

All About Me! ~ Autobiography Project

WRITING PORTFOLIO:
An Autobiography Assignment



*"Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life,
or whether that station will be held by anybody else,
these pages must show."*

— *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens

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The choice for an autobiography is based on many factors. One is that it allows students and parents to work on the project together. It's a great time to relive those special memories – look through pictures, share some stories and laughs, and enjoy the time together.

Second, students don't often take time to reflect on the positive events that have occurred during their lives. This gives them an opportunity to pull out pictures and awards that have been hiding in drawers and revel in their accomplishments – emphasizing their uniqueness.

Finally, it is now more important than ever that people all over the world begin to recognize and appreciate those differences, personal and cultural, that make us who we are. As students share these differences, we hope to gain a better understanding of, not only who we are, but why we are, so we can celebrate those attributes that make each one of us special. (Students often comment that “share day” is the best!)

Have fun with this project. Include pictures of Great Aunt Bertha, awards for being the fastest scooterboarder in the second grade, the note from your teacher telling your parents you “forgot your homework.” Include your favourite recipe, the first time you printed your name, the stick picture drawing of your family from kindergarten. The purpose is to tell who you are so – just about anything goes. This packet will help guide you through your autobiography. If you follow these guidelines step by step, you will have no difficulty completing the project. We will work on different parts in class each week, with mini-lessons to review concepts such as: paragraph writing, narrative writing, figurative language, synonyms and antonyms, etc...

Please check the grading sheet at the end of the packet so you will know how this project will be graded. The more detailed your writing, the higher the grade.

Remember – this is your life story. Let your personality come through!

Suggestion – Read the entire packet before beginning, so you can be on the lookout for bits and pieces. It is recommended you share this packet with an adult at home because you may need their help obtaining information. .

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"I'm doing research on myself."

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Assignments and Mini-Lessons: ** you can use this as a checklist**

1. ___ Mini -Lesson #1 - The Perfect Paragraph! How to write an amazing paragraph!
___ Assignment #1 - What's in a Name? (Paragraph and Art Collage)
2. ___ Mini - Lesson #2 - When do I Start a New Paragraph? (TiP ToP)
___ Assignment #2 - Family and Home. Find pictures of your family.
(3- 4 paragraphs)
3. ___ Mini - Lesson #3 - Using Sensory Words in Descriptions.
___ Assignment #3 - Are You Hungry? (2 paragraphs)
4. ___ Mini - Lesson #4 - Chronological Order: Making a Timeline.
___ Assignment #4 - My Life so Far! (4 - 5 Paragraphs) + Timeline. Pictures and mementos will be needed to complete this sections.
5. ___ Mini- Lesson #5 - First, Second and Third Person Point of View Writing.
___ Assignment #5: A Day in the Life (writing in 3rd person) & Memorable Events (writing in 1st person perspective).
6. ___ Mini - Lesson #6 - Figurative Language (Metaphors, Similes and Idioms)
___ Assignment #6: Personal Metaphors, 'I'm so "like"! & "These Words Belong to Me" vocabulary assignments.
7. ___ Mini - Lesson #7 - Synonyms and Antonyms (vocabulary work).
___ Assignment #7: Visually Speaking & Likes and Dislikes (2 -3 paragraphs)
8. ___ Assignment #8: Future Plans! (3 - 4 paragraphs)

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Assignment Descriptions

1. **What's in a Name?:** Names are an integral part of who we are. They shape our sense of who we are. Explore the origin of your name. Surname, Middle Name and First Name.

- What does your name mean? Does it have an historical significance, ethnical significance or country of origin?
- Do you know who gave you your name and why? Is there a story behind your naming? Did your parents consider any other names for you?
- Are these the names you would have chosen for yourself? If you could have any other name, what would it be?

(1 -2 paragraphs in length)

2. **Family and Home:** Home is where the heart is! Tell me all about what makes your family and your home so special to you.

- Describe each member of your family so people will know what they are like - looks, personality, age, occupation and what makes them special to you.
- Where do you fit? - oldest, middle, youngest, only child?
- What is your family's ethnic background? Do you observe any traditions in your family taken from your culture? Do you have any famous relatives?
- Do you have any pets? If so, why kind, name them and how long have you had them? Tell me some funny stories!
- What does your family like to do together? Special vacations, game nights, hobbies or special time together.
- Describe your home or apartment you live in now. Where else have you lived - other cities or places?
- Are there any places that are special to you, such a grandparents home, cottage or other place?

Photographs (or copies) will come in handy for this assignment. You may draw pictures of your home or special places, memories, etc too!

(3-4 paragraphs in length)

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3. Are you Hungry? The five senses allow us to perceive whatever is tangible, or concrete. A sensory experience is something we can taste, touch, smell, see or hear. For example, ice-cold water-melon, hot dogs sizzling over a over a charcoal fire, the music of the ice cream truck!

In great detail, using lots of description, tell us about your favourite meal. This can be a home-cooked meal or a fancy dinner out or even your usual fast food.. whatever makes you lick your lips! Where is it served? What dishes does it include? Who cooks it?

Include at least TWO details that appeal to each of the FIVE senses. You can include the recipe for your display too!

(2 - 3 paragraphs)

4. My Life So Far! This may be a difficult section to start since most of you will not remember many things about the early times in your life. What you write may require the help of parents or other relatives. ** Hint - make sure to ask questions when your parents have the time to answer them. While they are doing work around the house if not a good time. Choose a time during dinner or when you have free time. **

You don't need to answer all these questions below, they are just suggestions to help guide you for your timeline. Do these in CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

- What day were you born? How much did you weigh, length, did you have hair? What memories can your family recall about your first few days of life?
- Milestones: when did you get your first tooth, first words spoken, took your first steps, first haircut?
- Early years: did your family have a nickname or a term of endearment for you as a baby? What special things did you do as a toddler? What was your favourite book or song? Were you a fussy eater or what did you love to eat?
- School years: what was your first day of school like? What schools have you attended? What was your favourite subject? Who were your good friends in elementary school (before middle school)? Who were your favourite teachers? Why? What equipment/toys did you love to play with/on? What was one memorable event that occurred during your school years?

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- Later Life: Describe things you remember that have happened to you during your life. Special people you have met, things you have done, teams you have played on, places you have went/travelled, you can include events which are both happy and sad.

(4-5 paragraphs in length)

Creating a Timeline: draw a map, beginning with your birth and ending with the present. Along the way, include little labels or diagrams/pictures of what you remember as important events, places, and people in your life. Keep all items in order. It must fit on one page.

The timeline examples will help you in making your own personal timeline. These examples are done on the computer, but you may do your timeline by hand if desired.

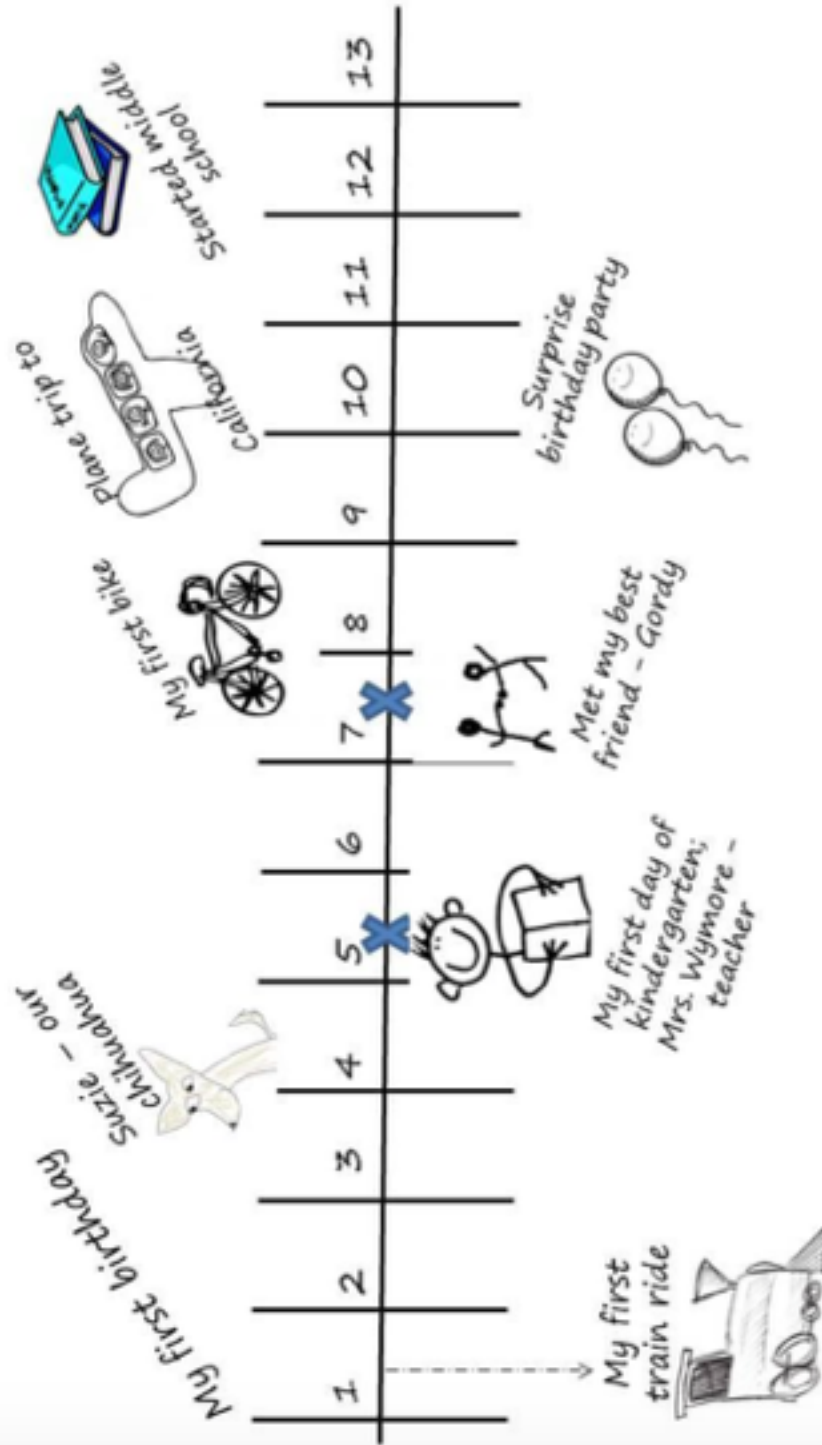
If you are doing your timeline in writing, divide the horizontal line on the paper into evenly spaced marks for each year of your life, beginning with your first birthday at the left, and moving across until you come to today.

Write in, above and below the line, all the events of your life that you can remember or have been told. Here are a few things to start with:

- ✚ your birthday
- ✚ first word
- ✚ first pet
- ✚ the very first thing you remember happening
- ✚ your first toys
- ✚ started to walk
- ✚ when you began school (What was your kindergarten teacher's name?)
- ✚ the first book you read by yourself
- ✚ the year you learned to ride a bike, ice skate, play a musical instrument, swim or whistle
- ✚ a train, plane, or car ride somewhere special
- ✚ the time you broke your arm or had an accident and how it happened
- ✚ the year your voice changes or you grew really fast
- ✚ when you met your best friend
- ✚ the first movie, baseball game, concert, or play you attended
- ✚ when your first tooth fell out
- ✚ special events when you finished elementary school
- ✚ first haircut
- ✚ first vacation
- ✚ first trip to a special place like the zoo, circus, or state fair

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My Timeline



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5. **A Day in the Life:** Write about your life as if it were a passage from a novel. Refer to yourself in the THIRD PERSON - not “I woke up” but rather “she woke up”. You can talk about a typical day in your life, an exciting day in your life or any day really! You can exaggerate and elaborate if you wish - there’s truth to be found in fiction, too.

Memorable Events: Describe events that are very special to you! You can include the best thing that has ever happened to you OR even include the worst thing that has every happened to you. Who was there? What was special about it? Would you do it again? For example, you might describe a concert you attended, a special movie you anticipated, a family reunion, a birthday party you had, a favourite vacation. Include a ticket stub, program, or some other tangible evidence to represent this memorable experience. If you don’t have something from that day, you can create it! Don’t forget the evidence!

6. **Personal Metaphors:** Make a list of metaphorical comparisons that describe you. Think, “If I were an animal, what kind of animal would I be?” For each item, write the general LABEL and then your specific comparison. Be realistic, and somewhat honest, and be able to explain your choices for share day.

Complete 5 from the list below:

Animal	Car	Article of Clothing	Day of the Week	Food
Colour	Plant	Musical Instrument	Geometric Shape	Season
Song	Word	Television Character	Cartoon Character	Movie

“I’m So Like...!”: here you will use similes to compare your qualities to something else. You will need to choose 5 talents or qualities you have, and create similes to compare them to something awesome!

Ex) I can run as fast as the wind! I can sing like the most beautiful song bird!

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These Words Belong To Me: make a list of words which have special power and magic to you. Find synonyms or antonyms for common words that describe your personality. List and define TEN words and for each word, explain why this particular word belongs to you.

7. **Likes & Dislikes:** What are some of your favourites - colour, foods, shows, books, season of the year. What is your idea of having a good time? Who do you admire, famous and non-famous people? Why do you admire them? What is important to you?

What do you find boring? What do you dislike? Do you have any pet peeves (little things that bother you). What is something that you get angry about?

(2 paragraphs)

Visually Speaking: Cut out words, phrases, logos, small photos, or whatever impresses you and represents you to create a collage on your poster board around your other assignments to fill up the space.

Try to express yourself throughout someone else's words. Select at least 3 quotes which expresses your philosophy of life. You can choose quotations which represent your thoughts on several aspects of life - love, friendship, family, success, integrity, character, faith. You **MUST INCLUDE** who said the quote underneath it. Put these on your poster board.

Use your "What's in a Name" collage as the title of your poster boards.

8. **Future Plans:** pretend you can see yourself 20 years from now. What do you hope you are doing? What job do you see yourself in? What schooling did you complete to get there?

Do you have a family? Where do you live? Do you travel? What are your hobbies? Dream Big!!

(2 -3 paragraphs)

Congratulations! You have completed your first project of the year! I have enjoyed getting to know you :)

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CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.	The information appears to be disorganized.
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1 -2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No detail and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.
Graphic Organizer	Graphic organizer or outline has been completed and shows clear, logical relationships between all topics and subtopics.	Graphic organizer or outline has been completed and shows clear, logical relationships between most topics and subtopics.	Graphic organizer or outline has been started and includes some topics and subtopics.	Graphic organizer or outline has not been attempted.
Creativity	Unique arrangement of material. Use of text and pictures makes project fun to read (borders, clip art, etc.)	Arrangement of material includes a mixture of text and projects	Routine format of writing and pictures	Little effort made to make project different
Pictures/Awards	Pictures and/or awards used to support text throughout project. Letters included.	Pictures and/or awards used throughout project. Letters included.	Pictures and/or awards occasionally in project.	Few/no pictures and/or awards.
Neatness	Arrangement of pictures and text make project easy and interesting to read.	Pictures and text easy to read.	Text has gaps in places, some pages are messy and difficult to read.	Little effort put into making project neat.
All chapters included	All 10 chapters and required elements included as well as extra information and pictures.	All 10 chapters and required elements included.	Most chapters and elements included.	Some elements and chapters included.
On time	Turned in BEFORE deadline – by extra credit due date.	Turned in on time.	Turned in 1 day late.	Turned in 2 days after date or later.
Overall project	Meets all criteria in 4 category	Meets all criteria in 3 category	Meets all criteria in 2 category	Meets all criteria in 1 category
Comments:				
GRADE:				

Name: _____

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