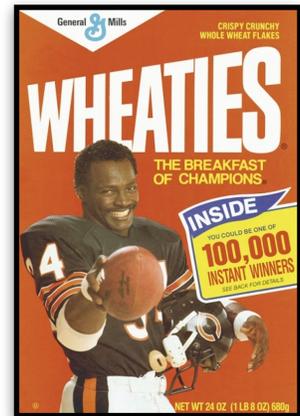


LEARNING FROM LEADERS!

In the program Readers Are Leaders we talk about how important reading is to being a successful leaders! As Harry Truman put it, “Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers!”. So here are some wonderful ideas for building on BIOGRAPHIES...

Wheaties Celebrity. We all know the famous cereal Wheaties and how they often have the pictures of famous celebrities. Challenge your students to determine who the next great champion on the Wheaties box should be. Have your class look at many different biographies at biography.com have them select some of their favorite people and determine if they will be on the iconic Wheaties box or maybe another brand or product. What makes them so special and what have they done for the world to make a difference. And more importantly what can each of us do to make a difference!



Build a biography. If you are looking for a simple way to integrate biography writing into a classroom activity, no resource could be of greater use to you than [The Biography Maker](#). By following the instructions, your students can create excellent biographies that address key questions and hold the attention of readers. The site walks students through the steps of choosing a topic, researching the answers to probing questions, pulling together resources, and creating an engaging story. The site offers a template that can help you turn the biographies into Web pages that can be published on a classroom Web site.

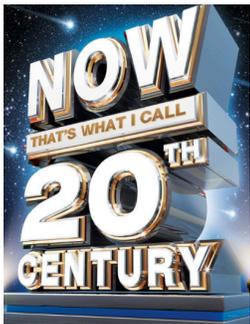


Write people poems. Poetry writing may seem dull to some students but not when it is combined with a biography! Have your class visit [InfoPlease: People](#) and search its 30,000 online biographies. Ask them to select one individual and write a poem about the person. The poem should feature qualities that make the person unique, facts relating to the person's life, and other details. You may choose to have each student include the name of the individual or to have the student share his or her writing and have others guess the identity.

Create a birth date biography. How many days have you been alive? What was the moon like on the day you were born? What was in the news, and what songs were people listening to? Those are questions participants in [The Day I Was Born Online Project](#) are answering. This ongoing project is the perfect endeavor for your class too! Students use online resources to answer specific questions about their dates of birth, and teachers collaborate with other classes by sharing their findings. If you prefer, have your students use the handout and links to perform the research -- then create "newspapers" that reveal facts about the days that they were born. They may then share the publications with others.



Imagine a celebrity guest. Invite your students to imagine that each is going to have a celebrity visitor to the school. Each student selects a person who would make an excellent speaker by examining the biographies of [The Biographical Dictionary](#). When he or she has made a choice, the student should write an introduction for this figure and tell about his or her accomplishments and what he or she will be discussing during the visit.



Identify people of the century. In *Time* magazine's [The Most Influential People of the 20th Century](#), the names of 100 influential people are organized into groups and ranked in order of their importance. Who do your students view as the top ten leaders and revolutionaries, artists and entertainers, builders and titans, and heroes and icons? After they have compiled a list of their picks and voted on them, have the students read the *Time* lists and compare the results. Do they agree with the findings of the readers of *Time*?

Choose the greatest American. What one person best represents the qualities of citizenship -- qualities that might qualify that person to be selected as "the greatest American"? Your students may decide! Have them read about historical figures at [Who's Who in American History](#). Instruct each student to choose a person he or she feels deserves this title and create an award for him or her. The student should define the characteristics that set this person apart from other Americans. Hold a class discussion to determine whether any students have chosen the same individual and why.

Work on Biography.kids. One thing the Web still lacks is a good biographical dictionary with the stories of kids. How many amazing kids do your students know? Have your students use our [Biography.kids](#) teaching master to interview or gather information about a special student who is newsworthy. Compile the reports into a

biographical dictionary in print or online so that all students may share the stories they have created.

Biography study guides. Anyone who has watched a segment of a biographical program from the A & E channel knows how interesting and enlightening those stories can be. Students can benefit from them as well when they are used in the classroom, and now it is even easier to make them a part of your curriculum. With [AandE.com](https://www.aandecom.com) Classroom Study Guides, you may choose from an index of programs and find summaries, vocabulary words, thought-provoking discussion questions, extension activities, and the next air time of specific shows. For an interesting twist, have your students watch a *Biography* program and create a study guide for it. Be sure to tell them to include an answer sheet!

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