BRIDGES EDITION

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

BIOGRAPHY

Michelle Obama
Barack Obama





by Joy Brewster

Benchmark EDUCATION

Genre: Biography
Level: K/20*

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

For teachers' inspection ONLY

LITERARY ANALYSIS
- Respond to and interpret text
- Make text-to-text connections
- Analyze the genre

READING SKILLS
Comprehension
- Identify sequence of events

Word Study
- Adverbs

Tier Two Vocabulary
(see Glossary)

WRITING SKILLS
Writer's Tools
- A strong lead

Writer's Craft
- How to write a biography

THEME CONNECTIONS
- U.S. History

*The reading level assigned to this text is based on the genre examples only. "Focus on the Genre," "Reread," and "Writer's Craft" features were not leveled. These sections are intended for read-aloud or shared reading.

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The Readers' & Writers' Genre Workshop series includes eleven fiction and nonfiction genres. There are two titles with multiple stories for each genre.

How to use this book

1. Learn about the genre by reading pages 2–3. Get background information about the subjects of the biographies on pages 4–5.
2. Read the biographies for enjoyment.
3. Reread the biographies and answer the questions on pages 13 and 21.
4. Reread the last biography. Pay attention to the comments in the margins. See how an author writes a biography.
5. Follow the steps on pages 22–23 to write your own biography.
6. Complete the activity on the inside back cover. Answer the follow-up questions.

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Michelle Obama

Barack Obama

Two Biographies

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BIOGRAPHY

What is a biography?

A biography is a factual retelling of another person's life. The person may have lived long ago or in recent history, or the person may still be alive today. Biographies can cover a person's entire life, or just important parts of a person's life. When possible, a biography includes direct quotes from the person. This helps the reader make a connection to the person.

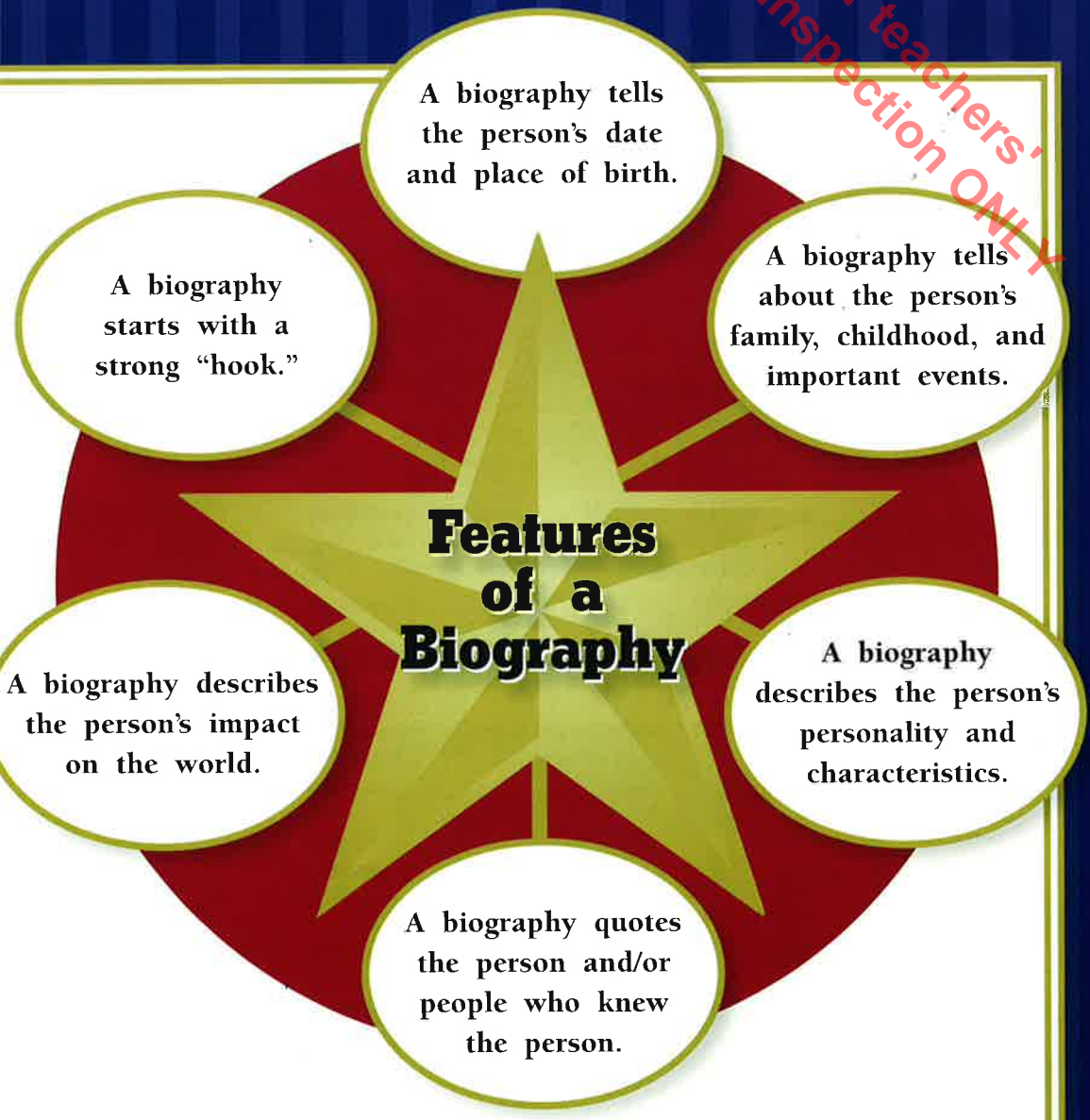
What is the purpose of a biography?

A biography helps a reader understand the people, places, times, and events that were or are important in the subject's life. It provides a summary of the person's major life experiences and achievements. In addition, the way the author writes the biography helps a reader get a sense of the person as a real human being who had (and perhaps still has) an impact on the lives of others.

How do you read a biography?

The title will tell you the subject of the biography and may include something interesting about him or her. The first paragraph will try to "hook" the reader by capturing his or her attention. As you read, note the setting. The setting often influences what happens in a person's life. Also pay close attention to the sequence of events in the person's life. Ask yourself: *Did this event happen to the person, or did the person make it happen? How did this event affect the person's life? What do I admire about this person? Is there something in this person's experiences that I could apply to my life?*

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Who writes biographies?

People who write biographies want to learn more about others' life stories and how those people made their marks on the world. Some people write biographies because they are interested in a certain topic, such as sports, history, or cooking. Others write biographies simply because they are interested in people!

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Meet the Subjects

Michelle and Barack



1961 Barack Obama is born on August 4 in Honolulu, Hawaii.



1983 Barack graduates from Columbia University.

1988 Michelle and Barack meet while working at the law firm of Sidley Austin.

1988 Michelle graduates from Harvard Law School.



1992 Michelle and Barack marry.

1964 Michelle Robinson is born on January 17 in Chicago, Illinois.



1985 Michelle graduates from Princeton University.



1991 Barack graduates from Harvard Law School.

Michelle's father dies. She is appointed an assistant to the mayor of Chicago.

1993 Michelle leads Public Allies Chicago, an organization providing leadership training to young adults.

Tools Writers Use

A Strong Lead

A strong lead, or first few sentences, grabs or "hooks" readers. A strong lead makes readers want to keep reading. The lead tells you something important about the subject and hints at what you may learn. Writers use two types of leads. A direct lead tells who or what the piece is about and why the subject is important. An indirect lead may quote someone, ask a question, describe a setting, or tell an anecdote, or true story, about the subject.

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Obama







Barack is elected to the Illinois State Senate.

Michelle begins working for the University of Chicago.

The Obamas' daughter Sasha is born.

Barack is elected to the U.S. Senate.

Barack begins his run for president.

1996 **1998** **2001** **2004** **2007** **2009**

The Obamas' daughter Malia is born.





Barack and Michelle become President and First Lady of the United States. The family moves to the White House.

Michelle Obama

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Michelle Obama is the First Lady of the United States. She is married to President Barack Obama. Her most important job is being a mom. "Our girls, Sasha and Malia, are the light of our lives," she says **softly**. Family has always been important to Michelle.

A Close Family

Michelle was born January 17, 1964. She was born in Chicago, Illinois. Her parents were Fraser and Marian Robinson. Her dad worked for the city. It wasn't always easy. He had a disease that made it hard to walk.



Michelle and Barack Obama have two daughters, Malia and Sasha.