Living the Life of a Famous Person

Grade Level: Fifth Grade
Presented by: Christine Nagle, Saint Michael School, North Andover, MA
             Christine Olenio, Saint Michael School, North Andover, MA
Length of Unit: Three or four months

I. ABSTRACT
Have you ever tried to teach your students to appreciate the life of someone else? Well, Here’s your chance! Living the Life of a Famous Person is an interesting and fun unit that encourages students to explore, through research, famous people of the past. In addition to teaching values and character traits, this unit is designed to incorporate topics outlined in the Core Knowledge History and Science sequence. Students will begin to realize the steps involved in writing a research paper that displays correct conventions. Through this creative approach to researching, students are given a chance to construct a famous 3-D person and an opportunity to become a famous person for one incredible day. This unit is compromised of five lessons with a culminating activity that will be covered over a period of three to four months.

II. OVERVIEW
A. Concept Objectives:
1. Understand how to generate a list of guide questions prior to researching.
2. Understand how to gather and organize a variety of sources including encyclopedias, magazines, books, and Internet.
3. Understand how to identify main concepts related to guide questions and to be able to interpret the meaning into his/her own understanding and words.
4. Develop an awareness of the proper way to cite sources used in researching.
5. Appreciate all the details and work involved in publishing a formal research paper.
6. Understand how to produce an outline to organize ideas for a final draft of a research paper.
B. Content from the Core Knowledge Sequence:
1. WRITING and RESEARCH (pg.109)
   a. Know how to gather information from different sources and write reports synthesizing information and presenting it in his/her own words
   b. Defining main ideas and sticking to it
   c. Providing an introduction and conclusion
   d. Organizing materials in coherent paragraphs
   e. Illustrating points with relevant examples
   f. Documenting sources in a bibliography
C. Skill Objectives:
1. The student outlines and organizes their ideas.
2. The student understands the importance of citing resources.
3. The student summarizes and paraphrases main concepts into his/her own understanding.
4. The student needs to read and comprehend to increase his or her own knowledge.
5. The student takes notes when gathering information.
6. The student understands the main steps within the writing process.
7. The student delivers an oral presentation with expression and awareness of the audience.
8. The student demonstrates knowledge of Grammar and Usage from previous grades.
9. The student gains an awareness of grade five Grammar and Usage.
10. The student demonstrates an understanding of questioning skills prior to researching.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
A. For Teachers:

B. For Students:
1. Background knowledge about researching skills (grade 4)
2. Background knowledge on how to take notes (grade 4)
3. Background knowledge in Grammar and Usage (grade 4)

IV. RESOURCES
A. *Research Made Easy* by Ginger Carey
B. *Writers Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, & Learners* by Dave Kemper, Ruth Nathan & Patrick Shebranek
C. *Report Writing: A Focus on Social Studies and Science* by Patricia Lewis & Peter Watson
D. *How to Write a Report* by Jo Ellen Moore
E. *Writers INC: A Student Handbook for Writing & Learning* by Patrick Shebranek, Verne Meyer & Dave Kemper
F. *The Research Paper: A Step-by Step Student Guide Folder*
G. Copies of Appendices

V. LESSONS
Lesson One: Generating Questions for Research Topic (45 min.)

A. *Daily Objectives*
   1. Concept Objective
      a. Understand how to generate a list of guide questions prior to researching
   2. Lesson Content
      a. Defining main idea and sticking to it
      b. How to produce a complete sentence
   3. Skill Objectives
      a. Demonstrating an understanding of questioning using who, what, when, where, why, and how categories to help facilitate researching
      b. Define and focus in on topic

B. *Materials*
   1. Student research contract (Appendix A)
   2. Questioning categories template (Appendix B)
   3. Daily Assessment Rubric (Appendix C)
   4. Several resources on Abraham Lincoln (you can choose any person)
   5. Chart paper
   6. One-inch researching binder
   7. Dictionary

C. *Key Vocabulary*
   1. Technique: the method of procedure
   2. Strategy: skill in planning
   3. Generate: to produce
   4. Focusing: to be specific; to make clear; the center of attention or activity
   5. Prior: earlier; previous
   6. Template: a pattern
7. Define: to state the meaning of
8. Research: careful study or investigation into some field of knowledge
9. Questioning: to inquire information about

D. Procedures/Activities
1. Prior to this lesson, students should select a person from the past that is part of the Core Knowledge History or Science Sequence that they are interested in learning more about and complete the student contract (see appendix A). In order for the students to pick a person from the Core Knowledge Sequence, it is recommended to generate a list of famous people with them prior to their choosing. Also, each student should have a one-inch binder to place all assignments and materials in. Binders should be divided into three sections; steps to researching, researching notes on famous person, and bibliography cards on famous person.

2. Divide class into five groups. Give each group a book or two on Lincoln. Explain that as a group, their task is to locate as much information as they can on Lincoln and to take written notes, however they choose, on him. (Provide at least 20-30 minutes)

3. Discuss as a whole class, the techniques each group used in locating information, how much information was found, how difficult/easy the task was to complete and suggestions for how to improve their techniques.

4. Discuss the vocabulary words. Ask students what the words mean before looking them up together. Make sure everyone completely understands the meanings and how the words are used. Display words with meanings on chart paper.

5. Discuss how the process of looking up information could be improved by utilizing questions to help focus and define the topic. Pass out questioning categories template to each student (Appendix B).

6. As a class, generate a list of guide questions for Lincoln and display on chart paper. Each student should fill in his or her template.

7. After completing the guide questions, ask the students which way would be more beneficial in researching—Having questions to go by or randomly searching? Why?

8. In closing, have students generate a list of guide questions (at least five for each category) for the famous person they chose to research.

9. All materials should be placed in researching binder.

E. Assessment/Evaluation
1. Assess students’ guide questions for specific and detailed questions (Appendix C).

Lesson Two: Bibliography (45 min.)

A. Daily Objectives
1. Concept Objectives
   a. Understand how to gather and organize a variety of sources including encyclopedias, magazines, books, & internet
   b. Develop an awareness of the proper way to cite sources used in researching.

2. Lesson Content
   a. Documenting sources in a bibliography

3. Skill Objectives
   a. Citing sources appropriately
   b. Reading and comprehending to increase knowledge

B. Materials
1. Bibliography Cards (Appendix D)
2. Daily Assessment Rubric (Appendix C)
3. Researching binder
4. Several sources on Lincoln
5. Chart Paper  

C. Key Vocabulary  
1. Bibliography: a list of books referred to in a scholarly work  
2. Cite: to quote  
3. Resources: the means available to achieve an end, fulfill a function  
4. Sources: a person or document providing evidence; a place, person or thing from which something originates.  

D. Procedures/Activities  
1. Review prior lesson on guide questions.  
2. Discuss the vocabulary words. Ask students what the words mean before looking them up together. Make sure everyone completely understands the meanings and how the words are used. Display words with meanings on chart paper.  
3. Using resources on Lincoln, explain the proper procedure for citing resources in a bibliography. Each student will need a copy of the bibliography cards (Appendix D) so they can take an active role in the following learning process.  
   a. Discuss the different bibliography formats.  
   b. Discuss and show where to locate information needed for the bibliography for each type of resource (author, title, publisher, etc.).  
   c. While students fill in their bibliography cards, model on the chart paper the appropriate way to cite resources explaining indentation, punctuation, and layout for each format.  
4. After demonstrating the appropriate way to cite resources, give students blank copies for each format to complete during a schedule library period. Students are asked to find one of each type of resource and accurately cite it on the correct card.  
5. All materials should be placed in research binder.  

E. Assessment/Evaluation  
1. Assess students' bibliography cards from the library period (Appendix C)  

Lesson Three: Note-Taking (45 min.)  

A. Daily Objectives  
1. Concept Objective  
   a. Understand how to identify main concepts related to guide questions and to be able to interpret the meaning in his/her own understanding and words.  
2. Lesson Content  
   a. Know how to gather information from different sources  
   b. Defining main ideas and sticking to it.  
3. Skill Objectives  
   a. Organizing ideas  
   b. Summarizing and paraphrasing main concepts into own understanding.  
   c. Reading and comprehending to increase knowledge  
   d. Note-taking strategies  

B. Materials  
1. Note-taking card (Appendix E)  
2. Daily Assessment rubric (Appendix C)  
3. Researching binder  
4. Several resources on Lincoln  
5. Chart paper  

C. Key Vocabulary  
1. Summarizing: to make brief; to sum up  
2. Paraphrasing: express the meaning of (a passage) in other words  
3. Bulleted notes: not in a complete sentence and starts off with a round black dot
4. Main idea: important facts

D. Procedures/Activities
   1. Review prior lesson on citing resources in a bibliography
   2. Discuss the vocabulary words. Ask students what the words mean before looking them up together. Make sure everyone completely understands the meanings and how the words are used. Display words with meanings on chart paper.
   3. Each student needs a copy of the note-taking card (Appendix E) and they need to have their guide questions for Lincoln available.
   4. Explain the layout for the note-taking card. Discuss how the guide questions now become the focus on note taking for each card. It is important for students to understand that there can be only one guide question per note card.
   5. Using resources for Lincoln, model how to take appropriate notes using the note taking cards (Appendix E). As you model on chart paper, students should actively be taking part in the following process by writing on their note cards.
      a. Before taking notes, explain to students that they need to fill out the appropriate bibliography card for the resource they are using to locate information for their guide question.
      b. Demonstrate how to take bulleted notes using the guide questions for Lincoln. At this point, students need to understand that they are not allowed to copy notes word for word. They need to realize that they only write the main idea, in their own words, that answer the guide questions and that notes do not have to be in complete sentences.
   6. After demonstrating how to use the note-taking cards, students are asked to complete one note card complete with bibliography card utilizing a guide question for Lincoln.
   7. In closing, students need to start taking notes, complete with bibliography cards, on his/her famous person. Provide students with at least three to four weeks, both in class and at home, to complete note and bibliography cards before moving on to lesson four. Students should have at least three different resources and thirty note cards- one card per guide question.
   8. All materials should be placed in researching binder.

E. Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Assess note taking and bibliography card on Lincoln.
   2. Assess note taking and bibliography cards on famous person research project.

Lesson Four: Outlining (45 min.)
A. Daily Objectives
   1. Concept Objective
      a. Understand how to produce an outline to organize ideas for final draft of a research paper.
   2. Lesson Content
      a. Illustrating points with relevant examples
   3. Skill Objectives
      a. Outlining ideas
      b. Read and comprehend to increase his/her own knowledge

B. Materials
   1. Outlining format (Appendix F)
   2. Daily assessment rubric (Appendix C)
   3. Research Binder
   4. Chart Paper

C. Key Vocabulary
1. **Outline**: a general plan: away of arranging information from general to specific
2. **Thesis**: a research paper
3. **Main Topic**: The principal theme for a book, essay, paper, etc.
4. **Subtopic**: details given to the main topic
5. **Supporting details**: providing back up information for the subtopic
6. **Roman Numerals**: any Roman letter representing numbers

**D. Procedures/Activities**

1. Review prior lesson on note taking
2. Discuss the vocabulary words. Ask students what the words mean before looking them up together. Make sure everyone completely understands the meanings and how the words are used. Display words with meanings on chart paper.
3. Give each student a copy of the outlining form (appendix F) and discuss the format i.e. main topic, thesis, roman numerals, subtopic, supporting details, etc.
4. Using note cards on Lincoln, start to explain how to complete the outline form. As you model on chart paper, students will fill in the outlining form gaining an understanding of how to complete their own outline for their famous person using the following process. **(note**: the outline on Lincoln should not be a completed product)
   a. Lay note cards out on floor. Separate cards into piles with similar themes i.e. childhood, work, death, etc.
   b. Review information for each theme and generate a main topic statement that summarizes all points to each theme. Put each statement on its own card and place on top of the theme pile.
   c. Rearrange theme piles on the floor by organizing main topic statements in a sequential order form one thought to another.
   d. Discuss the thesis statement. Explain that although it is at the beginning of the outline, it is the last thought completed for the outline. Students should understand that the thesis states the main idea for the paper. It allows one to focus on the writing of the paper.
   e. Using a main topic statement for Lincoln, start to fill in the outline form on chart paper while the students fill in the outline form. Explain to students that the first Roman numeral in an outline is always the introduction. It is important for students to realize that not all notes will be used. Only the notes that follow the theme for each Roman numeral will be used.
5. In closing, students begin the outlining process for their famous person. Allow several days for them to complete and for you to assess before moving on to lesson five.
6. All materials should be placed in researching binder.

**E. Assessment/Evaluation**

1. Assess students as they work on separating note cards into theme piles and generating main topic statements.
2. Assess student’s outline (appendix C)

**Lesson Five: Producing Final Paper (45 min.)**

**A. Daily Objectives**

1. **Concept Objective**
   a. Appreciate all the details and work involved in publishing a formal research paper.
2. **Lesson Content**
a. Knowing how to write a report synthesizing information and presenting it in his/her own words
b. Providing an introduction and conclusion
c. Organizing materials into coherent paragraphs
3. Skill Objectives
   a. Understanding steps within the writing process
   b. Demonstrating knowledge of grammar and usage

B. Materials
   1. Research binder
   2. Dictionary
   3. Steps-to-Writing Final Paper (Appendix G)
   4. Student checklist (Appendix H)
   5. Final Assessment Rubric (Appendix I)

C. Key Vocabulary
   1. Publishing: make generally known; announce
   2. Editing: alter; reword to correct; change or correction
   3. Draft: a rough outline; a preliminary written version of a document
   4. Revising: examine and improve; alter
   5. Transition Sentence: a sentence that passes form one thought to another

D. Procedures/Activities
   1. Review lesson on outlining
   2. Discuss the vocabulary words. Ask students what the words mean before looking them up together. Make sure everyone completely understands the meanings and how the words are used. Display words with meanings on chart paper.
   3. Give each student a copy of Steps-to-Writing a Final Research Paper (Appendix G) and discuss each step.
   4. After discussing Appendix G, explain how their outline on their famous person is used in writing the paper. Students should understand that each Roman numeral becomes the main focus for each coherent paragraph. Also, discuss how the thesis statement comes at the end of the introductory paragraph. Discuss that each paragraph should consist of five to six complete sentences (introductory sentence, three plus supporting sentences, and a transition sentence).
   5. Distribute and discuss student checklist (Appendix H)
   6. Write final paper. Allow students ample time to successfully complete paper in school.

E. Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Assess final product (Appendix I)

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY
   A. In order to make this unit come alive for students, a creative approach was added for displaying and presenting final product. Each student will engage in creating a 3-D replica of their famous person as well as a Biography T-shirt (see Appendix J & Appendix K). Wearing the Biography T-shirts, students become his/her famous person for a day. They will also give a 5-10 minute oral presentation to the class as if they were that famous person.

VII. HANDOUTS/STUDENT WORKSHEETS
   A. Copies of Appendices A-K

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Appendix A- Student Contract

Dear Student,

You are about to begin an exciting project that will last at least 3 months long. You will be learning how to write a research paper from start to finish. Your final published product will be an oral presentation of your 3D Famous Person with your research paper attached.

You will need to use your 1-inch binder to store all of your papers until the project is completed. Your papers and materials must remain neat and clean at all times. If at any time a paper is ruined or lost, you must redo the assignment. This project will mainly be worked on in school, and sometimes at home. Therefore, it is very important that all resources and materials be with you at all times.

Each part of your research project will be assessed when completed, as well as the final product. Please refer to the Rubrics to use as your own checklist. It is very important for you to remember that if at any point, you do not understand assignments that you ask for clearer directions. Remember the only uneducated question is a question not asked.

Have fun and be creative!

Sincerely,
Appendix A- Student Contract

Famous Person Research Project

I _________________________________ have read and discussed with my teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s) the overall objectives and criteria for the Famous Person Research Project. I agree to the following guidelines:

- To complete all assignments on time to the very best of my ability
- To keep all of my papers in my binder neatly – if not, I will agree to redo them
- To ask questions when I do not understand assignments
- To have materials with me at all times
- To use the assessment rubric as my own personal checklist
- To take full responsibility for my work, as the 5th grader at home and at school

__________________________________________________________
Student’s signature                       Date

__________________________________________________________
Parent’s/Guardian’s signature             Date
Appendix C - Daily Assessment

Daily Research Project Rubric

Name: ____________________________________________________

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Appendix D- Bibliography Cards

Bibliography Formats

- Look at the four citation examples below and follow carefully.
- The citation on the top gives you the information that you need from your resources.
- The citation on the bottom is an example of a citation following the format.
- Be sure to include punctuation in **bold** print in your bibliography citation.
- Be sure to write or type your citations starting at the left margin. If your citation is too long for one line, you must continue on the next line, but must indent. Remember that for each additional line, you must also indent.

**BOOKS**

Author (last name, first name). *Title* (underlined). City where the book is published: Publisher, Copyright date.


**MAGAZINES**

Author (last name, first name), “Title of the article.” (in quotation marks) *Title of the magazine* (underlined) Date (day month year): Page numbers of the article.


**ENCYCLOPEDIAS**


**INTERNET**

Author (last name, first name). Title of document. Retrieved (Date retrieved (month day, year)), from the World Wide Web: [http://www](http://www). (entire http address)

Appendix D- Bibliography Cards

BOOKS

Author (last name, first name). Title (underlined). City where the book is published: Publisher, Copyright date.


Your citation:

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Your citation:

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MAGAZINES

Author (last name, first name), “Title of the article.” (in quotation marks) Title of the magazine (underlined) Date (day month year): Page numbers of the article.


Your citation:

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Your citation:

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Appendix D- Bibliography Cards

ENCYCLOPEDIAS


Your citation:

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INTERNET

Author (last name, first name). Title of document. Retrieved (Date retrieved (month day, year)), from the World Wide Web: http://www. (entire http address)


Your citation:

____________________________________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________________________________
Appendix E- Note Taking Card

___________________ Note card
(Research topic)

GUIDE QUESTION:___________________________________________________________

Bulleted Notes:

★  ______________________________________________________________
★  ______________________________________________________________
★  ______________________________________________________________
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Source:____________________________________________ Page #s_________________
    Author’s last name or Title

___________________ Note card
(Research topic)

GUIDE QUESTION:___________________________________________________________

Bulleted Notes:

★  ______________________________________________________________
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Source:____________________________________________ Page #s_________________
    Author’s last name or Title
Appendix F- Outlining

(Title = Research topic)

Thesis:

I. Introductory remarks

II. Main topic
   A. Subtopic
      1. Supporting detail
      2. Supporting detail
   B. Subtopic
      1. Supporting detail
      2. Supporting detail
   C. Subtopic
      1. Supporting detail
      2. Supporting detail

III. Main topic
   A. Subtopic
      1. Supporting detail
      2. Supporting detail
   B. Subtopic
   C. Subtopic

IV. Main topic
   A. Subtopic
      1. Supporting detail
      2. Supporting detail
   B. Subtopic

V. Main topic
   A. Subtopic
   B. Subtopic

VI. Concluding remarks

- In an outline, everything comes in pairs. If you have a I, you must have a II. If you have an A, you must have a B. If you have a 1, you must have a 2, and so on. Not all subtopics will have supporting details, but that is ok.
- Pay close attention to how the information is spaced and lined up.
- Your outline should flow in sequential order starting at Roman numeral I.
Appendix F- Outlining

Thesis: 

I. 

II. 
A. 
1. 
2. 
B. 
1. 
2. 

III. 
A. 
1. 
2. 
B. 
1. 
2. 
Appendix G - Writing Process

Prewriting
- Generate who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about your topic
- Take notes with a bibliography

Drafting
- Separate notes into theme piles
- Create an outline in sequential order
- Begin writing 1st draft of paper

Revising
- Read what you wrote
- Change words or ideas to better ones
- Add or take out parts
- Complete unfinished thoughts

Publishing
- Create a title page
- Organize parts of paper
- Create 3-D person
- Create Biography T-shirt
- Present research to classmates

Proofreading
- Make sure all sentences are complete
- Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation
- Make corrections
- Peer editing
- Rewrite
Appendix H- Student Checklist

Student Checklist

Please use this checklist to ensure that you have completed your research paper following all directions.

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<td>d. Complete sentences</td>
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<td>e. Indented 1st sentence in each paragraph</td>
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<td>f. Complete paragraphs (5-6 sentences)</td>
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<td>2. Your paper is ready to be published if the following are completed:</td>
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## Final Research Project Rubric

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\[
\text{TOTAL} \% / 8 = \frac{\text{FINAL GRADE}}{}
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Appendix J-3-D Model

Famous Person Replica

Materials:
18 x 24-inch poster board
Scissors
Glue
Crayons, markers, colored pencils
Construction paper scraps
Stapler
Large Popsicle sticks
Scrap of fabric for decoration (optional)
You can use any materials you wish for decorating person

Instructions for making Big Person Book

Step 1: Fold poster board to eight equal sections as shown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>H</td>
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</table>

Step 2: Cut out section E and H. Save these for arm pieces

Step 3: Fold sections A and D toward the center to make a vest or jacket. Glue the arms as shown.

Step 4: Cut a head from the pieces of construction paper. Glue it to the top of Sections B and C. (you may need to support it by using a Popsicle stick behind it)

Step 5: To make pants or dress, cut a small triangle between sections F and G

Step 6: Draw a face; add hair and clothing. Add hands and shoes cut form paper scraps or any materials you wish. Give your big person your own finishing touches. Use Popsicle sticks to help support arms and legs.

Step 7: Staple or glue your report under the vest
Appendix K-Biography T-shirt

Biography T-Shirt

**Step 1:** Use a clean white T-shirt

**Step 2:** Using words or phrases from your researching, add them to your T-shirt

**Step 3:** Be creative with color, texture, and layout. Make sure you have information on both sides of the T-shirt.

**Step 4:** Make sure your T-shirt has no spelling errors

**Step 5:** Wear your T-shirt to school with jeans.