**Biography Project: A Major Grade**

**Objective**: Students will be able to interpret the life of a fellow student in a minimum seven paragraph biography using artifacts and interview questions to obtain information.

**SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITY AND DUE DATES** (Subject to change)

**Tuesday, September 19, 2017** – **Preparation Day** – . Review project requirements**. Homework: Due on Thursday, 9/21: Bring in ten items that reveal information about your life. Try to vary the type of items.**

**Thursday, September 21, 2017** – **Ten Items Day –** Students will bring **ten items** to class that represent different parts of their lives. They will **exchange their materials to a randomly selected student**. The **receiving student** will make **a list of the ten artifacts** provided. S/he will then **sketch five of the items and make a list of five characteristics for each of these items.** These will be used as primary source documents in writing the biography. Students will **begin their artifact descriptions in class**, both in writing and in drawing. **NO STUDENT “ARTIFACTS” WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE ROOM WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE OWNER. ALL MATERIALS WILL BE LOCKED IN THE CLASSROOM AT ALL TIMES IF TEACHERS ARE NOT PRESENT.**

**Friday, September 22, 2017** – Continue work on artifacts. **Please take your artifacts home with you today**. **Hwk**: **Create at least twenty questions** to ask your subject using at least **eight types of questions** from **the Kagan Matrix** prompts. **Two questions must be from each of the four highlighted blocks**. **Due: 9/25/17.**

**Monday, September 25, 2017** –**Interview Day**. Students **will interview their subjects** and **record their answers.**

**Tuesday, September 26, 2017** – **Interview & Chronology Day** - Students will **finish the interviews** with their partners. Students will refresh their memories about topic sentences. Students will create a **timeline of five important years in their subject’s life**. Students will begin to organize their ideas into a **graphic organizer**.

**Homework** due: **Wednesday, September 27, 2017** -- **1.** Create your **topic sentence** **AND** **2**. **C**reate a **tentative, rough draft GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** of your biography to help organize your thoughts.

**Wednesday, September 27, 2017** – **First Workshop Day** – Class will be used to rough draft biography.

**Thursday, September 28, 2017** – **Second Workshop Day** – Class will be used for creating/writing. (No computer time)

**Friday/Monday, September 29/October 2, 2017 – Third and Final Work Days** – Typing/Reviewing

**Wednesday, October 4, 2017 – Final Biography Day** – **Biography projects will be turned in**. **All late biographies** will be penalized 5 points for each day late up to 25 points. Parents will be called if a project is two days late.

**TEN ITEMS DAY**

**Objective**: The student will describe the artifacts of her/his partner by both **sketching the artifact and describing** it in written form with a **minimum of five characteristics**

On clean composition or notebook paper (lined or unlined), create about a two-inch column on the left side. You will draw your artifact in that space. Your writing will be to the right of the artifact. I suggest that you make a rough draft of your writing and recopy. Neatness does have an impact on your grade.

Your sketches should be relatively accurate, but consideration of ability will be taken into account in grading. However, an **honest effort to portray the artifact must be obvious**. Therefore, do not fret over their appearance. BUT**, it should be neat** – few erasures only. The **major grade will be based upon your description**. Use **complete sentences** in your descriptions. **Think size, weight, color, shape, material, and more**. In addition, take a guess at what the object is and its purpose. **See the example below.**

This coin is made of two types of metal. It appears to be silver on the outside, but in the middle is a thin layer of copper. On the one side of the coin are the words LIBERTY at the top and in the lower left, IN GOD WE TRUST. In the center is the engraving of a man. The year 1967 is below his portrait. On the reverse side is an engraving of an eagle sitting on a perch. A branch is below the perch. At the top of the coin is written, “UNITED STATES OF AMERICA” with “E PLURIBUS UNUM” below that. The words, “QUARTER DOLLAR” appear on the bottom of the face of the coin. The head of the man is opposite the tail of the eagle. The length is about ¾ inch and it weighs approximately ½ ounce. **I think this is a type of coin with which items were bought or sold. The face may have been that of an important leader.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Event** | **Situation** | **Choice** | **Person** | **Reason** | **Means** |
| **Present** | **What Is?** | **Where/**  **When**  **Is?** | **Which Is?** | **Who Is?** | **Why Is?** | **How Is?** |
| **Past** | **What Did?** | **Where/**  **When Did?** | **Which Did?** | **Who Did?** | **Why Did?** | **How Did?** |
| **Possibility** | **What Can?** | **Where/**  **When Can?** | **Which Can?** | **Who Can?** | **Why Can?** | **How Can?** |
| **Probability** | **What Would?** | **Where/**  **Who Would?** | **Which Would?** | **Who Would?** | **Why Would?** | **How Would?** |
| **Prediction** | **What Will?** | **Where/**  **When Will?** | **Which Will?** | **Who Will?** | **Why Will?** | **How Will?** |
| **Imagination** | **What Might?** | **Where/**  **When Might?** | **Which Might?** | **Who Might?** | **Why Might?** | **How Might?** |

**Notice** in the description, I have tried to completely describe **at least five** of my object’s characteristics. **IMPORTANT:**  **Notice that my last sentence provides the meaning of the object**.

**IMPORTANT**: **Your ten artifacts that you bring in have to represent different categories.** I do not want ten photographs of your family. This will be counted as one artifact. Similarly, do not bring in five CDs of music. They, too, will be counted as one artifact. For the benefit of the person who is writing your biography, be as varied in the artifacts as you possibly can. Bring in items from as many parts of your life as possible.

**The Kagan Matrix**

**THE INTERVIEW**

The next step is to interview your subject. As a minimum, you must ask **at least twenty (20) questions**, but you will notice you might have to ask a lot more to do a complete job.

**WHY AN INTERVIEW?**

Interviews offer a way of getting information that is not produced from looking at artifacts. Interviews help to define the importance of artifacts. Interviews may be a way of getting additional information about the subject. Interviews can be used to discover a subject’s feelings about topics such as goals, activities, or anything of curiosity. In short, good questions will complete the picture of who your subject really is.

**OBJECTIVE:** Use the chart above to make up **at least twenty**  questions. **At least two questions** **must come from each large, highlighted block and start with the key words of the question starters**. You may word your remaining questions any way you want. Keep in mind that you **must record all** the questions that you ask of your subject because **accurate, reliable notes** are important to a good **final** copy.

**Examples of Interview Questions using the Kagan Matrix.**

**Block 1 Question: Where and when were you born?**

**Block 2 Question: Who is the person that you trust the most for advice?**

**Block 3 Question: Which of your favorite teams would you like to win a major championship?**

**Block 4 Question: How will you prepare yourself for success in life?**

**WRITING THE BIOGRAPHY**

A good biography will be a story of someone’s life. It should have facts about the person, but also show an interpretation of the life of the person you are writing about. What do your artifacts show about the personality of your subject; a biography is just not a laying out of facts even though you will have to cite them informally in your paragraphs. It is also your idea of that person. True, objective, great biographers will show both the negative and positive side of their subject, however, **we are just going to focus on the** **positive**.

Throughout your biography, be sure to cite your source. It will be written with references made in parenthesis to either an artifact or an interview question. **For example**:

Kathleen Smith was born in the Gnaden Huetten Hospital In Lehighton, Pennsylvania on March 18, 2001. She weighed in at 6 pounds and reached a whopping 22 inches (Artifact #1). (\*\* In your list, Artifact 1 might be a note from someone describing the birth of Kathleen.) Her mother told her that as a newborn, she had the unusual talent of turning over on her stomach far earlier than was humanly thought possible. (Interview # 2)

**STEPS TO WRITING THE BIOGRAPHY**

The **FIRST** step in the writing of a biography is to organize and categorize your artifacts and questions. Decide which general categories your material would fit – sports, personal data, music, family, friends, organizations, hobbies, leisure time,etc. This is the rudiments of an outline. **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:** Did you ever consider asking why someone is in an activity rather than just what activities they were in? What motivates him/her in their sport? Lastly, perhaps your subject is involved in a current project?. Are they building something or tearing something down? Or, end with what your subject hopes to do in the future.

The **SECOND** step is to interpret your material. For example, one of your artifacts may have been a trophy won in a gymnastics competition. From this trophy, you might interpret two things or maybe more. First, the person competes in gymnastics **and** your subject may be good in that particular gymnastic event. If your were alert, you may have asked in the interview about the length of time she has been in gymnastics, how many hours she has practiced, or even, does she still compete, what might she do in the future dealing with gymnastics?

After you interpret the artifacts and interview, the **THIRD** step is to group your interpretations so you can write your biography. It is best to write a rough draft of each area of your subject’s life in paragraphs. This is very similar to the first step, except now you start writing in paragraphs. Think about what the questions and artifacts tell about your subject - what kind of a person.

The **LAST** step should be a summary of the person. What do you think this person is like? What do you predict for the future? This can be a delicate area, but remember the only person who will read this biography is me and you. Be diplomatic in your assessment. It is this part that makes a person a historian – the final assessment of someone.

**FINAL COPY: BIOGRAPHY SET UP**

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

**FIRST, all final copies** will be in **black ink** and on either **notebook paper, computer paper, or composition paper.** The notebook paper **will not have frilly edging**.

**SECOND,** the biography should be **at least** **seven** **paragraphs** in length based upon the subject areas about which you choose to write. The **first paragraph** should be an introductory one and the **last paragraph** should be a summary paragraph.

**THIRD,** you will be given **two class periods** to finalize this project for typing/writing and to ask any follow-up questions. **Use your time wisely**.

**ORDER OF COMPLETED PROJECT**

**Your final project must be submitted, arranged in the following order:**

**1. TITLE PAGE**

This is a **decorated page (meaning colorful, attractive, eye appealing, etc.)** with a **TITLE, your name, your section, the date the paper is handed in, the due date, and my name** (Mr. Stemler or Mrs. Pagotto), spelled correctly.

**2. THE BIOGRAPHY**

**3. THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS** - **The next pages** will be your interview questions and answers. These should be **neatly copied or typed** in the following style:

**Question #1**: What can you do now that you could not do three years ago?

**(Skip a space)**

**Answer #1**: I can now hit a golf ball over two hundred yards with great accuracy. I practiced a lot to achieve this.

**(Skip two spaces)**

**Question #2**: Do you have any brothers or sisters? If so, what are their names and ages?

**4. A CHRONOLOGY OF FIVE DATES IMPORTANT IN YOUR SUBJECT’S LIFE (Table or timeline, or some other method)**

**5. LIST OF ARTIFACTS -** The **last pages will be a numbered list of all of the artifacts**. **Select five** of the artifacts and **write a detailed description** as well as sketch them to the best of your ability which is better than stick figures. **They should be colored**.

**Artifact #1** – A note written by Kathleen’s mother telling where and when her birth took place. It is paper and is about 10” X 9” in length. The ink is blue. It appears recently written. The date states March 3, 2001.

**Artifact #2** – A golf trophy. The golf trophy is made of gold. It weights two pounds. It stands twenty inches tall from the base. A figure imitating someone driving stands on top. It has the year 1979 engraved.

Drawing of golf trophy here