



# eslactive

## Biography

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [business](#), [entertainment](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [music](#), [past simple](#), [politics](#), [present perfect simple](#), [present simple](#), [science](#)

In the Biography ESL project, students research the life of a famous person, then write about them and/or present to the class.

 1+  45-60+ mins  Internet (can be completed as homework)

### Setup

This project is normally completed individually, but could be done in pairs with younger students.

Students will need an Internet-connected device to research their famous person. If they can use smartphones or a computer room, this can be done in class. Otherwise, get them to do the research at home for homework.

### Project

1. Students choose a famous person that interests/inspires them. If necessary, limit this choice to fit the topic, e.g. musicians or scientists. Also, if you wish to practise the present simple and/or present perfect simple, the person should still be alive. Try and make sure you don't get too many students writing about the same person!
2. Students research their famous person and make notes on their life. To avoid the risk of plagiarism, stress that these notes must not be full sentences. With younger or low-level students, you could get them to copy a list (see below), and write the information they find next to it.
3. Using only their notes, students write up the research into full sentences as a biography. Optionally, they could also make a computer presentation with pictures, and present it to the class.

4. As an extension, you could get students to form small groups and teach each other about their person. Rearrange the groups a few times, then ask students to write/speak about a new person they have heard about too.

### **Possible required information:**

- Name
- Age
- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth
- Study (if any)
- Job
- Where they live
- Work (e.g. movies acted in)
- Achievements and Awards

### **Target Language**

As mentioned above, you can use the Biography ESL project as part of a topic on a particular field, like [music](#), [entertainment](#), [politics](#) or [science](#). For a [business](#) English students, you could even get them to profile a businessperson they admire (including related vocabulary).

Alternatively, you could focus on the grammar used for biographies – it's a great way to practise using a mixture of tenses. At a basic beginner level, students could just write a few facts in the [present simple](#). In most cases though they should also include sentences in the [past simple](#) (about life events, previous jobs, study etc.) and the [present perfect simple](#) (e.g. multiple accomplishments/award wins). Correct use of the passive for these tenses should also be used where appropriate.

Another option for this project is for students to write a biography of a family member. In this way you could link it in with the topic of [family](#).

You can reuse student-prepared biographies in the activity [Biography Scanning](#).