



Grange Park School

Learning for Life - Personalised Pathways for All

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# Biography Project for English

This is a long term project for students to complete during the COVID 19 (Corona Virus) lockdown. The amount of work completed can be dependent on the age of the pupil, their ability and their engagement with the task. As such the completed work can be as long as the student wants it to be - each section needs to be completed as paragraphs.

## Task 1:

Choose a famous person to write about. They can be from any area, but it is better if you pick someone you admire or think of as a role model as this will make your writing more interesting (if you are interested, your writing becomes more interesting). You can pick someone who is no longer alive, but your final chapter (when we get there I will explain) will be different. Here are some ideas, you can choose one of these, or you can go with your own idea;

**Authors:** Shakespeare (dead), Dickens (dead), Philip Pullman, David Walliams

**Sports Personalities:** Lewis Hamilton (F1), Diego Maradona (football), Kobe Bryant (basketball - dead), Marieke Vervoort (Paralympic wheelchair racer - dead)

**Film Stars:** Will Smith, Charlie Chaplin (dead), Clint Eastwood, Robin Williams (dead)

**Artists:** Michael Craig-Martin, Banksy, Frida Kahlo (dead),

**TV Personalities:** Ant and Dec, Anne Hegarty, Caroline Flack (dead), David Bellamy (dead)

**Chefs:** Michel Roux (dead), James Martin, Gary Rhodes (dead), Gordon Ramsey

**Comedians:** Jimmy Carr, Jo Brand, Victoria Wood (dead), Caroline Aherne (dead)

**Musicians:** Ariana Grande, Elvis Presley (dead), Michael Jackson (dead), Rag'n'Bone Man

**Other ideas:** Leonardo da Vinci (inventor/artist - dead), Boris Johnson (politician), Carl Friedrich Gauss (mathematician - dead), Sir Christopher Wren (architect - dead), Mother Teresa (saint/humanitarian), Greta Thunberg (environmental activist), Nelson Mandela (terrorist/racial equality leader/president - dead), Diana, Princess of Wales (member of the British Royal Family - dead), John F Kennedy (President of USA - dead)

## Task 2:

Research your chosen celebrity. Collect information for each of the following categories. At this point you can copy and paste, but remember you will have to put it in your own words when you write up your biography. If your chosen celebrity is alive you might (with your parent's or carer's permission) want to write a letter or contact them via social media or email to find out extra special information that might not be commonly known! Also try to find some quotes of things this person has said to add more interest to your work. You might like to use the planning sheet below the category list, but that is entirely up to you.

### Categories of information:

Why you have chosen this person, what is it that makes you admire them?

#### Basic information -

- Full name/nicknames/stage or professional name
- When they were born
- When they died (if appropriate)
- Where they were born
- Why are they famous
- When did they become famous?
- Where did they become famous?

#### Details of major events in their life

What impact has what they have done had on their own lives and the lives of others

What do they want to do in the future? (if they are still alive)

Why will they also be remembered (if they are dead)

## Biography Planning Page

Why this person?

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### Basic information

1. Person's names
2. Born
3. Died
4. What are they famous for?
5. When did it happen?
6. Where did it happen?

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### Key Events that happened in their life

- 1.

2.

3.

Conclusion

What are they doing now?

Have they taught us anything?

Why will they always be remembered?

What do they want to do in the future?

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Quotes:

### Task 3:

Time to think about how you will write your biography. You need to remember a few things:

Your introduction is personal to you - it is about why you are writing this text (not because I have asked you to!). This needs to be written in the first person (I/me) and present tense (writing as it is happening now).

Most of the rest of your biography will be written in the past tense (the events you will talk about have already happened). The exceptions to these are;

- Information about the current life of the personality (names, where they live, who their current family is etc) must be in the present tense.
- What they have taught us, because this will always be true and so is in the present tense.
- Their future plans, which will be in the future tense (something that will happen, but has not yet happened).

Biographies are always in chronological order. This means writing information in the date order for which they happen (birth, childhood, adulthood, death). This means that you will need to use time connectives to make your work flow. Write some time connectives (words or phrases) you might use below - I've put a some in to start you off:

|            |       |                 |
|------------|-------|-----------------|
| Eventually |       |                 |
|            | Later |                 |
| Soon       |       | All of a sudden |
|            |       | Finally         |

Remember, that time connectives usually have a comma after them!

Think about your vocabulary. Try to use some WOW words. Write some words you might try to use below - I've put in a few to start you off:

|           |          |         |
|-----------|----------|---------|
| Delighted | Ambition | Anxious |
|           |          |         |
|           |          |         |

Finally, remember to extend your sentences using connectives.

Now it is time to start your writing. For each of the following tasks I have ended with an example of how I would write each section - each one includes little hints to help you improve and impress with your work. I have only done this as short paragraphs so that you don't have to read too much - you can make your paragraphs as long as you like. You can write more than one paragraph for each section if you like!

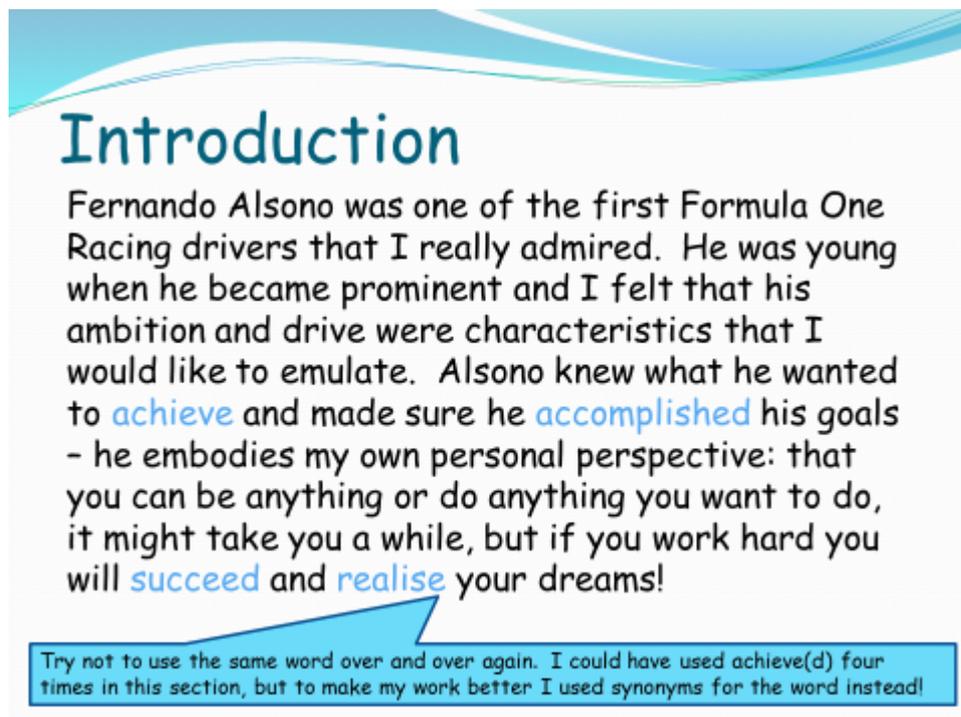
**THIS MUST ALL BE IN YOUR OWN WORDS!**

**NO COPY AND PASTE FROM THE INTERNET ALLOWED!**

Task 4:

Write your introduction.

Use the ideas from your planning sheet or own notes to write your introduction to the text. Once you have done it check back to task three to make sure you have written it in the correct way. Edit and improve your work if you need to.



## Introduction

Fernando Alonso was one of the first Formula One Racing drivers that I really admired. He was young when he became prominent and I felt that his ambition and drive were characteristics that I would like to emulate. Alonso knew what he wanted to **achieve** and made sure he **accomplished** his goals - he embodies my own personal perspective: that you can be anything or do anything you want to do, it might take you a while, but if you work hard you will **succeed** and **realise** your dreams!

Try not to use the same word over and over again. I could have used achieve(d) four times in this section, but to make my work better I used synonyms for the word instead!

Task 5:

Write your first paragraph. This should be about the person and the basic information about their life (not their death or their current family situation). Once you have done

it check back to task three to make sure you have written it in the correct way. Edit and improve your work if you need to.

Chapter 1 This is for setting the scene. Include their date of birth and where they grew up, what inspired them to do their job and how/when they became famous.

Fernando Alonso was born on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1981 in Oviedo in Northern Spain. He began his career as a professional Formula One racing driver when he made his debut with Minardi, a racing team, at the 2001 Australian Grand Prix. He was the youngest driver to win the Formula One championship in 2005, when he was 24 years old. This title was taken over by Lewis Hamilton in 2008.

Clear up any possible confusion for the reader by inserting a clause that explains. Separate the clause with commas. Not everyone will know who Miniardi are.

Task 6:

This will be several paragraphs. Each paragraph should be about one of the key events that happened in their life. Start with the earliest event and work forward to the most recent one. Once you have done it check back to task three to make sure you have written it in the correct way. Edit and improve your work if you need to.

Chapter 2 - Factual information about the key events from your celebrity's life. Start with the earliest.

As a child, Alonso's mother worked in a department store and his father was employed as a mechanic in an explosives factory near Oviedo. Alonso's father was an amateur kart racer and he wished to pass on his passion to his children. He built a pedal kart originally meant for Alonso's sister Lorena, however she showed no interest in the sport. Alonso was only three years old at the time but he soon became passionate about racing. His family could not afford all the equipment needed for the sport, nevertheless Alonso quickly became very successful, which meant that people wanted to sponsor him.

Explain each event; how it impacted on their life and how it contributed to their becoming famous. Use connectives to extend your sentences.

### Other chapters - Write about the next key event in chronological order

Following some notable performances over the 2001 season, Alonso became test driver for Renault in 2002. The Spaniard became the youngest driver to achieve a Formula One pole position at the 2003 Malaysian Grand Prix and the same year had a 180mph crash at the Brazilian Grand Prix: the result of missing the double yellow flags and Safety Car boards. He must have been devastated by this bad luck and he probably thought his luck had run out. However he finished second at his home grand prix two races later, finished the year sixth in the championship with 55 points and four podium finishes.

How do you think they felt? Speculate (because you can't tell the reader exactly) about how your subject felt about the incident. Use words that express possibility rather than certainty.

### Other chapters - Finish this section with the most up-to-date event that you have.

In December 2005, Fernando Alonso announced that he would be moving to McLaren for 2007. Lewis Hamilton was chosen as his partner for the season. McLaren were reported to have paid Alonso £20 million in 2007. From 2010 - 2014, Alonso drove for Ferrari. Alonso also announced that the 2014 season would be his last with the team and in December 2014 it was revealed that Alonso would return to McLaren for the first time since 2007, partnered with Jenson Button.

Alonso retired from Formula One racing in 2018, but remained as an ambassador for McLaren throughout 2019.

### Task 7:

End your biography with a paragraph that brings the reader up-to-date. What is the person doing now (if they are alive) or when and how did they die (if they are dead) Say what their lasting impact will be and why they will always be remembered. Once you have done it check back to task three to make sure you have written it in the correct way. Edit and improve your work if you need to.

**Final Chapter - Finish the writing by bringing it up to date.**

Ferdinand Alonso **currently races** endurance and Indy cars. He **is** a world champion in both of these and **is still trying** his hand at other motor sports - his ambition **is to be** world champion in as many different motor sports as possible.

"I've been driving very good cars, slower cars, with the same motivation and ambition and love for racing. I think I am the same driver with the same ambition, and probably the same aggressive mode in terms of racing and driving... a guy that never gives up. That's probably the way **I hope** people will think about me in the future."

Alonso will always be remembered as one of the greatest racing drivers the world has ever known.

He **currently lives in** Spain and has had a wife and several girlfriends; he does not have any children. Alonso does a lot of charity work for UNICEF.

Look at how the tense changes. Most of the writing is in past tense, but bringing it up to date requires present tense and possibly future tense too if your celebrity is still alive. Don't forget the quotes!

### Task 8:

Finish your work by adding some pictures or illustrations. You can copy and paste these from the internet or you can draw your own. Don't forget to write a caption for each picture - a sort sentence to explain what the picture shows.



Ferdinand Alonso in 2016

Task 9:

Design a front cover for your work. Give your work a title - use word play to make it memorable or 'catchy' for your audience. Don't forget to put your name on it!



Task 10:

Save your work and give it to Mrs Shaddock when we go back to school. If you prefer you can email it to Mrs Shaddock and she will save them all for when she can print them out. We are going to create a section in the library for all our own biographies - it will be wonderful!

Well done for all your hard work!