on this worksheet)*:**

*Characteristics of the Genre*: What makes it that genre?

*Setting*: How important is the setting to the author’s life?

*Characterization of the Subject:* What kind of person was the subject?

*Integrity:* Why is the topic important for the author to share?

*Theme*: What is the author’s message or purpose for telling this story?

*Accuracy/Authenticity:* How do you know the author’s information is true?

*Illustrations/Graphics*: What information do the illustrations tell us about the person’s life?

*Style and Language:* How did the author use language and details to make the story seem real to readers?

*Structure/Organization:* How is the information organized?

*Biographical Unit*

It doesn’t matter which book you have selected; all biographical books should include the same elements. Answer the questions below based the book you selected.

Title of your book:

Author of your book:

Characteristics of the Genre (answer 2)

1. Is your book a biography, autobiography, or memoir? How do you know?
2. What are some challenges of reading a biographical text?
3. What do you like most about reading books in this genre?

Setting (answer 3)

1. How important is the setting to the author’s life or accomplishments?
2. When did this person live? What was that time period like?
3. What if the person lived in a different time or place?
4. What connections can you make between the subjects memories and what others have said about the setting or time period?
5. What important details did the author share about the setting?

Characterization of the Subject (answer 5)

1. How does the author describe the subject of the biographical text?
2. What kind of person is the subject?
3. How does the subject change over time?
4. What do others say about the subject?
5. What are the physical characteristics of the subject?
6. How did the subject’s actions affect others?
7. What have you experienced in your life that helps you understand this person?
8. What does the story of this person’s life make you wonder about?

Theme (answer 3)

1. What is (are) the author’s message(s)?
2. What was the author trying to say by writing this biographical text?
3. What does the title tell you about this biographical text?
4. Why does this biographical text have meaning to others?
5. What insights does this book provide onto today’s problems and issues?
6. What is the moral or inspirational lesson the author is trying to teach?

Accuracy/Authenticity (answer 3)

1. What events in the life of the subject has the author chosen to write about?
2. What different viewpoints are presented?
3. How believable is the story? What makes it believable or not so believable?
4. What are some facts from the biographical text?
5. What background knowledge did you need to completely understand the story?
6. What does the biographical text make you want to learn more about?

Illustrations and Graphics (answer 2)

1. What information doe the illustrations give you about the person’s life?
2. How do headings or subheadings help you find information in the text?
3. What information is provided through reference aids (table of contents, index, bibliography, glossary, appendices)?
4. How does the overall format of the text help you to understand the biography better?

Style and Language (answer 2)

1. What words were new or difficult for you to understand?
2. What technique did you use to figure out words?
3. How has the author made the story more readable?
4. What words did the author use that are specific to a time period?
5. If dialogue was used, did it work well?

Text Structure/Organization (answer 3)

1. At what point in the subject’s life does the author begin?
2. How is the information organized?
3. Where does the story end?
4. What kind of order is used to present the information?
5. How would you summarize the events in the subject’s life in chronological order?
6. Did the author use flashbacks or flash forwards?