

Oral Biography Project 2026

Presentations will be made between April 23-May 1st

My Name: _____



Have you ever thought about what it would be like to be another person – perhaps an important saint, athlete, author, inventor, leader, artist, composer, explorer, president, actor, a pioneer in fields like medicine, space travel, education, or industry who changed history? Well, now's your chance! You are about to begin a very exciting project that you will never forget! You will work hard, but you will feel very proud of what you accomplish. You will be choosing an important and positive historical figure to learn about and then present to the class.

· The first step is to pick a biography to read. Your book and biography choice has to be approved by your teacher no later than March 6th. The person you choose should be an historical figure who has made positive contributions to society and/or shown exceptional courage or perseverance in the face of adversity. Generally choices should be people whose contributions have been known for 50 or more years rather than current figures. If you have had older sibling who has done the oral biography project, this is a change from previous requirements. You will need to be able to find an appropriate book and enough quality and approved information on that person to prepare your presentation. You may not choose: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Lewis, Clark, Sacagawea or your Saint. **Students should have a back-up choice as we prefer not to have duplicates.**

Presentations will be made from April 23rd-May 1st. We will determine the actual day students will be assigned to present as the time draws near.

Oral Biography Requirements

You will find that many biographies emphasize only certain parts of a person's life. Once you have finished reading your approved book, you may need to find other sources of information to round out their life. This could be the internet, videos, magazines or other books. We will teach and complete the bibliography format in class. Keep in mind that if your child uses google or the internet, parents should SUPERVISE and be there for the search. Often, it helps to put the phrase "for kids" when doing a google or internet search.

You'll have sticky notes to use for marking important pages and index cards for when it's time to prepare your speech. Students can also jot notes down in a notebook or on paper if that is helpful.

When you prepare your oral presentation, you need to consider the following guidelines as you decide what to share about your person. Some guidelines may not apply, but work to include as many as you can. The "Contributions" section is required in all presentations. The presentation will be given from the first person (*I, me, mine...*) perspective; in other words, you will become that person!

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

<u>1.Early Years (birth to about age 18)</u>	• Date and place of birth • Parents (names, occupations and other interesting info) • Siblings (names, ages, interesting info) • Childhood special interests and/or achievements. • Hobbies and any other interesting facts
2. Adult Life	• Education • Occupations and achievements • Struggles - obstacles - this is very important • Married? - If so, to whom, when, where? • Children - names, any interesting information • Fun stories or events that will add interest to your talk
3. Later Years	• Achievements during these years • Final facts such as death (date, place, cause, any other relevant facts) or if this person is still living, be sure to tell what he/she is doing at this time
4. Contributions – Must be included in each presentation.	• In your opinion what positive contributions did this person make to the world? What can you learn from the life and achievements of this person? (<i>This person made the world better because.... Many people view this person as a role model because.... This person is an example of.... for others to follow...</i>) This portion of the biography will be in <u>your voice</u>, not as the famous person you are reporting on. <u>Do not leave this section off your presentation and do not make it an afterthought.</u>



❖ Look for fun stories or anecdotes that you can include in the above sections.

❖ Make your talk fun and engaging—not just a list of facts.

❖ You are telling the story of your person's life.

Target Timeline: (just suggestions)

- **March 5th:** all biographies approved; students will bring home index cards and sticky notes once biographies are approved.
- **Now through March.** Read biography, first time through. Use your 20 minutes of nightly reading time, morning silent reading time at school, etc. Students should bring their book to and from school each day to read when they have time.
- **Next steps:** Focus on re-reading in sections. Start with “early years,” **make note cards and decide on your brilliant beginning. Add props for this section that help you remember details and tell the story. As you write the note cards, practice speaking/presenting these parts. Use PVLEGS.**
- Next move on to adult life and later years following the same process (underlined above).
- **March 23-27:** We will have a check-in at school during this week to see if you have a good start on your project and help you if you are having trouble with your brilliant beginning. You will start on the “adult life” section, as well.
- **March 23rd-April 3rd and through spring break--** Continue taking notes, be sure you are focusing on events that make this person famous and how they contributed positively--and overcame obstacles. You should be making good progress with your notes as we near presentation week.
- Complete the “Contributions” section of your project, including notecards and props. Add a creative ending/conclusion. Practice this section of your presentation.
- **April 13-17:** We will have more time this week at school for the students to work on their presentation, ask questions, work with classmates to practice etc
- **April 20-24:** Practice everything all together---in front of family and friends--the mirror, etc. Focus on clear enunciation, projection, expression.. PVLEGS. Make sure props are included in practices. (Some students will be presenting on Thursday and Friday this week)
- **April 23-May 1:** Presentations. All students will have presented.

Grading:

Your presentation will be graded on the following:

- Creativity of the presentation including:
 - o Introduction - Make it a Brilliant Beginning!
 - o Development of ideas - see Requirements Page #'s 1-3
 - o Conclusion/Contributions in your own words – see Requirements #4
- **Content** – How much important/relevant information you have clearly shared. Be sure you explain any unfamiliar words or events so your audience understands.
- **Creative use of props** - You will want to make or find items that will relate to your talk and add interest to the presentation in some way. Your costume is considered one of your props. You will need at least two other props. The props should be relevant to, and support your talk. *Examples:* scientific equipment, maps for explorers, writing materials for authors. Some examples could relate to hardships or charity work.
- **Timing - MINIMUM 5 minutes, maximum 10 minutes.** - Remember, when you are nervous you tend to talk more quickly. *Be sure you have at least a 5-minute presentation.* It should usually be longer than 5 minutes when you practice at home.
- **How well you know your material** and are able to explain your life to the class
- **Eye contact, voice projection, diction, expression** (*We use the acronym “PVLEGS” which will be taught in class*)
- First person presentation (*I, me, mine*)
- Bibliography (*completed at school*)
- Preparedness-*it is usually evident*



Notes: We will provide index cards for the students.

- Number your index cards to keep them in order.
- Either write very neatly or type out information and glue them to your cards.
- Do not put too many words on each card. Try using a bullet list or 2-3 word phrases. Keep it clear and neat. Use a large font if typing.
- Do not write out your entire talk on the index cards. Your cards should only contain key-words, phrases, dates, names, etc. to remind you what to say as you present. Basically your report should be mostly memorized other than the bullet points on your cards.

Don't wait to get started. You should begin right away so you are well prepared for your presentation.

Good luck and have fun!

Keep in Mind:



- You need to be able to find an appropriate book on your subject that you can read and understand on your own. Mom or dad can help you read, but this is partially a book report, and you need to be able to understand what you read.

- It is important that you know your person very well, and that as you present you explain things that the audience might not understand. This includes challenging vocabulary, events in history, or specific terms related to your subject.

- Practice saying/presenting your report many times. The more you practice, the more natural you will

sound and the more confident you will be! You can practice in front of a mirror to check for eye contact, and in front of family and friends to get their feedback.



- **Focus on PVLEGS:**

- o Good voice projection
- o Speaking at a good pace, not too fast
- o Eye contact
- o Gestures: Opportunities to move around a bit, show or use props

- Do not begin your report with, “Hi my name is...”

- Your brilliant beginning should involve some type of scene from the life of your person or it can be a quote, a question or surprise element.

- We will go over the expectations for the brilliant beginning in detail during class work times.

- Please let your teacher know if you have any questions along the way. It is important to keep up on this project and work on it a little bit each night. We will also have regular time in class to work on this project.

Oral Biography Grading Rubric

Name: _____ as _____

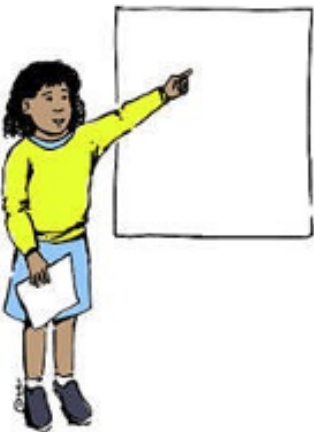
How well you know your material (x2)	4	3	2	1
Eye contact	4	3	2	1
Voice projection, clarity, pace	4	3	2	1
Expressive First Person Presentation	4	3	2	1
Listened attentively and respectfully to the other presentations	4	3	2	1

Creativity and Quality of Presentation:

Introduction (brilliant beginning that grabs audience)	4	3	2	1
Overall Content (spoke about important stages of life) (x2)	4	3	2	1
Conclusion (spoke about contributions, etc.)	4	3	2	1
Props (creative costume and good use of materials)	4	3	2	1
Timing (more than 5 min. and less than 10 min. long)	4	3	2	1

Time: _____

Preparedness (materials turned in on time)	4	3	2	1
Bibliography (sources correctly noted)	4	3	2	1
Self Reflection Sheet	4	3	2	1



Total (60 points possible)

Final Grade

Comments: