

Formatting Biographies Lesson Plan

Title: Formatting Biographies		Grade Range: 3-5
Integrated Curriculum Area: Language Arts	Concepts and Competencies: Grammar, Spelling, Formatting	Tool: Word Processing Software
Summary: Students retype and format a biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.		

Warm-up

- Make sure students have completed the EasyTech lesson **Word Processing: Proofreading and Editing** and its prerequisites.
- Read and discuss selected biographies from *My First Book of Biographies* by Jean Marzollo.
- Discuss elements of a good biography. (What is a biography? Who writes biographies? Are they fiction or non-fiction?)

Activity

Students will format a biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.:

- Review the skills learned in the assigned EasyTech lessons and the functionality of the specific word processing application students will be using.
- Students retype the provided biography using a word processor.
- Students follow the directions on the Student Activity Page to format the document.

Wrap-up

- Students print, compare, and display their formatted biographies.
- Discuss with the students why people write biographies. Who are some people the students are interested in reading about?

Extension

- Students write a short biography about someone they know personally and type it using a word processing program.

Formatting Biographies Student Activity Page

1. Read the provided Martin Luther King, Jr. biography.
2. Retype the Martin Luther King, Jr. biography using a word processor, as shown below. Use a font of your choice.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up in a time when segregation, or the separation of black people and white people, was a way of life in the United States. Laws forced black people to eat in separate restaurants and go to separate schools, but Martin Luther King, Jr. believed all people should have the same rights. He led people in nonviolent protests of many unjust laws. He boycotted buses, marched in Washington DC, and delivered many speeches, but he never used violence to spread his message.

Martin Luther King, Jr. became the leader of the struggle for racial equality in America, known as the Civil Rights Movement. He gave a speech in Washington, DC, known as "I Have a Dream," where he proclaimed his vision for a nation where people would "not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." When Martin Luther King, Jr. was 39 years old, he was assassinated. Martin Luther King, Jr. is honored every year with a national holiday on his birthday.

3. Save your document.
4. Center and **bold** the title.
5. Change the font type to Arial, and the font size to 12.
6. Indent the two paragraphs using the "Tab" key.
7. Use the "Spell Check" tool to make sure all of the words are spelled correctly.
8. Using the word processor thesaurus, replace the words in the biography - believed, unjust, nonviolent - with synonyms. In the chart on the next page, record the synonyms you used.

continued

	Original Word	Synonym
Example:	said	<u>proclaimed</u>
	believed	_____
	unjust	_____
	nonviolent	_____

9. Underline all the synonyms you added to the document.

10. List the homonyms used in the biography for the words below:

Example:	two	<u>to</u>
	they're	_____
	too	_____

11. Now, *italicize* the homonyms you found.

12. Use the "Word Count" tool to check the number of words in the biography. Write the number of words below:

There are _____ words in the *Martin Luther King, Jr.* biography.

13. Press "Enter" or "Return" twice after the last sentence in the biography. Then type your name and today's date.

14. Save and print the document.

Formatting Biographies Model

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up in a time when segregation, or the separation of black people and white people, was a way of life in the United States. Laws forced black people to eat in separate restaurants and go to separate schools, but Martin Luther King, Jr. believed all people should have the same rights. He led people in nonviolent protests of many unjust laws. He boycotted buses, marched in Washington DC, and delivered many speeches, but he never used violence to spread his message.

Martin Luther King, Jr. became the leader of the struggle for racial equality in America, known as the Civil Rights Movement. He gave a speech in Washington, DC, known as “I Have a Dream,” where he proclaimed his vision for a nation where people would “not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” When Martin Luther King, Jr. was 39 years old, he was assassinated. Martin Luther King, Jr. is honored every year with a national holiday on his birthday.

Name _____

Formatting Biographies Rubric

Self Evaluation

- _____ Entire Martin Luther King, Jr. biography is retyped
- _____ Title is centered and **bold**
- _____ Paragraphs are indented
- _____ All words are spelled correctly
- _____ Three synonyms written on Activity Page
- _____ Three given words replaced with synonyms in the document
- _____ All synonyms in document are underlined
- _____ Correct homonyms are listed on Activity Page
- _____ All homonyms are *italicized*
- _____ Correct number of words in document are written on Activity Page
- _____ Name and date are typed at the bottom of the document
- _____ Document is saved and printed

Teacher Evaluation

- _____ Entire Martin Luther King, Jr. biography is retyped
- _____ Title is centered and **bold**
- _____ Paragraphs are indented
- _____ All words are spelled correctly
- _____ Three synonyms written on Activity Page
- _____ Three given words replaced with synonyms in the document
- _____ All synonyms in document are underlined
- _____ Correct homonyms are listed on Activity Page
- _____ All homonyms are *italicized*
- _____ Correct number of words in document are written on Activity Page
- _____ Name and date are typed at the bottom of the document
- _____ Document is saved and printed

Formatting Biographies Resources

Marzollo, Jean. My First Book of Biographies: Great Men and Women Every Child Should Know. New York: Scholastic, 1994.

This collection of short biographies profiles the contributions of men and women from many different disciplines. It's written in a language that is easy for children to understand. Biographies include Madam Curie, Neil Armstrong, Walt Disney, Amelia Earhart, and many more.