

Legends of the Arts

50 Inspiring
Stories
of Creative
People

Arnold Cheyney



Good Year Books
Culver City, California

Dedication

To the memory of Ruth M. Cogan (1894–1981), choral director,
Lincoln High School, Canton, Ohio

Acknowledgements

To my wife, Jeanne, who produces sense out of the thoughts I put down on paper, and to Bobbie Dempsey, my Good Year Books editor, who makes everything come together, my gratitude and thanks. And a special thanks to the librarians in the Children's Department of the Wooster County Public Library, who went out of their way to help me gather books and information for *Legends of the Arts*

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Other books in this series:

People of Purpose:

80 People Who Have Made a Difference

Athletes of Purpose:

50 People Who Changed the Face of Sports



Preface

The major purpose of *Legends of the Arts* and the other books in this series is to provide biographies that will encourage students to go to the library and read in more depth about people of purpose in all walks of life. Through school and public library facilities, interlibrary loan, and Internet services, there are multitudes of books just waiting to be selected by young readers.

The “Further Reading” list at the end of the biographies and the “Reading” and “Social Studies” activities about these people are the first place to start after reading a biography. Hopefully, the challenge of the activities will cause students to interact as they read with their peers and

families. As students react to the values, lifestyles, and ambitions of the people in the biographies, they will learn more about people in the past and present who became so special. And they may also gain insights into the possibilities that exist in themselves.

Inborn ability in one or more aspects of the fine arts does not mean a person displays an equal amount of moral and ethical behavior. These people of the fine arts are as imperfect as all of us who are not so blessed with great talent. They would probably be the first to admit this. It is more important to focus on their competencies and how they worked to improve the abilities and gifts they possessed.

Journal Starters

The following sentences can be used as journal starters. Feel free to omit or change them to fit your students. After reading a biography in class, write a sentence on the board. In each sentence blank, a student can write the name of one of the persons in this book. The student can then finish the sentence with his or her own thoughts.

1. Two newspaper headlines that come to my mind about _____ are. . .
2. After reading about _____, I know. . .
3. After reading about _____, I think. . .
4. After reading about _____, I wonder. . .
5. Two characteristics that I find most admirable about _____ are. . .
6. _____ is the kind of person who. . .
7. Imagine having _____ at your home for dinner. The menu would consist of . . . because. . .
8. _____ would react to our present society by. . .

9. If _____ visited our house, we would. . . .
10. Write an obituary of _____ answering the questions who? what? when? where? why? and how?
11. Ten words that best describe _____ are. . . .
12. I will not forget about _____ because. . . .
13. If you could ask _____ only one question, that question would be. . . .
14. The three things I most admired about _____ were. . . .
15. My first reaction to the biography of _____ is. . . .
16. The three most important words (or phrases) in the life of _____ were. . . .
17. _____ is like _____ in our family because. . . .
18. If _____ walked into our classroom today and sat beside me, I would ask. . . .
19. I enjoyed the biography of _____ because. . . .
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Legends of the Arts

Louisa May Alcott

1832–1888 • Writer

Louisa was the second of her family's four daughters—tall, curious, energetic, and full of enthusiasm. Her father, Bronson Alcott, was a respected philosopher and teacher but had difficulty holding a paying job. His wife, Abigail, was hard-working and practical.

Some of her father's friends were important thinkers and writers of that day. People like Henry Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Nathaniel Hawthorne were frequent guests and friends of the Alcotts.

Louisa and her family moved twenty-nine times in twenty-eight years. Early in life Louisa realized she would have to help support the family. Throughout her lifetime she sewed clothes for family members and others. By the time she was sixteen she wrote her first book, *Flower Fables*, a series of stories that was published several years later and earned her thirty-two dollars, a tremendous amount of money to her.

At sixteen, Louisa also taught school to help the family survive. Her father showed a friend, a magazine editor, some of Louisa's work. This editor promptly let it be known that Louisa should stick to teaching. But Louisa was persistent and insisted she would be a writer and support the family. She later wrote articles for that editor.

During the Civil War, Louisa applied for a nursing position in the Union Army. She was accepted and sent to Washington, D.C., to care for Union soldiers at Georgetown, just outside of Washington. The building was converted from a drafty hotel into a hospital. In her twelve-hour

shifts, she cut off the mud-caked uniforms of soldiers, washed and dressed their wounds, and wrote letters for those who were unable to do so.

After a month, Louisa came down with typhoid fever. The long hours and fever were too much for her. In 1863, her father was summoned. After six weeks as a volunteer at the hospital, she had to be taken home.

Out of this experience came a series of articles called *Hospital Sketches*, which brought her to the attention of the public. Later it became a book. An editor asked her to write a "book for girls." She wrote a novel about her sisters and their family. The editor, a bachelor, was not sure it would sell, so he gave the manuscript to his niece to read. She read it and showed it to a friend, who gave it to another friend to read. They all were enthusiastic about the book. *Little Women* became a

delight to thousands of readers. It is a story about four sisters growing up in New England during the mid-1800s. The book was such a success that the editor invited Louisa to write a sequel. In 1870 she wrote *An Old Fashioned Girl*, and a year later, *Little Men*. Because her books sold so well, Louisa now was able to take care of her family without financial worry. As Louisa grew older, she managed to write about one book a year.

Bronson Alcott died on March 6, 1888. Louisa died two days later. Her books are not her only legacy. She is also remembered for her stands on a woman's right to vote and the temperance movement (opposition to the drinking of alcoholic beverages).





Reading

1. If you have brothers or sisters, write a short story about them as Louisa did with her sisters. Change their names in your story and set it in a different time (the past or future) and place (another state or country). Share the story with your family.
2. Make a list of ten words that describe Louisa May Alcott. Compare and share your lists. How many of the words on each list were similar? What percentage would that be?
3. Write a title for the biography of Louisa May Alcott. Compare your title with those of your classmates.
4. Make a list of ten words from the biography of Louisa May Alcott that you think would be difficult for younger children. Put them in alphabetical order and see if a child you know can read them. Then tell him or her about Louisa or read her biography aloud to them.
3. What two characteristics of Louisa's personality would you like to have as your own as you enter young adulthood? Discuss them with a classmate or family member.
4. Women now have the right to vote in much of the world. Discuss with your classmates when you think there will be a female president of the United States. What are your thoughts on this issue?

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Social Studies

1. Look up Henry Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Nathaniel Hawthorne in a reference book or on the Internet. Make a list of what they did in their lives and share the information with your classmates. Why would Bronson Alcott and Louisa May Alcott enjoy their company?
2. Read about typhoid fever in a reference book. What effect does it have on someone like Louisa? Share what you learned about the disease with your classmates.

Hans Christian Andersen

1805–1875 • Writer

Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark. His father was a cobbler who made and repaired shoes. His mother, Anne-Marie, never learned to read so she was anxious for Hans to go to school and learn.

Hans loved to play with puppets. He made them clothes and played with other toys his father made, including a little theater. Hans's father joined Napoleon's French army, an ally of Denmark, so he could send money home to support his family. When his father returned, he was ill, and he died about two years later. His mother had to wash clothes to earn money for food for the family.

At school other children teased Hans because of his big nose, or his small eyes, or his long legs, or his large hands and feet. This made young Hans prefer the company of adults rather than children.

Hans loved to tell stories. He memorized selections from Shakespeare's plays and acted out parts in his own awkward manner. Throughout his life, he enjoyed creating with scissors and paper. He folded a paper in half, sometimes twice, cut out sections, and then unfolded what was left. Pairs of dancing girls and boys or other scenes would emerge. During the time he cut the paper, he would tell a story. His mother told him it was time to learn a trade, but what Hans wanted to do was to go to Copenhagen and be an actor in the Royal Theater. At fourteen, Hans gathered what money and clothes he had and set out for Copenhagen to become famous.

Becoming an actor in Copenhagen was not easy. Finally, he got a part in a ballet as a troll,

which also got his name in the program. Hans slept with the program beside him in bed that first night. Good fortune began to shine upon him. King Frederik VI provided money from the royal fund for Hans to go to grammar school for three years. Hans was seventeen, his classmates, eleven, but he began to learn to write. He wrote poems, diaries, many letters, and plays, and he studied. When his exams came, he passed.

Soon his writing was published. In his travels throughout Europe, he became good friends with the German composer Felix Mendelssohn, the English writer Charles Dickens, and the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. He even wrote the libretto (words) for an opera. But what people remember the most, and still read today, are his fairy tales. They enchanted children and adults as well.

Hans began writing fairy tales he heard as a child, but mostly, he created his own tales. Some of the stories came from his own experiences in life. In "The Ugly Duckling," Hans appears to be describing himself: "The poor duckling was at his wit's end, and did not know which way to turn; he was in despair because he was so ugly, and the butt of the whole duckyard."

Hans did not consider writing fairy tales very important at first, but he received so much encouragement that he continued writing them. Three of his tales continue to be more popular than others: "The Ugly Duckling," "The Princess and the Pea," and "The Little Mermaid." He was a wealthy man when he died on August 4, 1875.





Reading

1. With two or three classmates, prepare to tell the life of Hans Christian Andersen. Use hand puppets made from socks. Write your script from his biography or other books you might get from the library. You may want to have classmates act out the story with the puppets as one person reads the short biography.
2. With a classmate or with the help of your school music teacher, create a song about Hans Christian Andersen. Include some of the experiences found in his biography. Sing the song to your friends.
3. Create a drawing of Hans holding a duckling and another one of him holding a swan. Write captions underneath both pictures.
4. Memorize a passage from one of Andersen's stories and present it to your classmates as you think Hans Christian Andersen may have done when he read the story to children.

Social Studies

1. Read "The Ugly Duckling" aloud to the younger children in your family or in the lower grades at your school.
2. Learn as much as you can about Denmark from an encyclopedia, reference book, or Internet Web site and use it as an introduction to one of Hans Christian Andersen's stories you read to young children.
3. Make a list of three careers you might enjoy when you become an adult. Discuss with your classmates what you would have to achieve to become proficient in each of them.
4. What is the capital of Denmark?

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Marian Anderson

1897–1993 • Singer

Marian loved to sing. By the time she was six, she was in the junior choir at her church in an African-American community in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Then Marian began singing in other churches and getting paid twenty-five to fifty cents for an appearance.

The Andersons' home was a happy one but financially poor. Marian's father died in an accident at his work when she was in elementary school. Her mother kept the family together by taking in laundry and scrubbing floors.

Marian joined the adult choir at her church when she was thirteen. In school she took business classes to prepare herself for making money to help support her family. With a voice like hers, the principal of her school said, she should be preparing for college. So she transferred to another school. Soon she was a guest singer at other black churches.

To be a professional concert singer, Marian realized she needed special training. She decided to enroll in a Philadelphia music school. When she asked for an application, she was told that she was not eligible because of her color. Marian knew black people were not allowed in some hotels, restaurants, or swimming pools, but being forbidden to enter a music school was beyond her comprehension. So, she found voice teachers who prepared her to sing classical music.

One of her teachers was Giuseppe Boghetti, who was an excellent voice instructor, but expensive. Members of Marian's church raised the money for her lessons. Now she was learning songs by composers such as Brahms, Rachmaninoff, and Schubert, and her new instructor taught her Italian. Because Schubert and Brahms wrote in German,

Marian had to sound out the words and sing them phonetically. Later she learned the language.

In her twenties, Marian placed first in a competition with 300 singers to sing as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic during its summer concert season. Other groups sponsored her in the United States and she won the Rosenwald Fellowship for study abroad. In the 1930s she was giving concerts in London, England; Berlin, Germany; Scandinavia; the Soviet Union; South America; and Austria.



The conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, heard her. He came backstage during intermission and told her, "Yours is a voice such as one hears once in a hundred years."

Even so, as an African American in the United States, she could not sing in Washington, D.C.'s Constitution Hall. The hall was owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of the U.S. president, resigned from the group in protest. Mrs. Roosevelt invited Marian to give a private performance at the White House. The Department of Interior arranged for Marian to sing at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., on April 9, 1939. It was Easter Sunday and 75,000 people came to hear her. Millions also heard her on radio that day.

In later years Marian enjoyed much success and respect. President Eisenhower appointed her as a delegate to the United Nations. In 1965 she gave a farewell concert at Carnegie Hall. Before her death on April 8, 1993, many honors flowed her way: nearly thirty honorary doctoral degrees, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Congressional Medal of Freedom.



Reading

1. Marian turned to her mother and friends in her church for guidance about decisions she had to make about her life and career. Who do you turn to for help in making crucial decisions about your life? Write the person a short letter of thanks for being there when you need him or her.
2. What songs do you sing to yourself from time to time? Write out the words and sing one or two of them to your parents or to a friend.
3. Create new words set to the melody of "Happy Birthday to You."
4. Make a list of your talents and ask a teacher, another adult, or older friend or relative what you might do to develop those talents.
4. Write a frame poem with the letters of Marian's name in a vertical position. M might be "marvelous" and so on. Be positive. Use a dictionary if you need help.

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Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *When Marian Sang*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2002.

Social Studies

1. Talk to older adults such as your grandparents or other senior citizens about what they may remember about Eleanor Roosevelt who invited Marian to sing at the White House. Tell your classmates what you learned.
2. Read about the Lincoln Memorial in a reference book or on the Internet and show a picture of the memorial to your classmates. Write what you think Lincoln would have said after Marian sang there in front of his statue. Read what you wrote to your classmates.
3. If you were asked what you intended to do with your life, how would you answer? Write briefly what you would say.



Maya Angelou

born 1928 • Poet, Dancer, Writer, Actress, Teacher

Three-year-old Marguerite Anne Johnson lived in California with her parents and four-year-old brother, Bailey. Because their parents could not care for the children, they were sent to Stamps, Arkansas, to live with their grandmother, Mrs. Annie Henderson. Grandma Henderson, who became “Momma” to the children, ran a small general store.

Bailey called his sister “Maya,” which was easier to say than her given name, and the name stuck. The two children studied hard in school, worked around the store, and obeyed their grandmother. Every Sunday they were in church. By 1940, when young black men in their community were being hanged by white racists, Momma sent young Bailey and his sister to San Francisco, California. Their mother had remarried and she and her new husband welcomed them.

At age sixteen, Maya got a night shift job as a conductor on San Francisco cable cars; she was the first African-American woman conductor. While still in high school, Maya had a baby boy, whom she named Clyde Bailey Johnson. She worked at various jobs to support both of them, but she also wrote poetry in her free time.

One of only three black students in her high school, Maya received a college scholarship upon graduation. This enabled her to attend evening drama and dancing classes. In addition to school, she had a night job as a singer and dancer at a club called the Purple Onion in San Francisco. There she went by the stage name of Maya Angelou, which she continued using the rest of her life. One evening she went to a musical

written by George Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess*. The cast was made up of all African Americans and the musical was set in the southern United States. Because of her outstanding performances at the Purple Onion, she was offered a starring role in a European and African opera tour.

On her return, she and her son went to New York City. Knowing she needed to improve her writing, she joined the Harlem Writers Guild.

In 1960, in New York, she wrote, directed, and starred in a show called *Cabaret for Freedom*. The money raised from the program went to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

In the 1960s, Maya and her son, who chose to be called Guy, lived in Africa. While there, she wrote for *The Arab Observer* in Egypt and *The Ghanaian Times* in Ghana. Guy went to college in Ghana.

Maya returned to the United States and wrote *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the story of her childhood years. It was nominated for a National Book Award and made into a two-hour television film. In the 1970s she began publishing her poetry and also appeared as a grandmother in the television miniseries *Roots*, for which she received an Emmy Award nomination.

In 1993 she wrote and delivered her poem “On the Pulse of Morning” for President Bill Clinton’s first presidential inauguration. Today she is a professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and continues her writing career as well as her work in film, television, and theater.





Reading

1. With a classmate, write Maya Angelou's first and last name vertically along the left side of a sheet of paper. Use the letters of her name to begin words that describe her (for example: M = magnificent). You may use a dictionary.
2. After reading more about her, write a letter to Maya Angelou. Tell her what you most admire about her.
3. Create three titles for Maya Angelou's biography. Compare your list with that of a classmate and explain to each other what you wrote.
4. Choose an experience Maya had and draw a picture of the scene. Write a title under the picture.
4. If you had to leave your town or city because you were fearful for your life (and cost was not a factor), where would you go? Discuss this with your classmates.

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Social Studies

1. If the current president of the United States asked you to compose a poem for his inauguration, what subject would you choose? Try creating a poem for him and give it a title. Share it with your classmates.
2. Find Winston-Salem on a map. Read about the city and share with your classmates five items of interest about the city.
3. Of the five professions listed for Maya at the beginning of this biography, which do you think is most important to the welfare of our country? Why? Discuss the profession with your classmates.

Johann Sebastian Bach

1685–1750 • Composer, Organist

Johann Sebastian Bach came from a long line of musicians. His great-grandfather was a professional violinist. His father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, was a church organist. In fact, seventy-six of his male relatives, of whom fifty-three were named Johann, made their living as musicians. The Johann Bachs often were called by their second names to make their identities clear.

Johann Sebastian was born in Germany on March 21, 1685. His father, a viola player, could also play several instruments, including the organ, trumpet, and drums; he even sang. As a child, Sebastian could sing well, too.

A series of untimely deaths struck the Bachs during Sebastian's childhood. First, a sister and a brother died. Then in 1693, his father's twin brother died. A year later Sebastian's mother passed away. His father remarried, but three months later he died, too. At ten, Sebastian went to live with his twenty-three-year-old brother and his family. At fourteen he received a scholarship to join the choir at St. Michael's School in Lüneburg, Germany.

While he was in Lüneburg, Johann Sebastian heard and sang a great deal of church music. While the church organ was being repaired, he learned how the organ was constructed and how to keep it working well. This knowledge would be of use to him throughout his musical career. At one point, he walked thirty miles to hear an accomplished organist and composer give a recital.

When Sebastian graduated from school, he began looking for employment as a musician. Churches needed organists and choir directors. Larger towns, where a prince or a duke ruled, would often hire musicians to supply music for

the court. Sebastian's first position, at eighteen, was as a violinist and organist in the court of Duke Johann Ernst in Weimar, Germany. A few months later, he moved to nearby Arnstadt, where he played on a new organ and had the responsibility for maintaining it. He was also given the challenge of directing a boy's choir that included difficult youngsters.

On October 17, 1707, he married his second cousin, Maria Barbara Bach. The following year he wrote his first cantata, *God Is My King*.

Sebastian gave organ recitals. When the Crown Prince Frederick heard him play, he took off a valuable ring and presented it as a gift to Sebastian.

More tragedy was to strike Sebastian. His wife died in July 1720 while he was away, and she was buried before his return. She left him with their four surviving children (three children had died earlier). The next

year, at thirty-six, he remarried. Anna was twenty and they had thirteen children during the next twenty years. This marriage was as happy for him as the first.

In his last years, Sebastian composed musical works in Leipzig, Germany: 295 church cantatas, motets, Masses, and oratorios. In the last year of his life, he lost his eyesight. Then he had a stroke and died on July 28, 1750. Four of his sons, two from each marriage, continued the Bach musical tradition.

In 1850, about 100 years after his death, the formation of the Bach Society created new interest in Johann Sebastian Bach's musical works. Then in 1977, the first *Voyager* spacecraft carried some recordings of his works into the heavens.





Reading

1. As you read about Johann Sebastian Bach, you will find words that relate to him and his music that may be unfamiliar to you. Review the meanings of the following words in reference books or a dictionary: *baroque*, *cantata*, *chorale*, *counterpoint*, *fugue*, *harpsichord*, *oratorio*, *prelude*, *toccata*, and *motet*.
2. What sort of person does Johann Sebastian Bach seem to be to you? List some traits or characteristics you sense he had from your reading of the biography or in other books about him. Discuss what you think with your classmates.
3. In your estimation, who is the greatest composer of music in our world today? Discuss your choice with your teacher, parents, and classmates.
4. Sebastian Bach and his two wives had twenty children. How would you feel about having that many brothers and sisters? How would your parents accommodate that many children?

Social Studies

1. Find Germany on a map. What countries, going clockwise, border Germany at the present time?
2. What is the capital of Germany? What direction is Leipzig from the capital?
3. Johann Sebastian Bach experienced blindness in his last year of life. What other well-known personalities of the past or present had this same challenge? How did they cope with their blindness? Share what you know with your classmates.

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Ethel Barrymore

1879–1959 • Actress

The Barrymore family made their living as actors in the theater. Maurice was a matinee star and his wife, Georgianna Drew Barrymore, a comedienne. Because they were often away in a theater or on tour, Georgie's mother, Louisa (called *Mummy* by the family), often took care of the children: Ethel, Lionel, and John. Grandma Louisa was also an actress. She made her first stage appearance when she was just a year old: a squalling baby was needed for a scene.

In 1886 at age seven, Ethel entered a convent school for girls, the Academy of Notre Dame. The piano became her favorite instrument; she seriously considered becoming a concert pianist. She won a silver medal for her piano playing. As a treat, Grandma Louisa would take Ethel and her brothers to the theater on weekends.

Ethel was thirteen when her grandma sent her to New York City to be with her mother. Georgie was ill with tuberculosis, an incurable disease at that time. Ethel and her mother then went to the milder climate of Santa Barbara, California, but Ethel's father stayed in New York City because of his work. Some months later, Georgie died. She was thirty-four.

After the funeral, Ethel began work as an actress. Grandmother Louisa went to Montreal, Canada, to play the role of Mrs. Malaprop in *The Rivals*. Ethel got a small part in the play as Julia. Not yet fifteen, she walked on stage, and in spite of severe stage fright, said her lines well. Her acting career began.

Through Charles Frohman, a theatrical producer, Ethel got a non-speaking role in a New York stage play, *The Bauble Shop*. She also was

an understudy for another actress, which meant she learned the actress's lines and had to be ready to perform at a moment's notice. For this work, Ethel received thirty dollars a week in pay.

Ethel toured the country in stage productions. Local newspaper reporters wrote about her. During these tours, she read books by the popular writers of that time: Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, William Shakespeare, and Robert Louis Stevenson. At each city in which she

acted, she learned as much as she could about its history. Because she did not graduate from high school, Ethel felt she needed to educate herself through reading.

In 1901, a comic play was written especially for Ethel: *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*. The plot concerned three young officers. The officers had never seen her but assumed she was a

wealthy, but older and unattractive, woman. They decided one of them would court her and marry her, and the three would divide her wealth. Ethel's character was, of course, young, attractive, and wealthy. When the stage play hit Broadway in New York, it was a tremendous success.

Ethel worked in silent movies but the stage was her first love. In 1932, she, Lionel, and John worked together on a film titled *Rasputin and the Empress*. In 1944, she received an Academy Award for her work in the film *None But the Lonely Heart* with Cary Grant. By 1946 she received another Academy Award nomination for her role in a murder mystery, *The Spiral Staircase*. At age sixty-seven, she was still making movies, appearing in twenty more before her death in June 1959.





Reading

1. Make a list of adjectives describing Ethel Barrymore. If she were your friend, what would you do together?
2. As a young stage actress, Ethel did not make much money. In later life, as a movie star, she did. Write an essay of fifty words on the disadvantages of receiving a million dollars at the time one is poor.
3. With a classmate, write imaginary diary pages about being in a stage play on Broadway. How do you feel when the play closes for lack of an audience after only a week?
4. Think back to memories about life before you began going to school. Write a short passage about each memory and discuss, with a parent, how each memory could possibly become a scene for a play about your life.
3. Make a list of three men and three women whom you believe are exceptional actors. Discuss with your classmates why you chose them.

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Social Studies

1. In New York City, plays and musical comedies have premieres in the city's famous Theater District. The theaters are called *Broadway* theaters. Read about them in an encyclopedia, in a reference book, or on the Internet. Report several things you learned and share them with your classmates.
2. Read about the "motion picture" in an encyclopedia or reference book. Make notes about the five things you learned that most interested you. Share what you learned with your classmates.

Ludwig van Beethoven

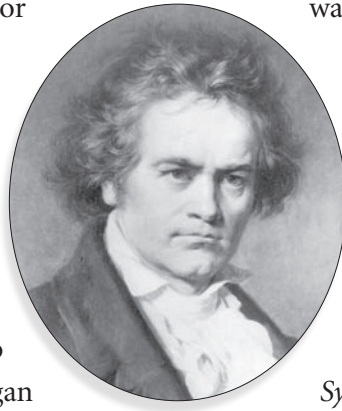
1770–1827 • Composer

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany, on December 16, 1770. Ludwig's father, Johann, was a singer and violinist in the court orchestra of their state's leader, or Elector. Ludwig's mother, Maria-Magdalena, kept close watch over her son.

When Ludwig was four, Johann started teaching him to play the clavier, an early keyboard instrument. Johann wanted his son to be a child prodigy like Mozart was in his childhood. Johann thought Ludwig could make a living for the family with his music.

Johann made Ludwig practice long hours. Late one night, Johann brought home his friend, Tobias, and made nine-year-old Ludwig play for Tobias for a couple of hours. Tobias realized that Johann had taught Ludwig as much as he could, so Tobias became his teacher. Ludwig began to compose music and learned to play the organ at a local monastery. By fourteen, he became Court Organist and led the Court Orchestra.

By 1787, seventeen-year-old Ludwig had saved enough money to go to Vienna to experience the best orchestras, performers, and composers. The Elector of Cologne gave him a letter of introduction to Mozart. Mozart listened to Ludwig play and commented, "Keep your eyes on him. Someday he will give the world something to talk about." But within three weeks, Ludwig's father called him home. His mother was dying of tuberculosis. Upon his return, his mother died and his father was dismissed from his court musicianship post. To compound the problems, Ludwig's seven-month-old sister, Margaret, died. His three younger brothers needed care and the lack of finances became a real problem for the family.



New and old friends came to Ludwig's aid. The Elector gave his father a small pension to be handled only by Ludwig. Ludwig was also given a paid position as a musician at the Court. Ludwig's friend, Count von Waldstein, gave him a new grand piano, which enabled Ludwig to teach music lessons.

In 1798, Ludwig began losing his hearing, but he wanted it kept a secret. On April 2, 1800, he gave a concert of his *First Symphony*. This

was followed by music for the ballet, *Prometheus*, eight more symphonies, piano concertos, sonatas, string quartets, an opera and Mass, and many other compositions.

By 1823, Ludwig was totally deaf, but he could "hear" in his mind. That year, in spite of his hearing loss, he conducted his *Ninth Symphony* in its debut. At the conclusion of the music, the concertgoers clapped and shouted wildly in appreciation. Because Ludwig's back was to his audience, he had no idea whether his work was accepted or not until one of the soloists in the orchestra took him by the arm and turned him toward the admiring audience.

Ludwig "talked" to his friends through notebooks. He had his friends write their questions and comments in his notebook. One evening he escorted a young friend, Bettina, to a ball and throughout the evening made notes. At the end of the evening, he wrote her these words: "My song is finished." During the evening, he had created a song especially for her.

On March 26, 1827, Ludwig slipped into a coma. Two days later, he died of pneumonia. His funeral was attended by 20,000 people.



Reading

1. List the names of three friends or relatives outside your class whom you think would enjoy hearing you read this short biography of Ludwig van Beethoven. Read the biography and discuss with them what you think is most significant about his life.
2. If you had to give up one of your senses (sight, touch, hearing, speech, or smell), which one would it be? Write in fifty words or less the one it would be. Which one do you think Beethoven would have chosen? Why?
3. Listen to a recording of a selection of Beethoven's musical works with a classmate. Discuss with that person what three portions you enjoyed most.

Social Studies

1. Trace the Rhine River on a map with a classmate. List the countries that it flows through and the one that interests you enough to visit.
2. With an adult, take a walk in your neighborhood. "Talk" in a notebook with pen or pencil, as Ludwig did. Describe what you see, such as houses, streets, bird life, colors, sizes of buildings, animals, and the persons who live there. Do not be concerned about spelling, handwriting, or grammar. When you return home, pick out the most interesting parts and rewrite them. Share those parts with a classmate. Discuss what you learned.
3. Beethoven went to Vienna, Austria, to study with Franz Joseph Haydn in 1792. What is the official language of Austria?

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Leonard Bernstein

1918–1990 • Conductor, Composer, Pianist

Leonard Bernstein was born on August 25, 1918, in Lawrence, Massachusetts. When he was old enough to go to school, he proved to be an excellent student but was not especially interested in music. All that changed when his Aunt Clara gave her piano to the family. Soon ten-year-old Leonard was able to play tunes he heard on the radio. He had an “ear” for music.

By the time he was twelve, there was little doubt that music was in Leonard’s blood.

His father bought a better piano and enrolled his son at the New England Conservatory of Music. Leonard’s father also made an arrangement with a cruise line for him to play for the passengers.

In 1935, Leonard began classes at Harvard University and became the college newspaper’s music critic. While there, he was influenced by George Gershwin’s opera *Porgy and Bess* and became aware of the importance of jazz in American culture.

At nineteen, Leonard met Greek conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, who encouraged the young musician to consider orchestral conducting. Leonard wanted to be a composer, but he also wanted to conduct orchestras. And he wanted to be a concert pianist, even though he had never given a solo piano performance in public. Later in his career, Leonard found he was good at making music come alive for children. What to do? He decided to master *all* of them.

Early in World War II Leonard reported to his draft board but was rejected for service because of his asthma. Instead, he turned to composing the *Jeremiah Symphony* (1943) and became the assistant director of the New York Philharmonic

Orchestra. As an assistant, his job was to get the orchestra ready for rehearsals for the conductor.

Then, on November 14, 1943, a most unusual thing occurred. A guest conductor, Bruno Walter, became ill, and the regular conductor was snowed in some distance away. At twenty-five years old, Leonard became the youngest person ever to conduct the New York Philharmonic. Despite his initial fear, he did a superb job from the moment he raised his baton. The following morning the

New York Times wrote a glowing review about his efforts on its front page.

Leonard was on his way to the top of his profession.

Soon after, his musical *On the Town* (1944) opened in New York. Then came *Wonderful Town* (1952), *Candide* (1956), and the internationally acclaimed *West Side Story* (1957), which, as a movie, won ten Academy Awards.

Leonard met Felicia Montealegre, an actress from Chile, and they married in 1951. They had three children: Jamie, Alexander, and Nina.

In 1958 the New York Philharmonic made him their music director. His Sunday afternoon Young People’s Concerts with the Philharmonic were so successful that more than forty of them became features on CBS Television. He stayed with the Philharmonic eleven years until 1969. Then Leonard traveled widely around the world as a guest director of major symphony orchestras in London, Palestine, Vienna, Berlin, and many other cities and countries.

On October 14, 1990, Leonard died of heart failure in New York, as a result of emphysema, a lung disease.





Reading

1. As you reread the short biography of Leonard Bernstein, think about what there was about him that would make a person think he would become an orchestral conductor. Write down your thoughts and compare them with those of your classmates.
2. Prepare to read the biography aloud to some older adults or senior citizens. Write down their comments about Leonard Bernstein and share them with your classmates.
3. Make a list of what you might ask Leonard if he were to come to your classroom. Share the list with your classmates.
4. Write a newspaper story about the time young Leonard Bernstein took over the New York Philharmonic Orchestra when the guest conductor and regular conductor were not able to be there. Answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how the performance turned out. Read your story to your classmates.
2. If you could ask three questions of Leonard Bernstein, what would they be? Write them down and share them with your classmates. Ask your classmates what the answers might be.
3. Borrow a video of *West Side Story* from your local public library. View it at home and then prepare a report for your classmates of your evaluation of the film.

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Social Studies

1. Leonard Bernstein set goals for himself in the area of music. What were his three goals? List them under his name. Then, under your name, list three goals you have for your life. Put the list in a place where you can read it from time to time during your school years. Change them as you develop new goals.



Johannes Brahms

1833–1897 • Composer

Johannes Brahms wanted to learn to play the piano. His father, Jakob, thought otherwise. Jakob taught his son to play the violin and cello—that was enough. Piano lessons cost money and the family did not have enough to buy a piano. Jakob finally said the two of them would talk with Otto Cossel, a music teacher in Hamburg, Germany.

Cossel recognized that Johannes was gifted. While Johannes stood facing away from the piano keyboard, Cossel hit a key and Johannes called out which one it was. With that, the cost of lessons was quickly settled: All lessons were free. Also, Johannes could practice on the teacher's own piano after his students were done for the day. Johannes was ecstatic!

For three years, Johannes had basic piano instruction with Otto Cossel. He introduced Johannes to Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, and Schubert, along with basic piano knowledge. Then Johannes moved on to study with Eduard Marxsen, who taught him music theory.

At age ten, Johannes was playing in public. Because the family needed money, Jakob had his son playing at night in taverns, restaurants, and dance halls. Johannes could hear a tune once and play it immediately. By the age of fifteen, he was considered a professional musician and began giving music lessons to students. Composing original music was his first love, though. He enjoyed poetry and set his poems to music.

Just before he turned twenty, Johannes went on tour with a Hungarian violinist, Eduard Reményi, who played gypsy music on his violin. Johannes took his own compositions along, hoping to impress others during the tour. In one town, they found the piano they were to use was

out of tune by a half tone, and there was no piano tuner available to correct the problem. Johannes transposed the whole concert by memory, up a half tone so he and Reményi would not have to cancel the concert. The concert was a success and Johannes Brahms was applauded at length when Reményi announced at the end of the concert what Johannes had done.

In 1853, Johannes met Robert and Clara Schumann. Clara was thirty-five and a brilliant concert pianist. Robert's compositions influenced Brahms a great deal and Clara offered him insightful suggestions for his composing. She also played his compositions at her own concerts. Johannes returned home to Hamburg a musical hero to his parents, teachers, relatives, and friends at the taverns and dance halls.

The next two years were extremely difficult for Brahms. His good friend, Robert Schumann, was in a mental hospital. Clara was not permitted to visit her husband because his doctors thought a visit from her might endanger his mental stability. Johannes came to the Schumanns' home and cared for their children. Clara traveled throughout Europe giving concerts to raise money for her husband's hospital fees and food for her family.

After Robert Schumann's death, Johannes Brahms began composing again. He made Vienna his home because of its cultural life. There Johannes composed the beautiful *Cradle Song*, popularly known as *Brahms's Lullaby*. Johannes continued composing and writing symphonies but destroyed many of his old compositions in the 1890s. Johannes died of liver cancer in 1897.





Reading

1. When Johannes was asked how he composed a song, he said, "I generally read a poem through very slowly and then, as a rule, I find that the melody is there." With a classmate or friend, read a poem you both enjoy and see if together you can make a melody from it.
2. In the biography, find the sentence that is most quotable or memorable to you. Read it aloud to a classmate and tell him or her why you chose that particular one.
3. From your library, check out a biography of Johannes Brahms. Report to your classmates three interesting facts about Johannes Brahms. Then, report to your classmates three interesting facts about him that were not in this short biography.
4. Share with your classmates what you think was Brahms's most interesting accomplishment. Why?
3. Reread the biography of Johannes Brahms and list three of his character traits that set him apart from other people. Discuss your list with those of your classmates.

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Social Studies

1. Why would Johannes Brahms want to destroy some of his earlier compositions as he grew older? Discuss your thinking on this topic with your classmates. What things of yours would you save for your future children to see or enjoy? Why?
2. Compare and contrast the life of Johannes Brahms with that of one of the other composers in this series. Discuss your opinions with your classmates.



Pablo Casals

1876–1973 • Cellist, Conductor, Composer

In the town of Vendrell, forty miles southwest of Barcelona on Spain's east coast, Pablo Casals was born on December 29, 1876. His father, Carlos, was the organist, choirmaster, and piano teacher there. Pila, Pablo's mother, was from Puerto Rico.

Pablo's father taught him to play the piano. At age seven, he studied the violin and composed music. Although he wanted to play the organ, he had to wait until his legs grew long enough to reach the pedals. But when he heard the cello played, at age eleven, he later wrote, "I was overwhelmed. I felt as if I could not breathe. . . . I told my father . . . that is what I want to play." His father purchased a junior-sized cello for him.

Carlos thought Pablo ought to learn a trade such as carpentry. Pila did not agree. His mother won and took Pablo to the Municipal School of Music in Barcelona, a five-year program. At school he studied the cello. By the time he graduated, he had won all the prizes in piano, cello, and composition.

Pablo's mother took him to Madrid, the capital of Spain, along with his two brothers, Luis and Enrique. He had a fifty-dollar-a-month royal grant from the queen of Spain to study at the Madrid Conservatory of Music. To broaden his background as a musician, he also took courses in history, languages, literature, and mathematics.

Two years later he was in Brussels, Belgium, to audition with a famous cello professor. The professor called him "The Little Spaniard" and asked, sarcastically, if he knew *Souvenir de Spa*, a particularly difficult piece. Pablo promptly borrowed a cello from a student and played the

piece exquisitely. The professor and his class sat dumbfounded.

The professor told Pablo if he studied with him he would be awarded first prize for the year's work. This amounted to a bribe. Pablo said no. He told the professor that he was rude. Pablo walked out and went to Paris and played in a theater orchestra. The next year, 1896, Pablo was teaching in the Barcelona Municipal School of Music.

Pablo's reputation as a cellist soon spread around the world. He toured the United States with the Austrian violinist Fritz Kreisler and received an honorary degree at Scotland's Edinburgh University with Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

When he was in his eighties, Pablo continued to compose, conduct, and play the cello. However, he refused to play for audiences in countries ruled by dictators such as Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy. He would not even play in democratic countries that recognized Spain, because a dictator, General Francisco Franco, ruled there. He gave concerts in England and France and contributed the proceeds to support the Spanish Loyalists who fought Franco.

In 1957, Pablo suffered a heart attack while rehearsing a program. Four years later he performed at the White House in Washington, D.C., for President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy. A reporter asked Pablo, "What is the key to your agelessness?" He said, in part, "I haven't time to grow old."

Pablo Casals suffered a second heart attack on October 22, 1973, and died at age ninety-seven. He was buried in Puerto Rico and later reburied in his birthplace, Vendrell.





Reading

1. After reading the biography of Pablo Casals, create a title that best expresses what you think of him.
2. Share with a classmate what you most admired about Pablo Casals after reading his biography.
3. Who among your friends has the potential of being a professional musician? Why?
4. Pablo Casals lived to be ninety-seven. With a classmate, make a list of five other famous people who lived long and productive lives. Tell your classmates why you think they lived so long and were so productive.
4. Compare and contrast Pablo Casals's biography with the biography of another musician. How are they alike or different? Who is your favorite? Why?

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Social Studies

1. Pablo Casals had very definite convictions about totalitarian dictatorships and made his views known. What convictions do you have in which you strongly believe? Discuss with your parents.
2. When Pablo first heard the cello played, he said he could hardly breathe. What experience have you had, such as seeing a beautiful sunset or hearing a musical selection, that took your breath away for a moment. Write a two-word poem (each line two words only, none rhyming) expressing your experience.
3. Study the country of Spain in an encyclopedia or reference book and write ten interesting facts about Spain. Share them with your classmates.



Charles “Charlie” Chaplin

1889–1977 • Actor, Film Maker

Charles Spencer Chaplin was born in London, England, on April 16, 1889. His mother, Hannah, entertained audiences with a sweet voice and an ability to mimic other people. His father, Charles, Sr., also performed on stage but had a severe addiction to alcohol. Charles, Sr., left Hannah, Charlie, and Charlie’s older brother, Sydney, and joined a theatrical touring company in the United States. Hannah and her boys were on their own.

Hannah’s audiences did not like her performances and, at one point, threw fruit at her on stage. She left in tears. The theater manager picked up five-year-old Charlie and put him on stage. Charlie began to sing and dance. He had memorized many of the songs he had seen performed by his mother and others and had practiced their dance steps. The audience laughed and threw coins at his feet. They wanted another song, but Charlie first picked up the coins, then sang and danced again until his mother took him home.

Hannah was institutionalized from time to time with a mental illness, and Sydney and Charlie were sent to a school for poor children. As the brothers entered their teens, they were able to get parts in plays in London. Then Charlie went with a group to the United States. One U.S. critic said Charlie was “the best pantomime artist ever seen here.” In May 1913, Charlie was offered a job at Keystone Film Company to appear in silent movies. Director Mack Sennett told Charlie to get a costume, go to a children’s park where car races were held, and make a nuisance of himself. Sennett would film Charlie’s actions and make them into a Keystone Comedy. Charlie put on a

hat that was too small and looked like a bowl. He wore a tight-fitting coat and oversized trousers and shoes and walked with a bamboo cane. He pasted a small black mustache under his nose. His character became known as The Tramp. Charlie was on his way to stardom.

Charlie began making movies of his own. He was a perfectionist and would keep filming until he had scenes that were just right. In 1918, Charlie created a film titled *Shoulder Arms*, a

comedy set in the trenches of World War I. In another film, *The Kid*, The Tramp finds an abandoned baby boy, raises him, and finally unites the child with his mother.

In the late 1880s, Charlie had read about gold prospectors in Northwestern Canada finding gold and becoming instant millionaires.

Based on this interest, he wrote a script for a film called *The Gold Rush*. Charlie also acted in the film, directed the cast, and produced the film. Other productions followed: *The Circus*, *City Lights*, *Modern Times*, and in 1940, *The Great Dictator*. This film became a warning to the nations of the world about German dictator Adolf Hitler.

Charlie married and divorced three times before he met Oona O’Neill, the daughter of famous playwright Eugene O’Neill. They married in 1943, had eight children, and were married for thirty-four years. In 1975, Charlie Chaplin was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and became Sir Charles Chaplin. Charlie was eighty-eight when he died in his sleep on Christmas night, 1977. He had made eighty-one movies.





Reading

1. Make a list of five words that you think best describe Charlie Chaplin. Share your list with an older relative or friend who may remember him. Discuss what you both know.
2. If you could ask Charlie one question about his life, what would it be?
3. Write a title for the biography of Charlie Chaplin. Compare your title with those of your classmates.
4. Draw a picture of Charles Chaplin as The Tramp. Write ten words around the figure that best describes the character. Use a thesaurus to help you in your search for the best words.

Social Studies

1. In 1972, Charlie Chaplin received an honorary Academy Award “for the incalculable effect he has had on making motion pictures the art form of this century.” Discuss with your classmates what this must have meant to Charlie at that time in his life.
2. Imagine Charlie Chaplin visiting your home for lunch. Who among your friends and relatives would you invite (limit of five not including yourself)? Why?
3. What character traits do you think Charlie had as a child that helped him overcome the problems of growing up in poverty and abandonment? Make a list and discuss it with your classmates.

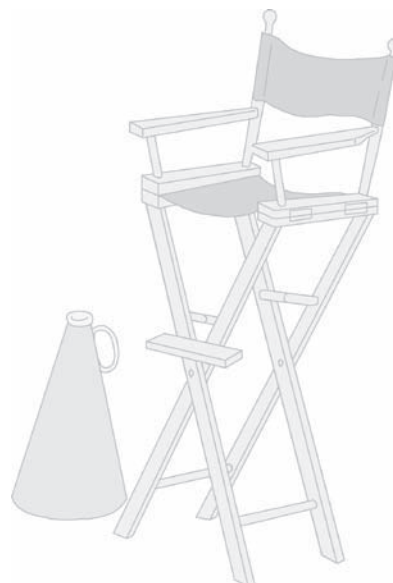
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Ray Charles

1930–2004 • Musician, Songwriter, Singer

Ray Charles Robinson was born to Aretha and Bailey Robinson in Albany, Georgia, on September 23, 1930. His brother, George, born one year later, and he were inseparable and enjoyed playing in the fields of northern Florida, where they moved with their mother in the 1930s.

One Saturday afternoon the two boys walked into the Red Wing Café. Mr. Pit, the owner, put Ray on his lap and showed him how to play a couple of tunes on the old upright piano with his tiny fingers. Ray was impressed.

When his brother George was four, he accidentally drowned in a tall washtub. Soon after, seven-year-old Ray began to lose his eyesight from the disease glaucoma. Aretha helped Ray become self-sufficient by requiring him to do chores around the house and run errands, even though he could not see. Then she sent him 160 miles away to the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind in St. Augustine. There he studied classical music, such as Chopin and Strauss, braille, piano, and basic skills. At ten, Ray learned to play the clarinet and to read and write music in braille.

Ray went to St. Augustine with a sighted person and learned how to get around the city by listening and making a map in his mind. He learned how to do this in other cities and was able to make his way around towns without help. He listened carefully at street corners for traffic, and, when possible, he got in with groups of people who were crossing the street.

When Ray was fourteen, his mother died of a heart attack at the age of thirty-two. Devastated, Ray dropped out of school to begin a career in

music. A family in Jacksonville, Florida, gave him a place to stay. While there, he spent time at the local Musicians' Union hall, where he could play the piano. He practiced playing the blues, boogie woogie, and swing music. One day, he was approached by a gentleman who offered him a part-time job, or "gig." He was delighted. He asked for his pay in one-dollar bills so he could count what was owed him.

In 1947 at seventeen, he decided to go out on his own. He got on a bus to Seattle, Washington, the farthest point from Florida, to look for work. He dropped his last name, Robinson, and became simply Ray Charles so he would not be confused with boxer Sugar Ray Robinson.

In the early 1950s Ray signed with a record company in Los Angeles, California. During this period,

his music took on a gospel flavor. He even played an electric piano, which was not often used by the professional jazz and blues players at that time. Some years later he played in New York City's Carnegie Hall. In 1960 he had his first hit, "Georgia on My Mind," followed by "I Can't Stop Loving You" (1962).

Many musical honors followed. On December 7, 1986, he was honored at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. After his death on June 10, 2004, he was honored with an exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio.





Reading

1. Research Louis Braille in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Internet Web site. Prepare to tell your classmates about his life and contributions to those who are blind.
2. How is the braille code formed on paper?
3. What impressed you most about the life of Ray Charles? Compare your answer with those of your classmates.
4. Imagine you are walking down a Florida street with Ray Charles and he invites you into the Red Wing Café. What would you ask him to play and sing for you? Write a list of questions you would ask. Compare your list with that of a classmate.

Social Studies

1. With a partner, find the places on a map of the United States mentioned in the biography of Ray Charles. Which location is nearest to where you presently live?
2. Read about the eye disease glaucoma in a reference book. Share what you learn with your classmates and parents.
3. If you could change one aspect of Ray Charles' life, what would it be? Why would you change it?
4. Listen to a recording by Ray Charles. What impresses you most about his style? Explain.

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Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain)

1835–1910 • Writer, Humorist

Sam liked to tell people that when he was born on November 30, 1835, he increased the village of Florida, Missouri, by one percent. There were only one hundred people living there at the time.

When Sam was five, the family moved to Hannibal, Missouri, by the Mississippi River. Some day, he thought, I'll be a pilot on a riverboat on the Mississippi. When Sam was fifteen, he became an apprentice in a newspaper office that opened in Hannibal. As pay, he received room and board and a suit of clothes. Two years later, Sam's brother, Orion, came home from St. Louis and started another newspaper in Hannibal. Sam went to work for Orion.

Sam drifted from one printer's job to another for a few years. Then he heard about a survey done in the upper Amazon River in South America. He thought, that is the place I want to go. But he had no money. As he walked down the street, a bit of paper flew by. He picked it up. It was a fifty-dollar bill! When he could not find the owner, he decided to forget the Amazon and become a pilot of a Mississippi riverboat. After an eighteen-month apprenticeship, twenty-three-year-old Sam got his Mississippi riverboat license. Then the Civil War broke out and the Mississippi was closed to boat traffic.

Sam lasted only a couple of weeks as a Confederate soldier and then left with Orion to go to Carson City, Nevada, on a stagecoach. While there, he failed as a prospector and instead became a full-time writer and reporter, writing under the pen name of Mark Twain. From there he moved on to California.

As Mark Twain, he wrote a short, humorous story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," which newspapers around the country printed. A newspaper in California sent him to Hawaii (called, at that time, the Sandwich Islands). Mark got his story onto a ship heading for San Francisco just in time. When he got back to the United States, a bonus of three hundred dollars awaited him from the newspaper, along with a great deal of fame.

The next year, 1867, he was off to Europe and the Holy Land as a correspondent. Aboard ship with a tour group, Mark mingled with the tourists and wrote letters back to his publisher. The publisher put Mark's letters into a book titled *The Innocents Abroad*, which became a success.

On the trip, Mark met a gentleman who showed Mark a picture of his sister, Olivia Langdon. Mark knew he had to meet her. On his return, Mark took her to hear Charles Dickens, the English writer. In 1870, Olivia and Mark married.

Mark used his childhood experiences, as well as his years on the Mississippi and in the West, as a basis for the characters in his books. His Mississippi years surface on the pages of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Mark lectured all over the world and received many honors, such as an honorary Doctorate of Literature from Oxford University in England, before his death on April 21, 1910.





Reading

1. Samuel L. Clemens used the pen name Mark Twain for his humorous writing. He chose the name during his riverboat piloting days. It signified a call that the boat was in two fathoms, or twelve feet, of water. What did that mean to a riverboat pilot?
2. Practice reading the biography aloud. Then read it to children in lower grades or to senior citizens you might know. Ask these groups what they know about Mark Twain.
3. Read Mark Twain's story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Draw a picture of Mark Twain urging his frog to jump.
4. After reading the biography of Samuel L. Clemens, write for five minutes without stopping about what you remember about him. Share what you wrote with your classmates.

Social Studies

1. Mark was born on the day Halley's Comet passed by Earth. Seventy-five years later he died on the day it reappeared. Read about English astronomer Edmond Halley and his discoveries. Report what you learn to your classmates. What do you think Mark Twain thought of this coincidence? What kind of a funny reference to the comet do you think he would make?
2. Mark Twain lectured in places such as India, South Africa, and Australia. He became internationally known. Find these countries on a map or globe. Learn about them from a reference book or on the Internet. Which of the three would you most like to visit? Why?
3. Locate Hannibal, Missouri, on a map. Which state is across the river from Hannibal?

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William “Bill” Cosby, Jr.

born 1937 • Comedian, Actor

Bill Cosby was born in Germantown, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 12, 1937. His father, a welder, left the family and joined the Navy, never to return. Bill’s mother Anna worked as a cleaning lady and often put in twelve-hour days. Bill, the oldest, was eleven and worked part-time shining shoes, selling fruit, stocking grocery shelves, and caring for his brothers until his mother got home from work.

Anna pushed her boys to get an education. Bill was tested and found eligible for gifted classes. In school he was the class jokester. One teacher, Mary Forchic, corrected him at one point with this statement: “In this classroom there is one comedian, and it is I. If you want to be one, grow up, get your own stage, and get paid for it.” And he did.

Bill played football, basketball, and track in high school but found studying less interesting. He dropped out of school at nineteen, joined the Navy, and trained as a physical therapist. The four-year tour of duty gave him the opportunity to use his comedic skills to encourage servicemen with disabilities. The military discipline helped him mature. His athletic skill on his naval unit’s track and field team kept him ready for college athletics. At twenty-three, he took and passed a test for a high school diploma and headed for college.

Bill got a full-tuition athletic scholarship at Temple University. He planned to be a physical education teacher. At Temple, a friend got him an evening job as a bartender. This position required him to be friendly to customers, so Bill cracked jokes and told his childhood stories. He was so

good, the owner had him fill in for the regular comedian. Soon he was doing comedy at various clubs in Philadelphia, but he still went to college during the day.

Bill preferred to tell funny stories and jokes about his childhood rather than stories that were rude or poked fun at other African Americans. He went to New York City one summer with his routines and was greeted with success. He dropped out of college, which distressed his mother, and began a full-time career as a comedian.

Bill met nineteen-year-old Camille Hanks, a college psychology student. He proposed to her soon after their first date and a few weeks later they were engaged. Then Bill auditioned and was accepted for an appearance on *The Tonight Show*. Soon he was doing extremely well, making comedy appearances around the country. A year later, Camille and Bill married.

From there Bill went on to star as the first African American in a dramatic television series, *I Spy*. This was followed by a television movie, *To All My Friends on Shore*; a cartoon series, *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*; and *The New Bill Cosby Show*. Bill took time off to earn a Ph.D. in education at the University of Massachusetts. By 1984, he was starring in the hit television series *The Cosby Show*, which ran till 1992 and is still in reruns.

Bill and Camille donated \$20 million to Spelman College, a black women’s college in Atlanta, the largest gift ever given by an individual to a black college. Bill Cosby continues to teach through his wonderful brand of humor.





Reading

1. Do you have a friend who is a “comedian” in school or in your family? List how they are like Bill Cosby and share your list with those of a classmate or your friend or relative.
2. Bill recorded a comedy album that won a Grammy Award as the Best Comedy Album of the Year in 1964. It was titled, *I Started Out as a Child*. Using this title as your first sentence, write a short humorous essay on how you started as a child. Share it with a friend or your parents.
3. List three things Bill did that were important. Share your list with those your classmates prepare.
4. As a class, do a choral reading of Bill Cosby’s biography. Change or delete parts of the text where necessary. Consider doing a program for another class, parents, or at a senior center or nursing home.

Social Studies

1. Bill attended Temple University and the University of Massachusetts and one of his daughters attended Spelman College. Look in both an encyclopedia and on a map of the United States to find where these schools are located. Using the map’s legend, determine approximately how far each school is from your home.
2. If you had twenty million dollars to give to a charity, to which one would you contribute? Why? Exchange your answer with those of your classmates and discuss your reasons.
3. What qualities make a good teacher? List three or four reasons for your conclusions.

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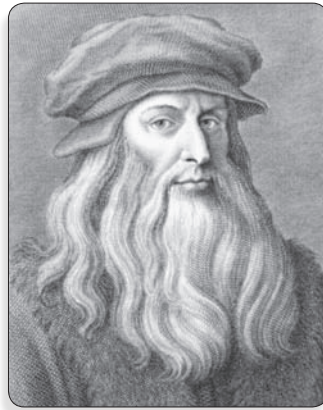
Leonardo da Vinci

1452–1519 • Painter, Sculptor, Architect, Engineer, Scientist

Leonardo da Vinci was born on April 15, 1452, about twenty-five miles west of Florence, Italy. His father, Ser Piero Vinci, a notary (a person who certifies legal documents, such as deeds), raised him. When Leonardo was fifteen, his father sent him to Andrea del Verrocchio, a skilled sculptor, painter, and goldsmith in Florence. As an apprentice, Leonardo spent several years learning a trade with the artist, but he was also assigned such monotonous tasks as sweeping floors, mixing colors, and cleaning brushes. For this he received food and lodging and an occasional change of clothes.

Toward the end of the apprenticeship, when Leonardo was in his early twenties, Verrocchio allowed him to paint a kneeling angel on a painting Verrocchio did of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus Christ. The title of Verrocchio's painting was *The Baptism of Christ* (1470–1476). Some who saw Leonardo's work thought it better than Verrocchio's.

Leonardo had more interests and gifts than just painting. In his final years in Florence, Leonardo began making inventions. His notebooks indicate that he designed light, but strong, bridges and even cannonballs that exploded. In his application for a position with the Duke of Milan, he wrote, "I can carry out sculpture in marble, bronze, or clay." He could also sing and play the lyre. The Duke of Milan was impressed, for he wanted a large bronze horse and also someone who could entertain his family. In 1482, Leonardo was awarded the position.



Leonardo set to work filling his notebooks with information about horses, their muscle structure, and how they moved. He first made a twenty-two-foot clay model of a horse. The Duke was delighted. But the French invaded Milan. The Duke and his family fled, and the troops used the horse for target practice. It was completely destroyed. Only drawings of the horse were left.

Leonardo was also an engineer. His drawings show how water can be raised by using twisting screws and how machines can bore holes or lift large objects. He even designed a flying machine! He was sure humans could fly. Three hundred years before the bicycle was in practical use, Leonardo designed one on paper that had ball bearings in the wheels to reduce friction. This allowed it to move faster and more easily.

Painting was still part of his life. He painted *The Last Supper* (1497) but never considered it finished because he could not make the face of Christ to his own satisfaction.

Leonardo made his way back to Florence eighteen years later. There he began his most famous painting, the *Mona Lisa* (1503–07). It is now in the Louvre Museum in Paris. A few years later he began an investigation of the human body. He did this by dissecting thirty dead bodies and making drawings of their main organs.

During Leonardo's sixties, the king of France invited him to live in France and make paintings of the king's family. Leonardo continued to fill his notebooks, experiment, and make drawings. When he died in 1519, he was sixty-seven years old.



Reading

1. Make a list of five questions you would ask Leonardo about his work in various creative areas of the fine arts. Compare your list with those of your classmates. Discuss how he might answer these questions.
2. Make a list of things we now know that Leonardo might find unbelievable. Discuss this list with your classmates.
3. Read in biographies about Leonardo's notebooks and about the variety of ideas he put in them for future reference. Begin your own notebook. Start with a page listing the interests you have and then put in your questions. Leave space for answers you find to your questions.

Social Studies

1. Leonardo had interests in many areas. After reading about him in other sources, which area of his work most impresses you? Share what you think with your classmates.
2. The largest island in the Mediterranean Sea lies off the coast of the "toe" of the boot-shaped Italian peninsula. What is the name of the island? Read about the island and tell your classmates what you learned about it.
3. Read about the Renaissance in a reference book or on the Internet. What part did Leonardo play in its development? Share what you learn with your classmates.

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Mona Lisa by
Leonardo da Vinci

Charles Dickens

1812–1870 • Writer

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, England. His mother Elisabeth taught Charles and his brothers and sisters reading and writing. When he was about two years old, the family moved to London. John, his father, worked for the navy for modest pay. To make ends meet, he sold his own library of books, as well as family household items. There was no money to send Charles to school. By the time Charles was twelve, he was working in a warehouse from eight in the morning until eight at night. The other boys who worked with him were a rough lot and teased him as being a “little gentleman.” To make matters worse, his father was put in prison for not paying his debts.

The other family members stayed at the prison with the father. Because the prison was too far for Charles to visit during the weekdays, he stayed with an elderly friend at night. After three months John Dickens was let out of prison. John was left an inheritance, which he used to pay his debts. He made Charles quit his job and sent him to school.

Charles’s formal education was over when he was fifteen. He worked as an office boy and then as a clerk in a law firm. His father was working as a newspaper reporter, and Charles became interested in that profession. He learned to take shorthand and at sixteen he was taking notes in court.

Four years later, Charles was working as a newspaper reporter. At twenty-one he had his first humorous story published in *Monthly Magazine*. Stories began to pour out of him. He took the pen name Boz, which was what his little brother was called. These stories became a book titled *Sketches by Boz*.



As a paid author, he could now afford a silk top hat and handsome clothes. He could also think about marriage. Charles chose Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of a newspaper editor. She was not adept as a housewife, but she did bear ten children. Later, two of her sisters moved in with them to help take care of the family.

In a series of magazine episodes, Charles called on his experiences as a child of poverty to create his characters. These stories became a

book called *The Adventures of Oliver*

Twist. People throughout England wanted more of his writing, as did Americans. Because there were no copyright laws in the United States to protect British authors, publishers in the States printed English authors’ works without paying them. Charles

was disturbed that he received no payment for that writing. He decided to visit the United States.

Charles was welcomed with great enthusiasm by average Americans and even U.S. President John Tyler. John Quincy Adams, a former president, invited him to his home. But after six months of traveling throughout the States, and especially after observing slavery, he was ready to return home.

Back in England, he wrote *A Christmas Carol*, which became a classic and is often seen as a television movie during the holidays. His book, *The Tale of Two Cities*, is required reading in many literature classes. In his latter years he gave many public readings of his writings. He died in 1870 before he could complete his last novel.



Reading

1. Reread the biography of Charles Dickens and list three things you most admire about him. Compare your list with that of a classmate and discuss your reasons for the choices you both made.
2. List some personal characteristics Charles Dickens had that helped him become a well-known writer. Discuss your list with those of your classmates. Which of those characteristics do you have? Explain what you can do to develop your abilities.
3. Ebenezer Scrooge was a character in Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. Find his surname in a dictionary. What does his name tell you about the character?

Social Studies

1. There were no child labor laws in effect during Dickens's childhood that prevented children from working long hours in factories. Dickens's writing exposed this abuse and led to governmental reforms. Read in an encyclopedia or on the Internet how laws came into effect to keep children from working in situations that would harm them. Share with your classmates.
2. Of all the historical places to visit in London, England, which four would you like to visit? Make a list and compare it with that of a classmate. Discuss your preferences.
3. What river flows through the heart of London?

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Ebenezer Scrooge, from
A Christmas Carol

Emily Dickinson

1830–1886 • Poet

Emily Dickinson's grandfather, Samuel Fowler Dickinson, was a founder of Amherst College. His son, Edward, Emily's father, became a lawyer, prominent congressman, and treasurer of the college. At the age of nine, Emily became a student at Amherst Academy, a school for girls. Her studies at the academy consisted of anatomy, ancient history, arithmetic, astronomy, chemistry, Greek, logic, and grammar. These subjects were taught from a religious point of view.

Emily most enjoyed reading. Emily and her older brother, Austin, would smuggle books to their rooms and have "reading feasts." Emily and her friends would get together and have discussions about the books they were reading. Emily's favorite author was William Shakespeare, but she also became interested in other poets and authors, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Charlotte and Emily Brontë.

As Emily grew older, she and her sister, Lavinia, nicknamed Vinnie, had to take more and more responsibility for their mother and father. Vinnie helped Emily with the household chores so she could write her poems and letters. Emily wrote to various people to get their opinions on her poetry. One person she wrote to was Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who published an essay in the *Atlantic Monthly* titled a "Letter to a Young Contributor." Often, because of the vast volume of mail that poets sent to editors for publication consideration, many poems could not be used. However, the correspondence between Emily and Mr. Higginson would last for some time.

Then in 1866, Emily saw her poem published in the *Springfield Republican*. The first line of this

poem, which was about a snake, was "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass." Her sister-in-law, Susan Gilbert Dickinson, had submitted it without Emily's knowledge. It was given the title "The Snake." The few poems that were published in Emily's lifetime often were edited by the publishers to fit with what they thought would make the poems more readable.

In the twenty years before her death, Emily wrote more than a thousand poems. Later in her life, Emily began losing her eyesight and had to limit her reading and writing because of her blurred vision.

She became more and more reclusive and refused to leave her home, but she continued to write large quantities of poems. During one year, she wrote 366 poems.

Emily put many of the poems she wrote in small booklets she stitched together. Often she would write on the backs of recipes, in the margins of old newspapers, and even on wrapping paper. After her death from kidney disease on May 15, 1886, Vinnie found these writings in a locked chest. There were hundreds of poems and letters. She did not title the poems but others who published them gave her poems titles. The few poems that were published during her lifetime, perhaps ten, were printed without her permission.

Vinnie, with the aid of others, began putting the poems together so many people could share them. They were often hard to read because of Emily's handwriting and her uncommon punctuation. In 1955, they were finally bound together in a three-volume edition published by Harvard University Press.





Reading

1. Emily was interested in reading the works of her favorite authors: William Shakespeare, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Charlotte and Emily Brontë. Choose one or two of her favorite authors and read their poetry or other writing. Share with your classmates those portions that you most enjoy.
2. Do you have a favorite author? Write him or her a letter about a book you especially like that he or she has written. Your librarian can most likely get the address of the author or publisher for you. Tell the author what you enjoy most about his or her writing.
3. How would you define poetry? Share your definition with your classmates.
3. Find a portrait of Emily in a reference book or on the Internet and draw it on an 8½-by-11-inch sheet of paper in pencil or pastels. Copy one of her poems on another sheet. Then write a short poem about her. Put them in a notebook and keep them to show children that you may have in the future.

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Social Studies

1. Emily studied the following subjects as a student at Amherst Academy: anatomy, Greek, logic, arithmetic, chemistry, and grammar. How does her curriculum compare to the one you are taking? Discuss the difference with your classmates.
2. Organize a Biography Club with interested classmates. Share in your meetings biographies of fascinating people about whom you read. Discuss what you enjoy most about the people in the biographies.

Paul Laurence Dunbar

1872–1906 • Poet, Novelist

Paul Dunbar surprised his first-grade teacher in Dayton, Ohio. He could write his name! Paul told her his Ma had taught him. His mother, Matilda, a former slave, did more than that. She worked as a laundress for little pay and saw that Paul had school supplies, such as a slate and pencils, and that he had on a starched white shirt.

School was a delight to Paul. He loved to play with words. He enjoyed rhyming words like *bed* and *sled*. Math classes were another story: They were not a high point in his school day.

Paul's father, Joshua, was twenty years older than Matilda. As a former slave, he escaped to Canada through the Underground Railroad. When the Civil War broke out, Joshua returned to the United States and joined the Union Army's 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, which was made up of African-American soldiers led by white officers. His last years were spent in the Soldier's Retirement Home in Dayton, Ohio, near Matilda and Paul.

Paul was the only African American in his high school graduating class. His classmates voted him their class president and poet. He was on the debating team, editor of the school newspaper, and president of his high school literary club. In the fall of 1888, the *Dayton Herald* newspaper printed three of his poems.

Although Paul received no pay, the *Dayton Herald* continued to print his poems. If the editors liked them that much, he reasoned, they would hire him as a reporter. When he applied, he was told the newspaper's policy would not allow the hiring of "colored reporters." Paul was disgusted when he learned his skin color made

him unemployable there. Then he found this was the case for most jobs in the city.

After graduating from high school, the only job Paul could get was operating an elevator in a four-story building for four dollars a week. Still, it would help his mother. Paul kept his notebook handy and took notes on the people he met riding the elevator.

His former English teacher asked him to give the welcoming address to the Western Association of Writers meeting in Dayton. He gave the speech in poetry form and received enthusiastic applause. Then he ran back to his elevator—but as a poet.

Paul wrote two kinds of poems. One was in black dialect, or "plantation talk," as his mother would say. The other was in standard English, which he spoke flawlessly. One of his dialect poems was written this way:

"'bout de time dat night is fallin'," while he wrote a standard dialect poem in this fashion: "An angel, robed in spotless white. . . ." Paul's book *Majors and Minors*, containing poems written in both styles, received glowing reviews.

New York City became his home. His literary agent there also represented Mark Twain, Henry Ward Beecher, and Frederick Douglass. Paul met Alice Ruth Moore through a letter and learned she was a writer and teacher. After an extended correspondence, they met and married. Paul took a position at the Library of Congress, which assured him of financial stability. He was only thirty-four years old when he died of tuberculosis in Dayton, Ohio, in 1906, but in his short life, he had written fourteen volumes of poetry.





Reading

1. Paul wrote a poem about his late father containing this line: "Never again shall the manacles gall you. . . ." Write what you believe to be its meaning. Use a dictionary to get a better understanding of the words that are not clear to you.
2. You and a classmate each write a sentence telling what you like best about Paul Laurence Dunbar. Exchange your sentences and write why you agree or disagree.
3. Pretend you are riding the elevator with Paul Laurence Dunbar. What two questions would you ask him about his life? Exchange questions with a classmate and answer as you think Paul would.
4. Complete this statement: I enjoyed (or did not enjoy) the life of Paul Laurence Dunbar because. . . . Read and discuss your statement with a classmate.
4. What incident in the biography (or in another biography about Paul Laurence Dunbar) made you uneasy? Why? Discuss the event with your classmates.

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Social Studies

1. Why do you think Paul once wrote "but I dread applause"? Discuss with your classmates. How do you feel about applause for what you have done well?
2. What made Jonathan Dayton so significant to settlers in Ohio that they named a city after him? Read a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site for the answer.
3. Create a comic strip of three panels about an event in the life of Paul Laurence Dunbar. Discuss and compare them with those created by your classmates.



Robert Frost

1874–1963 • Poet

Robert Frost's early years were spent in San Francisco, California, where his father William worked as a newspaper reporter. William suffered from tuberculosis and drank heavily. Robert loved his adventurous father and at the same time feared him. His mother Isabelle comforted Robert and his younger sister Jeanie and tutored the children at home.

William Frost died at age thirty-four when Robert was eleven. Isabelle and the children moved to New England, near William's parents. Isabelle got a job teaching in Salem, New Hampshire, and Robert began school there but was less than enthusiastic about his studies. When he entered high school, a teacher used poetry to spark his interest. By the time Robert was ready to graduate, he was one of the top two in his class. The other student, Elinor White, enjoyed poetry also, much to Robert's delight.

Robert was set on being a poet and did not think college would help him much in that kind of endeavor. Nevertheless, he was accepted at Dartmouth College as a freshman in 1892. His grandfather happily paid his way. He didn't stay long, quitting to go home and help his mother deal with some bullies in her class.

Robert tried working at different jobs in factories and at a newspaper. Nothing interested him. One of Robert's poems was eventually accepted for publication, and he received fifteen dollars. He went to Elinor and proposed marriage, but she told him to wait until she got home during a break in classes.

Finally, Elinor said she would marry him. His mother started a private school and Robert

and Elinor became two of her teachers. They were married in one of the classrooms. A year later they had a son, Elliot. Robert did not find teaching elementary school very stimulating and decided to go back to college. He was accepted at Harvard and his grandfather paid his way again. A second baby, Lesley, was born, but their little boy Elliot died.

Robert worked on a farm his grandfather had bought. When his grandfather died, he left that farm to Robert. Now Robert had time to write

poetry, but he did not make much of an impact on the publishing world. Their family grew and Robert occasionally taught at a nearby school. Then on impulse, Robert and Elinor decided to sell the farm and move to England.

After arriving in England, Robert put together a collection of his poems in a book entitled *A Boy's Will*. Within three days it was accepted for publication. His second book, *North of Boston*, was even better received. Now

people in the United States knew about Robert Frost. World War I began and the family returned home, where he was a celebrity. His books of poetry were awarded the Pulitzer Prize in four different years. Robert continued to write, teach, and lecture through World War II.

President-elect John F. Kennedy asked Robert to read one of his poems at the presidential inauguration in 1961. At age eighty-five, Robert recited from memory "The Gift Outright," to the delight of millions of Americans. Robert Frost died two years later, on January 29, 1963. He was eighty-eight years old.





Reading

1. Read poems by Robert Frost. Find one that you particularly enjoy. Count the number of syllables in each of the first eight lines. What sort of pattern do you find? Discuss with a classmate what you found.
2. Compare and contrast the lives of Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson. Name four ways they are alike and four ways they are different. Discuss your views with another classmate.
3. Compose four newspaper headlines about Robert Frost from different times in his life. Exchange your headlines with those of a classmate and read his or her headlines aloud.
4. Complete the following sentence by filling in the blanks with your thoughts:
 _____ enjoyed _____
 because _____. Read your completed sentence to your classmates.
3. "A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom." Discuss with a classmate what you think Robert Frost meant when he wrote these words.

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Social Studies

1. Read "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. Draw a picture of yourself standing where two roads meet and signs telling where they lead. Which road "less traveled by" will you take? Where will it lead you? Discuss with your classmates or family the road you choose to take.
2. Robert Frost studied at Dartmouth and Harvard and taught and lectured at many other schools during his lifetime. Of all the colleges and universities in the United States, which two would you choose to attend? Why?



George Gershwin

1898–1937 • Composer

As a young boy on New York City's East Side, George Gershwin took pride in his "toughness." A permanent scar on his right eyebrow attested to one fight he was in. He and his friends were not interested in music.

One afternoon he and his friends skipped a music program to play ball. Ten-year-old George stopped in his tracks when he heard the strains of a violin float from the assembly room. Maxie Rosen was playing Dvorák's *Humoresque*. Later George walked through the rain to Max's home to talk to him about music. They became good friends.

George had an older brother named Ira. The boys' parents decided that Ira should take piano lessons. When the piano arrived, George sat down and began playing simple tunes on the keyboard. By the time he was thirteen, George convinced his parents that he, too, should have lessons.

The piano and George were meant for each other. At sixteen, George dropped out of high school and got a job as a "song plugger" with a music publisher. George played the publisher's music ten hours a day for singers and band leaders in hope they would sing or play selections before the public. If they did, then people might buy the music from the publishing company. This was excellent training for George.

A short while later another company hired him for \$35 a week. All George had to do was check in, study, and compose music. And George did. By the time he was twenty-one, he wrote a musical comedy, *La La Lucille*. He also composed a song titled *Swanee*, which sold more than two

million copies after Broadway star Al Jolson featured it in one of his shows.

On a trip to Boston by train, George became excited by the rhythm and sound of the train wheels as they rolled over the tracks. He had been asked by Paul Whiteman, the orchestra conductor called "the King of jazz," to blend jazz with serious music. This resulted in George's famous composition "Rhapsody in Blue." Paul Whiteman played the symphonic, jazz-style piece in public. Shortly after that, Whiteman

played George's *Concerto in F* in concert. George's music was in demand everywhere.

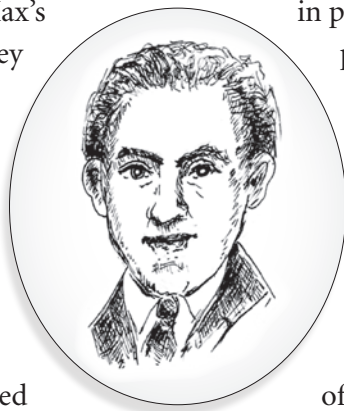
To get a break from work, George went to France. While walking the streets of Paris, he listened to the sounds of traffic, people, and other city noises. Out of this experience, he wrote *An*

American in Paris, an orchestral piece

about a tourist strolling Paris.

George and Ira won the Pulitzer Prize for a Broadway musical, *Of Thee I Sing*, in 1932. They completed the score for *Porgy and Bess* in 1935. George wanted it to be an American opera. Even though the critics did not say kind things about it, the opera became his masterpiece.

In early 1937, George began to have dizzy spells and terrific headaches. He blacked out momentarily at a piano concert. His doctors advised him to rest. When he went into a coma, the doctors realized he had a brain tumor. George Gershwin died in Beverly Hills, California, on July 11, 1937, at thirty-eight.





Reading

1. Play a tape or disk of "Rhapsody in Blue." Listen for sounds one might hear in the city or in the country. List the sounds you think you hear.
2. Sit quietly someplace in your neighborhood during the day or in the evening and list sounds you hear. Check off sounds that are similar to those in "Rhapsody in Blue."
3. If possible, put the sounds you hear on tape. If you have access to a piano or another instrument, match the tones you hear.

Social Studies

1. Read about Paris, France, in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Internet Web site. Make a list of the attractions there in the order you would enjoy visiting them. Compare your list with those of your classmates.
2. Read about New York City in an encyclopedia or on a Web site. Study a map of the city and find Broadway.

3. With three or four classmates, each of you scan a section of your daily newspaper for references to music. Circle those references with a felt-tipped pen. Which section of your newspaper has the most references to music?

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Martha Graham

1894–1991 • Modern Dancer

When two-year-old Martha Graham heard the organ play in church one Sunday morning, she could not help but wiggle with the sound as she sat on her mother's lap. Martha shifted into the aisle and danced to the melody. Her mother gasped, Martha said later, for she was "scandalized."

Martha's father was a physician who specialized in patients with mental disorders. Dr. Graham caught Martha telling an untruth. He explained that he knew when a person lied by how they moved parts of their bodies—an eyelid, a finger, perhaps the head. "Movement never lies," he said. Martha said this conversation became her first lesson in dance.

When Martha was in her teens, the family moved from outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Santa Barbara, California. Martha's younger sister, Mary, had asthma and their parents thought a warmer, milder climate would be better for her.

Toward the end of high school, Martha attended a dance performance by Ruth St. Denis in Los Angeles. Miss St. Denis, barefoot on stage and in a colorful costume, danced as the Hindu goddess Radha, among other roles. Asian religions inspired St. Denis to compose interesting dances. Martha was hooked! She would be a dancer! She promptly gave up sports in high school so she would not injure her legs.

After high school, Martha enrolled in the Cumnouk School of Expression in Los Angeles, where she received instruction in interpretive dance, theater, dramatic arts, voice, and academic instruction. Her father would have preferred she go to Vassar College in New York but wrote

that "she must keep her soul open." Her soul was open to dance. During the summer of 1914, after Martha's first year at Cumnouk, Dr. Graham died of heart disease.

Martha continued at Cumnouk but looked forward to studying with Ruth St. Denis at her School of Modern Dance called Denishawn, named for St. Denis and Ted Shawn. At twenty-two, Martha became their oldest student. Ted Shawn took a special interest in Martha and created a



dance, *Xochital*, about an Aztec maiden. Martha put all her emotion into the dance. Sometimes her partners were bleeding as they left the stage. Dance critics used words like *electrifying* and *wild* to describe these performances. Modern dance, or contemporary dance, as it was also called, let Martha Graham explore and create. There was little emphasis on costumes and scenery but stress on gesture, forceful movements, such as falls to the floor, and curt emotions.

By 1927, Martha, now on her own, created *Revolt*, *Heretic*, and *Vision of the Apocalypse*. Martha also created works about the poet Emily Dickinson. In her long career, she choreographed more than 180 works.

Martha retired from performing in 1969 at age seventy-five but continued to choreograph (create or compose) dances. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1976 and honorary degrees from Harvard and Yale. In all, she received more than forty honors and awards from around the world. After a fifty-five-day tour in the Far East with a modern dance troupe, she contracted pneumonia and died of complications a few weeks before her ninety-seventh birthday.



Reading

1. List five words that describe Martha Graham. Compare your list with those of a classmate.
2. Martha Graham remembered her father's words of wisdom. What words of wisdom would you hope to give your future children? Make a list and compare them with those of your classmates.
3. Draw a picture of Martha Graham in a dancer's pose. Add a caption that would be a good title for her biography.
4. Of all the honors Martha Graham received, which do you think was most important to her? (Other biographies about her give a more detailed list than in this shortened version.)

Social Studies

1. Plan a school for dancers. Write a page describing the school. What ages are the students who will attend? Where is it located? What are its educational goals?
2. Research the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Who is eligible to receive this award? When was it first awarded?
3. Compare and contrast the lives of Anna Pavlova and Martha Graham in terms of their childhoods, adult experiences, and dance styles. Discuss your information with your classmates.

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Virginia Hamilton

1936–2002 • Writer

Virginia Hamilton was born in Yellow Springs, a village in southwestern Ohio, the fifth child of James and Etta Belle. Virginia, named for the state of Virginia, found the rich farming area a wonderful place to grow up.

James worked as a food service manager at Antioch College. He and Etta Bell raised vegetables, chickens, and pigs on the farm where they lived. James was also a classical mandolinist, but because he was black, he could not join the musicians' union and play in concert halls. So he performed in other places—clubs, radio stations, and dance halls. He and Etta Bell delighted Virginia with their stories. One was how Etta Bell's father had escaped from slavery.

When Virginia was seven, she began writing stories. In sixth grade she wrote a novel and later wrote a play that her classmates presented. Virginia was anxious to go to college but the family had no money. Then one evening one of her high school teachers called to tell her that she had been granted a five-year college scholarship to Antioch College. The college was the first in the United States to admit both men and women as equals.

By 1956, Virginia transferred to The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. She had decided she needed to be on her own and learn more about life. Columbus was about an hour's drive from Yellow Springs, so if she were homesick, she could easily visit her family.

Virginia had three dreams for her life. She dreamed of going to New York City, which she did after graduating from Ohio State. She enrolled

in the New School of Social Research, where she took a class on writing novels. During this time, she met Arnold Adoff, a poet and writer. A year and a half later, they married.

Her second dream was to go to Spain. Arnold took her there and then to Africa. In college Virginia had kept a card file of her writing ideas. Now she continued filing her ideas and thoughts in Africa. Much of what she wrote would help her with her first book.



Her last dream was to be a published writer. Virginia wrote a short story while she was living in New York.

One day an editor called and wanted to know if Virginia could rewrite a short story that her agent had submitted. However, it would have to be rewritten as a book.

Virginia said, "I would love to rewrite it." *Zeely* became the American Library

Association Notable book of 1967. Almost every year after that, her books received awards.

Virginia and Arnold and their children soon settled in Yellow Springs. There Virginia wrote many books, including *The House of Dies Drear*, about the Underground Railroad. In 1968 it won the Edgar Allan Poe Award for best juvenile mystery. *The Planet of Junior Brown*, published in 1971, was about a 262-pound musical prodigy. *M.C. Higgins, the Great* (1974) won the Newbery Medal, The Boston Globe/Horn Book Award, and the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award. In 1992, Virginia won the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award for writing, along with many other awards. On February 19, 2002, Virginia died of cancer in Dayton, Ohio.



Reading

1. Virginia Hamilton once said, "I am descended from dirt farmers, eccentric individuals who never failed to see the humor in a monotonous Ohio landscape." What does this quote tell you about Virginia's life in southwestern Ohio?
2. Virginia kept a card file with information she heard or read that might be used in her writing. These thoughts became suggestions that later came back as part of her stories, novels, and nonfiction books. With a classmate, discuss what you might put on individual cards that would help you create future writing projects.
3. Read a book by Virginia. Report how the story made you feel.
4. Ask your librarian to direct you to information about the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award for writing. Virginia won this award in 1992. Tell your classmates what you learned about the award.
3. Compare and contrast the life of Virginia Hamilton with that of Madeline L'Engle. (See her biography later in this book.) Discuss your thoughts with your classmates.
4. Virginia dreamed of living in New York City, visiting Spain, and becoming a published writer. What are three dreams you want fulfilled in your life? What would you need to do to fulfill them? Discuss them with a friend or your parents.

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- Marinelli, Deborah A. *Virginia Hamilton*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2003.
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Social Studies

1. What large city lies west of Yellow Springs, Ohio? Find it on a map of Ohio.
2. Read about Africa in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site. Choose one country to study. On a 3-by-5-inch card, write what you think are the most interesting thoughts and facts about the country and tell your classmates what you learned.



Jim Henson

1936–1990 • Muppeteer, Producer

As James “Jim” Henson grew up, he became very interested in radio. He enjoyed listening to Edgar Bergen, a ventriloquist, and his dummy, Charlie McCarthy. Then, in seventh grade, Jim pestered his parents until they bought a television set. He watched Fran Allison and her hand-held puppets in the show *Kukla, Fran, and Ollie*. In high school, he combined his interest in art with that of the puppet club. When he was seventeen, the local TV station needed a puppeteer for a children’s show. He designed a puppet with a movable mouth. Jim was hired.

That fall, Jim took classes in acting, puppetry, and stagecraft at the University of Maryland. Even though he was just a college freshman, he was approached by a TV station about doing short, late-night puppet skits. A classmate, Jane Nebel, agreed to help him. She was good at building puppets and had a keen sense of humor.

The program they created in 1955, “Sam and Friends,” had a puppet they called Kermit. It was constructed from a green coat Jim’s mother no longer wore. A Ping-Pong ball, cut in half, became the eyes. More than one puppeteer was needed to work the head and arms of a puppet. Henson’s puppets were called “Muppets” because they were part marionettes and part puppets. Not long after, “The Muppets” were on Steve Allen’s *Tonight Show* in New York City.

Jim and Jane created a company called “Muppets, Inc.” and made TV commercials with their Muppets. In 1958, Jim graduated from college, and “Sam and Friends” won an Emmy Award for Best Local Entertainment. He and Jane married in 1959.



Jim brought Frank Oz into Muppets, Inc. Oz became the voice of Miss Piggy and Jim was Kermit. By the end of the 1960s, they were creating characters for *Sesame Street*: Bert and Ernie, Big Bird (who was seven feet tall), Cookie Monster, and Oscar the Grouch. The program was designed for children of all economic levels, including their parents. Its first, but not last award, came in 1970: The George Foster Peabody Award for Meritorious Service in Broadcasting.

In the mid-1970s, Jim and his company went to England to tape an all-new series, *The Muppet Show*.

In the show were Kermit, Miss Piggy, the Great Gonzo, and Fozzie Bear. Frank Oz’s character, Miss Piggy, came “alive” during the taping. (The puppeteers did not always follow a script but improvised their parts.)

In more than 100 countries, 235 million people saw *The Muppet Show*. Then Jim Henson took the Muppets to the next level: They became stars in their own movies: *The Muppet Movie*, *The Great Muppet Caper*, and *The Muppets Take Manhattan*.

In early 1990 Jim Henson decided to sell his company to the Walt Disney Company so he could do more creative activities and have less involvement in the business end of the work. The deal would allow Jim to work with the Disney Company on creative projects. But a short time after the sale, Jim became ill with a sore throat. He died suddenly of pneumonia on May 16, 1990, at the age of fifty-three. Five days later 5,000 people celebrated his life in New York City.



Reading

1. Write a poem of your choosing about one of the following Muppet characters: Fozzie Bear; Oscar the Grouch; Miss Piggy; Snuffleupagus; Kermit; Big Bird; Gonzo; Bert; or Cookie Monster. Share it with a younger brother, sister, or friend.
2. What were the three most interesting sentences you read in the biography about Jim Henson? Read them aloud to your classmates in your order of importance and explain your reasons for choosing these sentences.
3. Write a poem of four lines about one of Jim Henson's puppets. Rhyme lines 1 and 3, and lines 2 and 4.
4. What were three outstanding personality characteristics of Jim Henson as a person and Puppeteer? Share your thoughts about him with your classmates.

Social Studies

1. Draw a pencil sketch of your favorite Muppet on a sheet of 8½-by-11-inch paper. Below your sketch, write a sentence that you want the Muppet to say.
2. Read about pneumonia in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site. Report to your class what you learned.
3. Ask classmates who watched *Sesame Street* as children what they enjoyed most about the program.
4. What TV commercial is most humorous to you at this time? Compare your choice with those of your friends.

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Statue commemorating Jim Henson on the University of Maryland campus

Scott Joplin

1868–1917 • Pianist, Composer

Giles and Florence Joplin had six children. They lived in Texarkana, Texas. Giles, a former slave, laid track for the railroad and his wife, Florence, worked as a maid for white families. They were a poor black family who enjoyed playing musical instruments at home with their children. Giles played the violin and taught the boys how to play. Florence sang and played the banjo, and the girls sang. Little Scott learned to play the guitar and bugle on his own before he reached the age of seven. That same year, he learned to play a neighbor's piano. While his mother cleaned houses for white families, he practiced on their pianos—with permission, of course.

Florence was able to buy a second-hand piano for him to practice on at home. Giles was proud of him, but he felt Scott could not make a living playing the piano. When Scott was thirteen, Florence introduced him to J. C. Johnson, who recognized Scott's musical talents. He gave Scott piano lessons free of charge. Johnson, also known as "The Professor," introduced Scott to the classical masters: Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart. Scott was later able to blend their works into church hymns, folk songs, and the marches of John Philip Sousa.

With two brothers and friends, Scott created a quintet. They played for dances and parties. At age twenty, Scott left home and set out on his own. His mother had died and his father wanted him to just get a job. Scott knew music was his job.

Scott played the piano in saloons, gambling halls, churches, and social clubs. He heard other musicians play what became known as "ragtime"

music: the right hand played syncopated (the shift of accent to weak notes) melodies while the left hand played stomping (march-like) rhythms. People loved dancing to ragtime and Scott's music. He spent a few years playing in St. Louis and mastering his "rag" style of playing.

He sold "Original Rag," his first ragtime piece, in 1899. This was followed by "Maple Leaf Rag." He received fifty dollars and a one-cent royalty for each copy sold. Fortunately for Scott, thousands were sold.



Scott became known as the "Ragtime Kid." In 1902, he composed a piece called "The Entertainer." In 1911, Scott Joplin wrote a three-act opera titled *Treemonisha*. Its theme was education. Scott believed it was the best way for black Americans to make progress as a people. The opera was not ragtime, but it was American popular music and, in a sense, it was Scott's autobiography. He also wrote the opera as a tribute to his mother. The critics ignored the opera. It was not received well by the public. *Treemonisha* closed quickly. This devastated Scott. The next year he was committed to a mental hospital, where he died.

But Scott was not forgotten. "The Entertainer" is known today because it was the theme song of a 1973 movie, *The Sting*. *The Sting* won seven Academy Awards, including an award for best soundtrack. In addition, *Treemonisha* became a Broadway hit in October 1975, fifty-eight years after Scott's death. In his life Scott had published sixty-six musical compositions along with two operas, but many of his unpublished compositions are now lost.



Reading

1. The following words are in the biography of Scott Joplin: *opera*, *quintet*, *sting*, *theme*, and *syncopated*. List them and write their specific meanings, in terms of their use in this biography. How many did you understand before finding them in the dictionary?
2. After reading the biography of Scott Joplin (or a book about him from your library), write for five minutes as quickly as you can without stopping or putting down your pencil or pen. Read what you wrote to another classmate and have him or her read to you. What experiences were the same? Different? Discuss this experience with each other.
3. List the names of three relatives who would enjoy Scott Joplin's biography. Tell your classmates why you chose each person. Read the biography to at least one of them.
4. Create a title for Scott Joplin's biography. Read it to your classmates and tell why you chose those words.
4. The player piano became popular in the United States during Scott Joplin's life. Read about it in an encyclopedia or Web site and tell your classmates what you learned.

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Social Studies

1. Ask the music teacher in your school or another musician you know to demonstrate the technique of syncopation on an instrument.
2. Role-play scenes from the life of Scott Joplin with another student. Present the scenes to your classmates.
3. If you could change one aspect of Scott Joplin's life, what would it be? Why?



Cover of sheet music for "Maple Leaf Rag," composed by Scott Joplin

Frida Kahlo

1907–1954 • Painter

On July 6, 1907, Frida Kahlo was born in Coyoacán, a suburb of Mexico City. Her full name was Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón. Her father, Guillermo, often took young Frida to a park where he painted. Frida would find plants and insects and study them. Her mother, Matilde, taught Frida to cook, sew, and embroider.

When Frida was six, she contracted polio, which left her right leg thin and weak. The disease kept her home for nine months. To pass the time, Frida created in her mind an imaginary friend. Later in life, she painted a picture of them holding hands, *The Two Fridas* (1939). Her father, who had epilepsy, encouraged Frida's involvement in physical activities to strengthen her leg: swimming, skating, bicycling, and playing ball. She hid her leg from view with long, colorful peasant-style dresses.

In 1925, Frida and her boyfriend, Gómez, were in a bus, which collided with a streetcar (trolley). A metal armrest jammed into her stomach. A passerby pulled it out of her. Gómez carried her carefully across the street and laid her down. When Frida got to the hospital, doctors found her spine broken in three places, her collarbone and two ribs broken, her right leg broken in eleven places, her right foot broken, and her pelvis smashed. She was not expected to survive. But tough little Frida *did* survive.

Frida could not sit up in bed because of the plaster cast she had around her body. Her mother had a carpenter devise an easel so she could paint while lying on her back. Her father gave her

his box of oil paints to use. Her parents hung a mirror in her room so she could draw pictures of herself. Frida was in the hospital for three months.

In 1928, Frida decided to show the noted Mexican muralist, Diego Rivera, three of her paintings. He was impressed, so she invited him to her home to see her other paintings. Soon he was coming to the Kahlos' more often, but not to evaluate Frida's painting skill. They had fallen in love. Frida's parents were not excited about Diego.

He was twenty years older than Frida, six feet tall, three hundred pounds, and married twice before. Frida was tiny, weighing only ninety-eight pounds. Regardless, Frida and Diego married.

By 1930, the couple set out on a tour of the United States. They traveled to cities where Diego had been commissioned to paint, including San Francisco, California; Detroit,

Michigan; and New York City. After three years, the couple returned to Mexico.

Frida and Diego's marriage was stormy, with the couple divorcing and then remarrying. Frida taught in an art school, but her health deteriorated, so the students came to her home for instruction. In 1954, she died of pneumonia in the little house where she was born.

Frida created more than 200 paintings: self-portraits, portraits of others, landscapes, and still lifes. They now hang in museums and galleries around the world. The house where she was born and later died is now a museum celebrating her life.





Reading

1. Choose a writing companion. Each of you write what you think was the most difficult problem Frida had to face. Exchange your sentences and share your answers.
2. Share with a classmate what you most admire about Frida Kahlo.
3. Frida Kahlo said, "I am not sick. I am broken, but I am happy to be alive as long as I can paint." What does this tell you about her attitude toward life? Discuss this sentence with your classmates.
4. Write an essay or poem about the pluses and minuses of being bedridden. Read it to your classmates.

Social Studies

1. Find Mexico City in an encyclopedia, reference book, or Web site. Compare and contrast it with a large city in the United States. In what ways are they alike and different? Share with your classmates what you learned.
2. Guillermo Kahlo suffered from epilepsy and his daughter, Frida, had poliomyelitis. With a classmate, research these two diseases and report to your class what you learned.
3. Trace on a globe the trip Frida and Diego took from Mexico City to San Francisco, Detroit, and New York City and back to Mexico City.
4. From a book in your school or public library, select a painting by Frida Kahlo. Study it and tell your classmates what you think she is describing.

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Madeleine L'Engle

born 1918 • Writer, Poet

As a child, Madeleine Camp spent much of her time reading. At five, she wrote her first story. A year later she started school and began playing the piano. At home, her parents often invited actors, writers, and musician friends to their New York apartment on Sunday evenings. Madeleine hid in the room behind the sofa listening to the music. Her parents never realized she was there.

When she was eight, Madeleine began keeping a journal. Her father would take her to opera matinees and she would write in her journal about what she saw and heard. She also wrote about such things as sad endings in stories, which bothered her to the point that she cried. When the family toured Europe, she continued her journal writing, describing what she saw. Her journals became material for stories and poems.

Madeleine's teachers did not think she was bright because she was so quiet. In sixth grade, she entered a poem in the school's poetry contest. Madeleine's poem won first prize! Her teacher assumed she copied it. When her mother found out what happened, she took Madeleine's stories and poems to school and proved she had written the poem. That fall her parents enrolled Madeleine in a private school where she was encouraged to write all she wanted. Madeleine's confidence grew.

The family moved to South Carolina. Madeleine continued to write, and she became the high school literary magazine editor. Despite all of her words, however, when her father died, all she could write in her journal was, "Father died."

Madeleine was accepted to an all-girl Ivy League school, Smith College, in Massachusetts,

where she majored in English. A poem she wrote won \$2,500 in prize money. After college, she moved to Greenwich Village in New York City to act and write. She decided to use a pen name, Madeleine L'Engle, and dropped Camp.

Her first book, *The Small Rain*, was published by Vanguard Press in 1945. Other books and magazine articles, as well as acting parts, followed.

She met Hugh Franklin in a play called *The Cherry Orchard*. He had the male lead and she had a small part as a clumsy maid. Two years later when they were on tour in a play called *The Joyous Season*, they married.

Madeleine continued to write. During this time, she and Hugh had children and bought a 200-year-old farmhouse in Connecticut. In 1959, Madeleine completed *A Wrinkle in Time*. More than thirty

publishers rejected the book. Discouraged,

Madeleine asked her agent to send the manuscript back to her. At Madeleine's Christmas party that year, a friend suggested she take it to John Farrar. She did. He liked the book and published it, and the book later won the Newbery Medal.

Writing continued to be Madeleine's passion. For months she read countless scientific books and journals for background material for her book *A Ring of Endless Light*. Hugh helped her revise some of her books "for the better," she said. Together they were a wonderful combination. In the early 1980s they went on a goodwill tour of Egypt for the United States Information Agency, and in 1986 they toured China for the Agency. In September of that year, Hugh passed away after a bout with cancer. They had been married forty years.





Reading

1. What three sentences in Madeleine's biography are most important to you in understanding her as a writer? Why? Compare your set of sentences with those of your classmates.
2. With a classmate, compose a poem about Madeleine L'Engle's life as a child and/or as a teenager. Give it a title.
3. Read *A Wrinkle in Time* and discuss, with a classmate who also read it, what you thought of it.
4. Compare your favorite author with Madeleine L'Engle. In what three ways are they alike? How are they different?

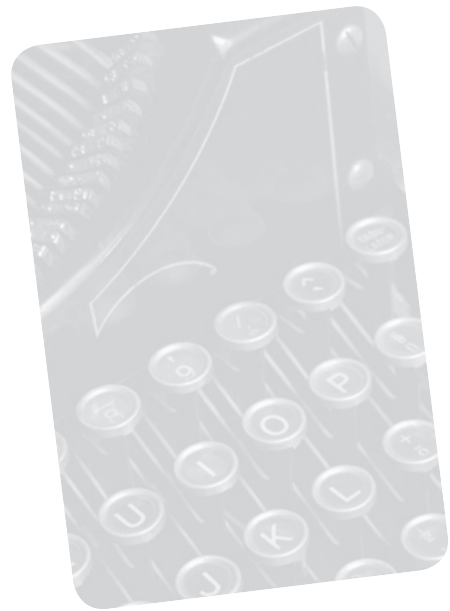
Social Studies

1. How did Madeleine's childhood prepare her for a career as a writer? Discuss your opinions with those of your classmates.
2. Assume you are in college and won a prize of \$2,500 for a poem you had created. How would you use the award?
3. Read about the Newbery Award in a reference book. Discuss what you learned with your class.
4. Madeleine L'Engle's counsel to writers, both old and young alike, is that writing in a journal, as well as practicing the piano, requires a person to keep at it daily. If you enjoy writing, begin a journal today and promise yourself to write something you think about or experience every day for a month.

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C. S. Lewis

1898–1963 • Writer

Clive Staples Lewis loved to read. He gained his love of reading and knowledge from his mother Flora, who had a degree in mathematics and logic. Before he was seven years old, Flora taught him French and Latin. His father Albert practiced law in Belfast, Ireland, where the family lived. Lewis's father was strict with him and his brother Warren, who was three years older than Clive. They became close friends as they grew older.

Flora died of cancer in the summer of 1908. Her death caused a change in Albert. He felt he could not raise his two boys by himself, so he sent Warren and Clive (who now preferred to be called Jack) to private schools in England. By 1915, Lewis was admitted to Oxford University. He could translate the Greek poets and had mastered French, German, and Italian.

Lewis's education was interrupted by World War I. In 1917, he fought the war in the trenches in France as a second lieutenant. Sixty German soldiers surrendered to him there. A few weeks later, a misdirected shell from the English artillery fell near him, killed a friend, and wounded Lewis in the arm, face, and leg. Shortly thereafter, a shell fragment was found lodged in his chest and stayed there the rest of his life. As he recuperated, Lewis completed a book of poetry titled *Spirits in Bondage*.

Back in England, Lewis completed his education. He taught medieval literature at Oxford University for twenty-nine years (1925 to 1954). Although he was popular with students, he was considered a bit unorthodox. He began his lectures in the hallway as he entered his

classroom, then stopped promptly at the end of the class session and left. During this time, Lewis became good friends with a colleague who was an inspiration to him, J. R. R. Tolkien.

By 1933, he wrote a book called *The Pilgrim's Regress*, which was a pun (a play on words) on John Bunyan's classic *Pilgrim's Progress*. By 1938, *Out of the Silent Planet*, Lewis's science-fiction novel, was published. It became part of a trilogy. In this book three scientists traveled to Mars and found strange creatures there.



In the 1950s Lewis began publishing his children's series *The Seven Chronicles of Narnia*. The series began with *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, which depicts the conflict between good and evil. These books combine moral values with myth and fantasy.

Lewis also wrote more scholarly works, such as his *English History in The Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (1954). Because some of his books, such as *Mere Christianity* and *The Screwtape Letters*, sold well to the general public, university academics did not consider them scholarly, so Lewis was not promoted in university rank. He then took a teaching position at Cambridge University at a higher rank. There he taught medieval literature and Renaissance literature from 1954 to 1963.

Lewis married late in life, in 1956. His last book, published in 1961, was a short volume, *A Grief Observed*, which dealt with the loss of his wife Joy. C. S. Lewis died on November 22, 1963, just a few days before his sixty-fourth birthday, and, coincidentally, on the same day that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.



Reading

1. What do you consider the most important paragraph in the biography of C. S. Lewis? Discuss your choice with a family member or a classmate.
2. What were the two most difficult words you found in C. S. Lewis's biography? Write out the words and their dictionary definitions. Compare them with those of your classmates.
3. If C. S. Lewis were your older brother, what would you do together? Exchange your answers with your classmates.

Social Studies

1. Who do you know who is most like C. S. Lewis? What traits does that person have that are similar to Lewis's?
2. What feelings did you experience when you read the biography of C. S. Lewis? Compare what you felt with those of a classmate.
3. After reading C. S. Lewis's biography and J. R. R. Tolkien's biography, determine how they are alike. How are they different?
4. What kind of person was C. S. Lewis? Would you like him as a friend or as a teacher? Why or why not?

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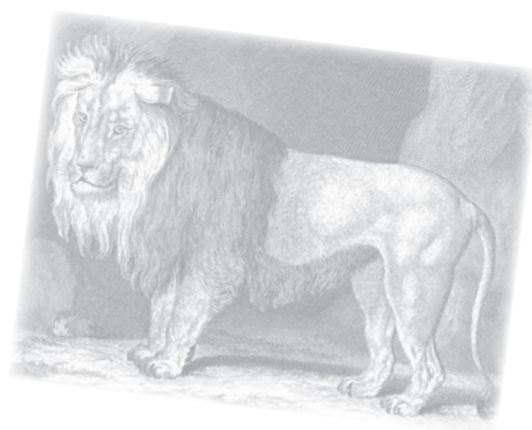
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Maya Ying Lin

born 1959 • Architect, Sculptor

Maya was born in Athens, Ohio, to Henry and Julia Lin. Henry and Julia had both left China in 1949. At that time the two did not know each other. Henry became a professor at Ohio University in Athens. They met, married, and had two children. Henry became the university's dean of fine arts and Julia, a poet, became professor of Oriental literature and English. Maya's older brother Tan became a poet, like his mother.

Maya, an avid reader, enjoyed Tolkien's books, especially *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. But she also enjoyed ceramics (her father's specialty) and designing jewelry. Maya was the co-valedictorian of her high school graduating class.

After she enrolled at Yale University in 1977, Maya developed an interest in architecture. She spent her junior year in Europe and found cemetery architecture of interest. On her return to Yale, she took a class in funerary architecture. Her coursework that year coincided with a nationwide competition to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Many well-known architects from the United States entered the contest. Maya, a senior in college, was one of the 1,420 entrants.

To prepare for the contest, Maya went to Washington to see the location for the memorial. As she walked the site's peaceful grounds, she said the design "sort of popped into my head." Maya went to work on her model for the committee. She proposed two black granite walls joining at a "V"-like angle at its center. The names of more than 58,000 U.S. soldiers who died in the conflict were to be carved in the granite.

Maya's design won. She insisted the names appear in sequence according to the time of death

during the war. Many thousands of people visit the memorial to search for and honor the sacrifice of a family member or friend.

In 1986, Maya obtained her master's degree in architecture and the next year she was awarded an honorary doctor of fine arts from Yale University. In 1988, she received the Presidential Design Award for the memorial. Because of criticism of the design, Maya determined not to do another memorial. She just wanted to be an architect and sculptor.



Then in 1989, the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, asked Maya to create a memorial honoring those who lost their lives in the fight for equal rights. She could not turn down the request.

Maya spent weeks studying the civil rights movement. While reading the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., she came across a phrase from the biblical

Book of Amos: "... we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Water, she decided, would be part of the memorial design.

Maya's design is a round, table-like granite form, twelve feet in diameter, with fifty-three names and events from the civil rights era inscribed in chronological order. Behind the table is a nine-foot-high wall with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s quote from his speeches. From the center of the table, water flows continually and slowly over the names and events, allowing those who pass by to pause and actually touch the words engraved there.

Maya Ying Lin's artistry appears in several U.S. cities: New York; Los Angeles; San Francisco; and Columbus, Ohio. She teaches at various universities and lectures in museums and educational institutions.



Reading

1. Make a list of five adjectives that best describe Maya Ying Lin. Compare and discuss your list with those of your classmates.
2. Prepare two questions you would ask Maya concerning her work. Discuss how you think she might answer your questions.
3. List the names of three friends or relatives who have not read the biography of Maya Lin. Read the biography to them and discuss her life.
4. Draw a picture of Maya Lin at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall and write a caption underneath.

Social Studies

1. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks were involved in the civil rights movement. Read a biography of each and report what you learned to your classmates.
2. Maya Lin was young when she began creating architectural designs. What does that tell you about her ability to think creatively? With your classmates, discuss what each of you do that is creative.
3. Many people died in the struggle over Vietnam. Read in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site about the country and share five facts with your classmates.
4. Compare and contrast the lives of Maya Ying Lin and Frank Lloyd Wright. (See his biography later in this book.) Discuss what you learned with a classmate or parents.

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Close-up of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, designed by Maya Ying Lin

Jack London

1876–1916 • Writer

Jack London began life as John Griffith Chaney. His mother, Flora, was pregnant with Jack when Jack's father left her. After Jack's birth, Flora married John London, a farmer. The nine-month-old boy became Jack London. Jack was twenty before he learned that John was not his biological father.

The family lived in the San Francisco Bay area of California, and there was little money. At ten, Jack helped by selling and delivering newspapers in Oakland, California. He also set up pins in a bowling alley. Then he discovered the public library. Later, he wrote that he read sitting down, walking to and from school, and at recess. He even took books to bed.

Jack's formal schooling ended when he finished grammar school in his early teens. When he was fourteen, he worked in a fish cannery from morning till night at ten cents an hour. He turned over his wages to his mother. At sixteen, Jack became an "oyster pirate" when he stole oysters during the night from the traps of commercial fishing companies and then sold the oysters to restaurants and saloons. At seventeen, he became a seaman and helped the crew of the *Sophia Sutherland* catch seals along the coasts of Japan and Manchuria. On this trip Jack experienced a typhoon and he had to take over the wheel of the ship for a short time. He spent eight months at sea. Upon his return, Jack entered a writing contest sponsored by the *San Francisco Morning Call*. His 2,000-word essay was titled "The Story of a Typhoon off the Coast of Japan." He won twenty-five dollars for his first published story.

When Jack was eighteen, he traveled across the United States as a hobo, catching rides

illegally on trains. He kept a record of the trip in a notebook. He was arrested for vagrancy and spent a month in jail. These experiences found their way into his writing.

In December 1894, Jack returned to Oakland to attend Oakland High School. He was much older and more experienced than his classmates. Because he wanted to go to college, he later dropped out of high school and studied for the entrance exam to the University of California at Berkeley. He passed but spent only one semester there.



When gold was discovered in the Klondike River region of the Canadian Yukon, Jack traveled there. The trip gave him experiences that he put into short stories and his book *The Call of the Wild* (1903). The novel has been translated into sixty-eight languages and is still in print.

In 1904, Jack continued his travels and took time to write a novel, *The Sea Wolf*. By 1905, after an unsuccessful marriage, Jack married Charmian Kittredge. They began a cruise around the world in a ship they constructed. But before they were halfway through their trip, Jack was hospitalized in Sydney, Australia, and they returned home. That same year he wrote a somewhat autobiographical novel, titled *Martin Eden* (1909).

In 1912, Jack and Charmian sailed from Baltimore, Maryland, around Cape Horn, to Seattle, Washington, gathering background material for a sea novel. Two years later, he covered the Mexican Revolution for *Collier's* magazine.

Jack London died on November 22, 1916. Although he was only forty, he had written fifty books and hundreds of articles and short stories.



Reading

1. Pretend Jack London just came into your classroom. Write three questions you would ask him. Compare your list with those of your classmates.
2. After reading the biography of Jack London, what impression did you get about him as a person? Write your impression on a sheet of paper and compare it with those of your classmates.
3. Jack London set a daily goal for writing one thousand words about his short stories, articles, and books. What realistic goal could you set for yourself as a writer? Fifty? One hundred? Try writing a certain number of words on any topic you find interesting and meet that challenge for the next ten days. With your family and classmates, discuss what you learned about yourself and your writing because of this experience.
4. One writer wrote that Jack London's brain was "like a dry sponge." Write what you think he meant and compare your answer with that of another classmate.
2. If you could sail around the world, starting at San Francisco, and returning to New York City, what ten places would you probably visit? Use a map or globe to trace your route. Compare your stops with those of your classmates.
3. On a map of Alaska, trace with your finger along the Yukon River from the Bering Sea to the Yukon Territory in Canada. Show a classmate where the river flows.
4. In an encyclopedia or on the Internet, read about oysters and tell your classmates five interesting facts you learned.

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Social Studies

1. Jack London died at forty years of age. His death was caused, mainly, by poor choices in his early years concerning alcohol and cigarettes. What more do you think he might have accomplished if he had made healthier choices?

Yo-Yo Ma

born 1955 • Cellist

Yo-Yo Ma was born in Paris, France, to Chinese parents. He spent his early childhood there. His father, Hiao-Tsuin Ma, was a professor of music who specialized in composition. His mother Marina was a mezzo-soprano singer from Hong Kong. They had two children.

Yo-Yo is two years older than his sister Yeou-Cheng. Yeou-Cheng played the violin but her special interest was medicine. She became a pediatrician. Yo-Yo's father taught him to play the piano and violin. When he was four, he asked for a larger instrument: the cello.

Hiao-Tsuin used short lessons to teach his children. Each day they were to memorize two measures from a famous composer's work. One composer was Johann Sebastian Bach. After a few days of this thorough study, the music began to make sense.

By the time he was five, Yo-Yo's talent emerged and he knew three Bach compositions from memory. The University of Paris became the first place Yo-Yo Ma gave a public recital. He played the piano and a small cello for his audience.

In 1962, the family went to New York City to meet Hiao-Tsuin's brother, who had immigrated to the United States. Hiao-Tsuin and his family decided to stay in New York City.

In 1963, Leonard Bernstein asked Yo-Yo and Yeou-Cheng to participate in the "American Pageant of the Arts" in Washington, D.C., along with other children. The event was a television fund-raising benefit program for the Kennedy Center. Yo-Yo drew much international attention at the time. Two years later, at age nine, he was enrolled in the Juilliard School of Music.

Yo-Yo was fifteen when he graduated from high school. He enrolled at Columbia University and continued taking private lessons with former teachers. Yo-Yo next went to Harvard to study anthropology, history, literature, and the natural sciences. He wanted to be a well-rounded individual along with his natural ability in music. His father encouraged him to stay in school and limit his concerts around the world to one a month. It was not unusual for Yo-Yo

to fly to large cities between exams and classes to be a guest soloist with well-known orchestras.

At Harvard, Yo-Yo met Jill Hornor. By 1977, he proposed marriage to her and she said yes. They have two children, Nicholas and Emily. Yo-Yo graduated from Harvard but remained on campus as artist-in-residence for about three years. At age twenty-four, Yo-Yo had an

operation for scoliosis, which is curvature of the spine. He realized that if the operation was not successful, he might not be able to play professionally again. Fortunately, the operation was a success. He even gained two inches in height!

This musician has many credits in his favor: a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; more than fifty recording albums; guest appearances with the Philadelphia Symphony, Israeli Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and San Francisco Symphony; soloist at a United Nations Day Concert; and an album titled *Yo-Yo Ma Inspired by Bach*, which was the basis for a six-part television series that aired on the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). In 1991 Harvard University awarded him an honorary doctorate.





Reading

1. In Chinese *Yo* translates as “friend” or “friendship.” Some English names have obvious meanings: Apple, Baker, and Miller. Ask your parents what your name means and from what language it evolved. Discuss what you learned with your classmates.
2. Study the word *pediatrics* and *pediatrician* in a dictionary and encyclopedia. Tell your classmates what you learned.
3. With your teacher and classmates, discuss how you might apply the method of “learning two measures of music thoroughly” with the subjects you take in your classes.
4. Draw a picture of Yo-Yo Ma playing his cello. Write a caption that tells what musical composition he is playing.
4. Listen to a recording of Yo-Yo Ma playing the cello. Close your eyes and write what you think as you listen. Discuss the experience with a classmate who did the same activity.

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Social Studies

1. Make a list of your accomplishments, such as speaking, walking, singing, reading, and so on. Discuss your list with your classmates. Then make a list of what you hope to accomplish in the future.
2. If Yo-Yo Ma could come and visit you, where would you take him? To your home? To places that interest you? What would he see and hear that would interest him?
3. Does Yo-Yo Ma, as a young person, remind you of anyone you know or have heard about? How are the two alike? Different?



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791 • Composer

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria, on January 27, 1756. His father Leopold was a violinist who played in the court orchestra of the Archbishop of Salzburg. Leopold and his wife Anna Maria had seven children, but only Wolfgang and his older sister Maria Anna lived beyond childhood.

Maria Anna was musically talented and began music lessons at age seven. Four-year-old Wolfgang taught himself some of her songs after listening to her play. Leopold then began lessons with Wolfgang and quickly discovered that his little boy was a musical genius. In 1762 he took his children (six-year-old Wolfgang and eleven-year-old Maria Anna) on tour to Munich, the capital of Bavaria. Later that year the whole family went to Vienna.

By age seven, Wolfgang Mozart had composed four sonatas. He could sight-read music and then play the piece on the piano. Wolfgang even taught himself to play the violin.

In 1763, the family went to Paris. Leopold hoped to receive money for playing for royalty but the family was treated more as servants, as were musicians at that time, and received gifts that had little practical value. So they crossed the channel to England. The English were more generous, and the children played for the king and queen. Interestingly, English musicians considered it such an honor to accompany the talented children that they refused their usual fee. While there, Wolfgang played the organ with Johann Christian Bach, the youngest son of Johann Sebastian Bach.

The family remained in England for a year, then returned to Salzburg. At thirteen, Wolfgang wrote his first opera, *La finta semplice* (*The Pretended*

Idiot). The next tour was to Italy, and Wolfgang and his father went together. In Rome at the Sistine Chapel during Holy Week, Wolfgang heard a choral piece (*Miserere*) and went back to his room and wrote down the complete musical notation from memory. Wolfgang received many honors in Italy, and his operas were held in high regard.

Back in Salzburg, in the 1770s Wolfgang wrote eight symphonies, much sacred music, a piano concerto, and another comic opera. At



twenty-one, Wolfgang traveled again, this time with his mother, on a tour of Europe, hoping to get a well-paid position. There Wolfgang met sixteen-year-old Aloisia Weber and fell in love. Unfortunately, while in Paris, Wolfgang's mother died and Aloisia rejected him, so Wolfgang returned to Salzburg and his father and sister.

At that time there were no copyright laws protecting a composer's works, so it was difficult for Wolfgang to make a living. Even giving concerts was expensive because of the necessity to rent a hall and to promote a musical event.

Wolfgang became interested in Aloisia's sister, Constanze, who was eighteen. They married in 1782. During the years of their marriage, Wolfgang had a few piano pupils, wrote some new operas, and performed in concerts. Wolfgang and Constanze had two boys, Karl and Franz Xaver. His comic operas *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* were well received.

In December 1791, Wolfgang died of kidney disease. Constanze had him buried in an unmarked grave. He was only thirty-five but had composed more than six hundred musical works.



Reading

1. Choose a sentence in the biography that you think is the most important one about Mozart. Write why you chose that particular sentence. Exchange what you wrote with a classmate. Discuss with each other why you chose the sentences you did.
2. What more would you like to know about Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart that is not in the short biography. Make a list with a classmate who has also read the biography. Read more about him in other biographies and discuss with your classmate what you both learned.
3. Look up the word *genius* in a dictionary. Who do you know that comes closest to matching the dictionary definition?
4. What surprised you most as you read the biography of Mozart? Write your thoughts on a piece of paper and share it with your classmates. How many agree with you?

Social Studies

1. Go through the biography and make a list of the cities and countries in which Wolfgang lived or visited. Find each place on a map in an encyclopedia or reference book. Choose one you would most like to visit and make a list of three things you would prefer to see in each place. Share what you learned.
2. As you “read between the lines” of the biography, what traits do you think Wolfgang had that contributed to his genius as a composer? List and discuss what you think they are with your classmates.

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Anna Pavlova

1881–1931 • Ballerina

Anna Pavlova was born on January 31, 1881, in St. Petersburg, Russia. Her mother was a laundress. Her father was a reserve soldier in the Russian army who died when Anna was two years old. Anna and her mother became very close.

The Christmas that Anna was eight years old, her mother took her to the Maryinsky Theater to see *The Sleeping Beauty*. This was Anna's very first ballet experience. The music by Tchaikovsky was beautiful, and she was enthralled with ballet. At that moment, Anna knew that she wanted to spend her life as a ballet dancer.

After much discussion, her mother said she could try out for the Ballet School. The Russian government, which was headed at that time by the tsars, paid the entire cost of schooling. But eight-year-old Anna would have to wait until she was ten before she could apply.

When she was ten, Anna was accepted into the school after passing a physical exam and testing in basic school subjects. She could no longer live with her mother, but she would share a dormitory room with twenty other girls. Her mother could visit on weekends.

In 1899, Anna graduated with honors and became a leading member of her class. (She was unaware that sitting in the graduation ceremony audience was Victor Dandré. He would be her future husband and manager of her business affairs.) Anna joined the Imperial Ballet Company and soon was touring widely throughout Russia, Europe, and other parts of the world. By 1905, Anna was a prima ballerina, the leading ballerina in the company. During World War I, she formed her own dance company.



In the latter part of her life, Anna made her main home in Hampstead, London, England. On a country hill, "Ivy House" was built of stone and covered with ivy and Anna and Dandré built a large studio and rehearsal hall there for her touring company. She also kept an apartment in St. Petersburg, which she used a few months of the year.

Over the years, Anna's ballet company toured Europe, England, North, Central and South America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, the Philippines, Burma, India, Egypt, and South Africa. At the outbreak of World War I, Anna took her ballet company to the United States to raise money for the Red Cross and other charities. She would not get back to Ivy House for five years.

Touring the world with her company was not an easy task. Often the company performed every night of the week and some days twice in different towns. This meant packing and unpacking luggage, boxes, clothes, music, wigs, shoes, and many cases of stage scenery. Then there was the problem of making time schedules with the railroads so deadlines would be met at the various theaters. This was before airline travel. But millions of people were rewarded by seeing her artistry and that of her performers.

In 1931 Anna was in Paris on tour when she fell ill with a cough and fever. Against her doctors' advice, she went on to her next tour stop, The Hague, Netherlands. She died there of pleurisy on January 22, 1931.



Reading

1. What did you find most extraordinary about Anna Pavlova? Discuss with your classmates.
2. After reading this short biography and a book or two about Anna Pavlova, list some characteristics about her that you think made her such a notable dancer of the ballet. Compare your list with that of your classmates. Do you know anyone with any of these characteristics? Do you have any?
3. Read in an encyclopedia about modern dance. Discuss with a classmate what you find most interesting about this art.

Social Studies

1. Anna wanted to be a ballet dancer so much that at age ten she was willing to leave home and go to a school to learn how to dance. What does that tell you about her commitment to dance? What kind of training would you commit to by leaving home?
2. Create a short television episode in the life of Anna Pavlova. Imagine what she would say to her mother about leaving home for Ballet School, what life would be like in a dormitory of twenty girls in the early morning and at bedtime, and the travel problems and logistics of getting from one ballet engagement to the next.
3. On a map, find the countries in which Anna's ballet company toured.

Further Reading

- Allman, Barbara. *Dance of the Swan*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, 2001.
- Fonteyn, Margot. *Pavlova: Portrait of a Dancer*. New York: Viking Press, 1984.
- Levine, Ellen. *Anna Pavlova: Genius of the Dance*. New York: Scholastic Press, 1995.
- Maze, Stephanie, and Catherine O'Neill Grace. *I Want to Be a Dancer*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997.
- Montague, Sarah. *The Ballerina*. New York: Universe Books, 1980.



Pablo Picasso

1881–1973 • Painter, Sculptor, Graphic Artist

It is said that Pablo Picasso's first words were "piz, piz"—short for the Spanish word *lapiz*, or pencil. His father, Don José Ruiz Blasco, was a teacher and artist who taught in the School of Arts and Crafts in Málaga, Spain. He and Pablo's mother, Maria Picasso, raised the boy in that southern coastal town on the Mediterranean Sea. When he was twenty, Pablo took his mother's last name as his surname.

When Pablo was ten, the family moved to La Coruña on the far northwest coast of Spain. This enabled him to study at the School of Fine Arts. His father also taught him during these early years. In 1895, he was admitted to the School of Fine Arts in Barcelona, where his father was teaching.

Pablo's first sale, a drawing of a bullfight, was to an art dealer in Paris. But selling enough pictures to make a living was not always easy. Picasso knew poverty. At the turn of the century, two or even three pictures a day flowed from his brushes. There were times that he burned his drawings to keep warm in his apartment.

Pablo's biographers divide his career into what they call *periods*. The first years of 1900 became known as the Blue Period. His subjects were the poor, the sick, and the beggars in the street who were shunned by the rest of society. Often he used the color blue to paint these people. A feeling of sadness is expressed in Picasso's painting *The Old Guitarist*, which he painted in various hues of blue.

By 1904, he began painting in red and pink. This was the start of his Rose Period, also called the Pink Period. Many of his paintings of this

time centered on circus scenes, jugglers, and acrobats. Paintings titled *The Harlequin's Family*, *The Bareback Rider*, *The Actor*, and *The Acrobat's Family with a Monkey* illustrate this period in his life. Interestingly, Picasso never gave titles to his paintings.

The period following the Rose Period, 1908–1916, was that of Cubism. His paintings of this time are more abstract. One can see a face, for instance, from both a front and profile view at

the same time. This style outraged some people. One critic said his painting

"resembles a field of broken glass."

Picasso continued to experiment in his painting and sculpturing.

In the 1930s, after civil war broke out in Spain, Pablo used the theme of war in his painting.

In 1937 the town of Guernica, in northern Spain, was defenseless and completely destroyed by German bombers.

The people heard the planes and came out to look and wave at them. Bombing innocent people had never been done before. The work that became known as *Guernica* was completed in a few weeks and was exhibited in the Spanish Pavilion at the World Exposition in Paris in 1937. The mural was 25 feet wide and 11 feet high. Picasso did the painting in the Collage Cubist style in black, gray, and white to emphasize the horrors of war.

Pablo Picasso died a wealthy man. In his later years, although his fortune was estimated at \$300 million dollars, he continued painting until he was ninety-three years old. By the time he died, he had created more works of art than any artist who had ever lived.





Reading

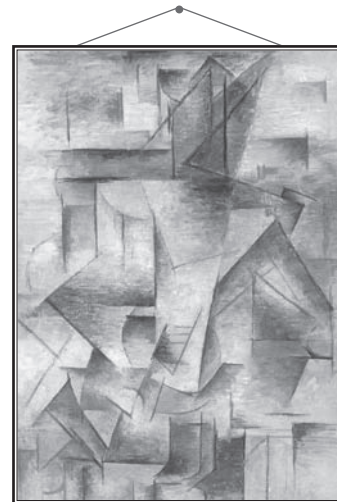
1. Create a poem—rhymed or unrhymed, haiku, cinquain, or another form you have learned—about some aspect of Pablo Picasso's life. Read your poem to your classmates.
2. Write a review of the life of Pablo Picasso in exactly thirty words. Read it aloud to your classmates. Allow them to check your word count. Take the review home and read it to your parents or some family member.
3. Would you choose Pablo Picasso as an older brother? Why or why not? If you were related to him, what would you suggest to him you do together?

Social Studies

1. Pablo Picasso had an enormous fortune when he died. Write an essay of approximately 100 words on any disadvantages of inheriting a great amount of money. Share your thoughts with your classmates.
2. Pablo Picasso was able to continue painting until he was ninety-three years old. Write an essay of 100 words on the advantages of being able to work at something you enjoy doing until you are in your nineties. Share your essay with your classmates.
3. Read about Spain in an encyclopedia or on the Internet. Which two countries border Spain? Share five items of interest to you about Spain with your classmates.

Further Reading

- Lepscky, Ibi. *Pablo Picasso*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 1984.
- Loria, Stefano. *Picasso*. New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1995.
- MacDonald, Patricia A. *Pablo Picasso*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Silver Burdett Press, 1990.
- Mason, Antony. *In the Time of Picasso*. Brookfield, CT: Aladdin Books, 2002.
- Rodari, Florian. *A Weekend with Picasso*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1991.



Le guitariste by Pablo Picasso

Edgar Allan Poe

1809–1849 • Poet, Writer

Edgar Poe's mother Elizabeth, a talented actress, had married David Poe, a young lawyer who left his law practice to become an actor. Acting was not David's gift, and the young couple found it difficult to earn a living. Their first son, Henry, was followed two years later by Edgar. David abandoned his family, leaving a pregnant Elizabeth, who was also ill with tuberculosis, a serious lung disease. After giving birth to her third child, Rosalie, Elizabeth died.

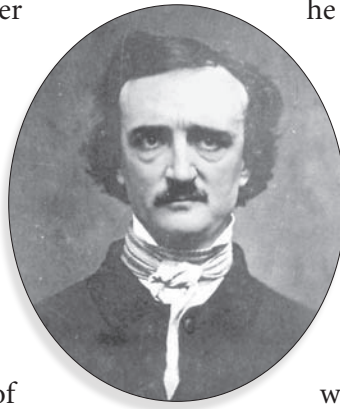
The children were taken in by other families. Fanny and John Allan gave Edgar a home. Later, Edgar would take "Allan" as his middle name. The Allans' house was large and had many books, but Edgar was often lonely. Edgar spent time with books by poets such as Goethe, Shelley, and Wordsworth. He learned to read Latin and French and devoted much of his time to writing poetry, plays, and stories.

When Edgar was college age, John enrolled him at the University of Virginia in Richmond, Virginia. In college, Edgar translated Latin poetry and read poets from France and Italy. He also incurred gambling debts and drank to excess. When Edgar dropped out of school, John thought that working in his office might be what Edgar needed. But Edgar preferred writing. After a bitter argument in 1827, Edgar left the Allans to go to Boston.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army. In his free time, he wrote poetry and stories. His first published writing was a booklet titled *Tamerland and Other Poems*. He signed his name as "The Bostonian." Edgar rose in rank to sergeant major. Upon his discharge, he entered West Point for officer training. The program was rigorous, and he decided to drop out of school. John would not

help him, so he broke some of West Point's rules of behavior and was dismissed.

Edgar then lived with his father's sister, Maria Clemm, and her children in Baltimore, Maryland, and became involved in magazine publishing. A few of his poems and stories were published, but he was more successful writing critical reviews of short fiction and poetry. A few years later, he married Virginia Clemm, his teenaged cousin. He was criticized for marrying one so young—he was twenty-seven.



In the 1840s, he published a collection of stories titled *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. Then he created a detective, Auguste Dupin, who appeared in his short fiction, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Another popular story, "The Gold Bug," followed. But it was his 1845 poem "The Raven" that

brought him the most fame. "The Raven" was printed on the back page of *The New York Evening Mirror*. It met with such success that newspapers in large cities around the country printed it, too.

Still, Edgar did not earn much money. Virginia was ill for five years with tuberculosis, and there was no cure. Edgar could only afford straw for a mattress for his young wife's bed. Edgar and her mother could only watch as she slowly passed away.

Maria Clemm begged editors and friends for money to keep the despondent Edgar alive. He continued to drink, becoming quite ill and hallucinating. On October 3, 1849, he was admitted to a hospital, where he died four days later at the age of forty.



Reading

1. A popular poem with a winter setting by Edgar Allan Poe is “The Bells.” Read the complete poem aloud with a classmate.
2. If you were to write a story or poem for a children’s magazine, what would you write about? Discuss this with a partner.
3. Create a poem about Edgar Allan Poe as a child or adult, rhyming or non-rhyming.
4. Copy five words from the biography of Edgar Allan Poe that intrigue you. Find the dictionary definitions of each and discuss your list with those of your classmates.

Social Studies

1. What were the three most important events that happened in the life of Edgar Allan Poe as written in this biography? Share your choices with your classmates and tell why you made them.
2. Look at the picture of Edgar in the biography. Make a pencil sketch of him and write an interesting caption below.
3. Edgar Allan Poe lived during the years 1809 through 1849. In a history text or reference book, search for five important events that happened during those years. Compare your list with those of your classmates.

Further Reading

Anderson, Madelyn Klein. *Edgar Allan Poe: A Mystery*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1993.

Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Writers: Comedies, Tragedies (and What the Neighbors Thought)*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994.

Streissguth, Tom. *Edgar Allan Poe*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2001.



Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn

1606–1669 • Painter

As a child, Rembrandt loved to draw pictures. His father was so sure that Rembrandt would become an artist that he sent the young man to study with an artist. After learning all he could, Rembrandt went to another teacher in Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands.

After three years passed, he came home. He continued to draw, paint, and make etchings. His mother sat at her spinning wheel for hours as he painted her. When his father had time, Rembrandt painted portraits of him. Rembrandt, who went by his first name, made many portraits of himself. He also painted beggars. By 1628 he was teaching others how to paint.

When his father died, Rembrandt returned to Amsterdam. In 1632, he was asked by Dr. Tulp, a famous surgeon, to paint a picture of him lecturing in an anatomy class. There were to be seven other surgeons observing Dr. Tulp. Rembrandt arranged the surgeons in a pyramid shape so all their faces could be clearly seen in the portrait. Rembrandt was only in his mid-twenties when he painted *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* (1632). This painting made Rembrandt quite popular and many merchants in Amsterdam came to him to have their portraits drawn, making Rembrandt wealthy in the process.

In 1634 he married Saskia. Rembrandt painted her portrait many times. He dressed her in fine clothes and jewels, which he kept in his shop for those who came to him to have portraits made. The picture that gained him much fame was titled *The Night Watch* (1642). Commissioned by a captain of the civic guards, it has life-sized characters on the large canvas. It

shows the captain giving orders to his lieutenant. The painting became blackened with tobacco smoke where it hung in a hall for many years. It now hangs in the Rijkmuseum in Amsterdam.

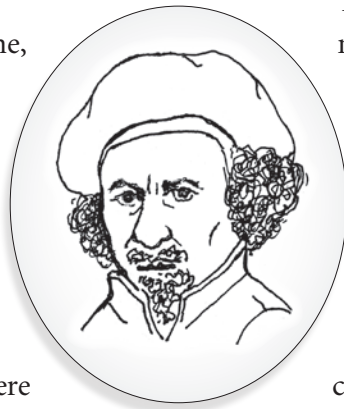
Rembrandt was making money from his paintings, so he and Saskia moved into a fine three-story home with a large mortgage. His studio was on the first floor, there were small studios on the second floor for his students, and the upper floor was for his family.

Then, in 1640, his mother died. The next year his son, Titus van Rijn, was born, but his twenty-nine-year-old wife Saskia passed away a few months later. Now he had only his little boy for company. Rembrandt was short of money because of the economy, the mortgage on his home, and fewer wealthy patrons coming to have their portraits drawn.

Rembrandt was nearly bankrupt.

When Titus was eight years old, a young girl, Hendrickje Stoffels, came and cooked and cleaned house for Rembrandt and his son. Rembrandt sold his home, paintings, and jewels and then found a room in Amsterdam where he continued to paint. Titus and Hendrickje sold his paintings in a small shop they operated. In 1663 Hendrickje died. Titus married in February of 1668 but died the following September.

Although he was lonely, Rembrandt continued to paint. In 1669 he painted his last portrait, one of himself called *Self Portrait*. Rembrandt passed away on October 4 of that year. His legacy to the world was his hundreds of paintings, etchings, and drawings.





Reading

1. After reading a biography of Rembrandt, what kind of feeling did you have for him? Describe the feeling in a paragraph and share with your classmates.
2. Look in a reference book or encyclopedia at some of the paintings of Rembrandt. Which do you like best? Why? Share your thoughts with your classmates.
3. If you could change the ending of Rembrandt's life, how would you do it? Rewrite the last two paragraphs of his biography as fiction and share with a classmate.

Social Studies

1. Read about Amsterdam in an encyclopedia, reference book, or Web site. Share what you think is most interesting about the city with your family or classmates.
2. Rembrandt's legacy to the world was his hundreds of paintings, etchings, and drawings. What would you like your legacy to be? Complete the following sentence: I would like my legacy to the world to be. . . . Share with your classmates what you wrote. Then write a plan that would help you to fulfill that legacy.
3. What do people of the Netherlands call themselves? What are they known as in English-speaking countries?

Further Reading

Bonafoux, Pascal. *A Weekend with Rembrandt*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1992.

Schwartz, Gary. *Rembrandt*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992.

Venezia, Mike. *Rembrandt*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1988.



Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*.

Norman Rockwell

1894–1978 • Illustrator

Norman Perceval Rockwell was born in New York City in 1894. Norman was not the athlete that his older brother Jarvis was. Instead, Norman was pale and wore corrective shoes for his pigeon-toed feet. His round, rimless eyeglasses prompted some children to call him “Moony.” But Norman loved to draw and could do it well.

Around the table in the evenings, his father read to his two boys from books by Charles Dickens. *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* held their interest. The characters also created pictures in Norman’s mind; they became his pencil sketches. The chalk in his hand became a picture on the sidewalk for his friends to admire. His eighth-grade teacher asked him to do Christmas decorations on the chalkboard.

Norman was determined to be an artist, but the family thought he should “get a job.” They did not believe that a life as an artist was a profitable occupation. The minister of his church put him in contact with Ethel Barrymore (who later became a well-known stage and screen actress). Ethel and a friend wanted art lessons plus a Saturday escort to the countryside to sketch pictures. He tutored others in art as well. Norman dropped out of high school and went to the Art Student League to study.

At eighteen, Norman was ready to be a full-time illustrator. A publishing house gave him the opportunity to illustrate a children’s book, *Tell Me Why: Stories about Mother Nature*. For ten or twelve illustrations, he earned \$150. This led to illustrating a handbook on camping for *Boy’s Life*, a Boy Scout magazine. At nineteen he became art director for the magazine and did its monthly covers and illustrations for stories

within the magazine. In four years he painted two-hundred illustrations.

A *Saturday Evening Post* cover was Norman’s highest goal. A friend encouraged him to show his paintings to the *Post*’s editor, George Lorimer. Norman was sure his work would be rejected. The art editor finally came out of a meeting with Mr. Lorimer and said they would buy all five pieces Norman had shown them. Norman was elated. His association with the *Post* would last forty-seven years.



Norman was twenty-two when his first painting, *Boy with Baby Carriage*, appeared on the cover of the *Post*. The painting tells a story of a boy, dressed in a suit and hat, pushing a baby carriage. Two boys in baseball uniforms tease him by their actions as they pass on their way to the ball field. Norman did more

than 320 *Saturday Evening Post* covers and illustrated nearly 160 stories in the magazine.

During World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke to the country about our basic freedoms: freedom of speech and of worship and freedom from want and from fear. One night at three in the morning, the idea of how to depict these four freedoms in paintings came to Norman. The paintings were first published in the *Saturday Evening Post*. They raised about \$133 million dollars for the war effort. Norman received 70,000 letters of appreciation.

Norman died at age eighty-four on November 8, 1978. In 1993 the Norman Rockwell Art Museum opened in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The museum displays the largest collection of his original art.



Reading

1. Write across the top of a blank sheet of paper, "I will not forget. . . ." Follow this statement with a list of things about Norman Rockwell you will not forget. Tell your family what you remember.
2. Read Norman Rockwell's biography to older adult relatives or friends. Ask them to tell what they remember about Norman Rockwell.
3. From a library book, read about Norman Rockwell. Copy a sentence that impresses you and discuss it with your family at mealtime.
4. In your school or public library check out one of the books about Norman Rockwell listed in the "Further Reading" list. Report to your class five other things about Norman Rockwell that were not in this short biography.
4. After reading other biographies about Norman Rockwell, list three character traits that he had. Compare your list with those of your classmates.

Further Reading

Cohen, Joel H. *Norman Rockwell: America's Best-Loved Illustrator*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1997.

Durrett, Deanne. *Norman Rockwell*. San Diego, CA: Lucent Books, 1997.

Gherman, Beverly. *Norman Rockwell: Storyteller with a Brush*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2000.

Roy, Jennifer Rozines, and Gregory Roy. *Norman Rockwell: The Life of an Artist*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, 2002.

Venezia, Mike. *Norman Rockwell*. New York: Childrens Press, 2000.

Social Studies

1. In a reference book, search for paintings showing the "four basic freedoms." Rate them from 1 to 4 in terms of the paintings you prefer and what is, to you, the most important freedom of the four. Discuss this with your classmates.
2. Who among your friends has the potential to be a fine painter? Why? Share the biography of Norman Rockwell with him or her.
3. Imagine Norman Rockwell visiting your home for dinner. Which of your friends and relatives (limit of four, not counting yourself) would you invite? Why?



Norman Rockwell's studio, preserved in Stockbridge, Massachusetts

William Shakespeare

1564–1616 • Playwright, Poet, Actor

John Shakespeare and his wife Mary Arden lived in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, 100 miles west of London. John was a respected maker of gloves, leather, and wool goods. John inherited some money and property from his father and was given property by his father-in-law. The couple had three or four children who grew to adulthood: William was the first of them. He was born around April 23, 1564. A few years later his father began to experience financial problems.

William's private school was rigorous. He was in class for eight or nine hours a day, six days a week, and most weeks of the year. But when his father could no longer afford to send him to school, fourteen-year-old William came to live at home and help his father.

At age eighteen, William married twenty-six-year-old Anne Hathaway. They moved into the Shakespeare house with the father, mother, brothers, and sisters. In coming years William and Anne had a daughter and then twins. There were now twelve in the house. William decided to go to London to seek employment and send money home to support the family.

In London, William found work in the theater. With no formal training, he undoubtedly had to start from the ground up as a prompter, making sure the actors were in place to go on stage at the right time, and stagehand. As an apprentice, he moved into acting and playwriting.

His first plays were historical: *Henry VI* and *Richard III*. Then he turned to tragedy and comedy with *Hamlet* and *The Comedy of Errors*. But real-life tragedy fell upon London. The city was cramped with people. There was no sewage

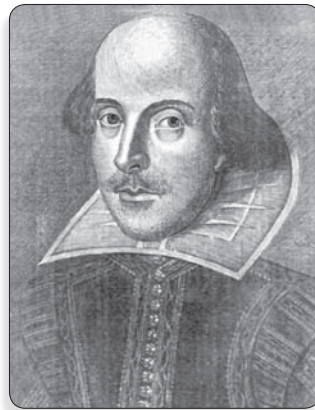
system and filth was everywhere. Between 1592 and 1594 the bubonic plague killed more than 10,000 people in London. The authorities closed down the theaters and other public meeting places. Those who could left London for the healthier countryside, so there was no one to attend theaters or to keep them open.

William wrote poetry during this time. His book *Venus and Adonis* sold well and went into sixteen printings. Another book of poems and then a series of sonnets followed.

By 1594, the plague began to subside and theaters were back in business. William became a playwright again. He wrote comedies such as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. One of his plays that became especially well known is still performed in theaters and movies: *Romeo and Juliet*.

In September 1601, William's father John died. William inherited his father's estate and at once became Stratford's largest landowner. William's mother Mary died seven years later.

After 1610, William gradually retired from London. During this time, he wrote one of his last plays for the theater, *The Tempest* (1611). The play has more songs and music than any other one he wrote. Many consider it his "farewell" even though he wrote three more: *Henry VIII* (1612), *Cardenio* (1612–1613), and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613). In 1616, William Shakespeare died at the age of fifty-two. A few years later two actors found his plays and published them. Apparently, William had not been interested in publishing them. If they had not, the plays might never have survived for others to experience and enjoy.





Reading

1. Following are a few phrases in use today that appeared in Shakespeare's plays: tongue-tied; as dull as dishwater; budge an inch; fool's paradise; seen better days; played fast and loose; as dead as a doornail; own flesh and blood; lie low; at one fell swoop; eyesore; high time; foregone conclusion; the long and the short of it. Choose five and use them correctly in sentences. Exchange your sentences with those of a classmate and discuss.
2. These words were used by Shakespeare in his plays: *majestic*, *countless*, *hint*, *hurry*, *reliance*, *leapfrog*, *excellent*, and *gloomy*. Have a "Shakespeare Conversation" with your classmates and check off the words as you converse together.
3. What questions would you ask William Shakespeare if you had the opportunity? Make a list and then attempt to answer the questions you and your classmates create.
3. Draw a picture of William Shakespeare, his birthplace, or his home in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. Most reference books have these pictures. Give your picture a title and write a short poem underneath your drawing. Share with your classmates.
4. Compare and contrast the Globe Theater of Shakespeare's England with a theater in your hometown. Share with your classmates what you learn.

Further Reading

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Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Writers: Comedies, Tragedies (and What the Neighbors Thought)*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994.

Middleton, Haydn. *William Shakespeare: The Master Playwright*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Rosen, Michael and Robert Ingpen. *Shakespeare: His Work & His World*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2001.

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Thrasher, Thomas. *The Importance of William Shakespeare*. San Diego, CA: Lucent Books, 1999.

Weitzman, David. *Great Lives: Theater*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Social Studies

1. Read in reference books or an encyclopedia about plagues that in the past have swept across Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America. How did they spread? Discuss with your classmates.
2. Read about London, England, in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site. Prepare a report for your class on the five places of most interest to you in London if you could visit there.

John Philip Sousa

1854–1932 • Band Director, Composer

Early in life John Philip Sousa learned to play the violin plus a number of other instruments. At thirteen, John was playing the violin in his home in Washington, D.C., and a man walking by stopped to listen. Impressed, the man went to the door and asked John about his music background. Then he invited John to join the circus band that was in town at that time. John thought it over for a few moments and accepted. He was sworn to secrecy and told to join the circus the night when it left town. He could later write home and tell his parents how well he was doing. But John had to tell someone. He told his friend Ed next door. Word quickly got back to John's mother and father.

The next morning, Mr. Sousa told John to put on his Sunday clothes and come down for breakfast. After eating, he took the boy for a walk to the Marine Barracks and John signed enlistment papers as an apprentice to study music. John's father had played trombone in the Marine Band since 1850 and knew the commandant well.

After his time in the Marine Band, John played with various orchestras. One evening the orchestra conductor at Ford's Opera House became ill, so John filled in as conductor. He did so well that he received job offers in both Chicago and New York City.

John met Jennie in New York. She was in the chorus of the musical *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and he was conducting the orchestra. John was twenty-five and Jennie seventeen. They married, and soon afterward John was invited back to Washington, by the Marine Corps commandant, to conduct the Marine Band. The band needed complete reorganization. None of the music of the then-

modern composers, such as Tchaikovsky, was in the band's library. The men received little pay and could not be discharged from the service. John arranged with the commandant to allow those who wanted honorable discharges to obtain them. The band dwindled to thirty-three members.

Under John's leadership both the Marine Band's membership and audience increased. Audiences on the White House grounds grew to thousands. There were Saturday afternoon concerts at the White House and

Thursday concerts at the Marine Corps Barracks. A favorite assignment of John's was to play at the request of the president of the United States. John wrote that during the last eight years he directed the Marine Band, not one man was reported for dereliction of duty or inappropriate conduct. John stayed with the band for twelve years.

In 1892, John left the Marines and formed his own concert band so he could play everywhere. As he toured the country, he also composed music. He became known for his marches, such as "Semper Fidelis," "The Stars and Stripes Forever," "The Washington Post March," "The High School Cadets," and "The Gladiator." His tours took John and his band to Europe, England, Africa, Australia, and throughout the United States. Besides band music, John also composed comic operas, operettas, and various musical scores and wrote three novels.

"Stars and Stripes Forever" was the last piece he conducted. The date was March 6, 1932, in Reading, Pennsylvania. After the concert, John went back to his room at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, where he passed away at the age of seventy-seven.





Reading

1. What were some of the characteristics in John Sousa's personality that made him a success as a conductor and composer? Share and discuss with your classmates.
 2. John never stopped learning during his lifetime. What does this statement say to you as you consider what you will do with your life? Write your answer in twenty-five words.
 3. Make a list of three relatives you think would enjoy this biography. Then explain why you chose each of the three. Make a copy of the biography for each of them.
2. Find Washington, D.C., on a map. How many states would you have to pass through by car, or over by plane, to get there from your home? Make a list of the names.
 3. Read about Washington, D.C., in a reference book or on the Internet. What three places of interest would you like most to visit there?

Further Reading

Bredeson, Carmen, and Ralph Thibodeau. *Ten Great American Composers*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, 2002.

Greene, Carol. *John Philip Sousa: The March King*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1992.

Sousa, John Philip. *Marching Along: Recollections of Men, Women, and Music*. Boston: Hale, Cushman & Flint, 1928.

Venezia, Mike. *John Philip Sousa*. New York: Childrens Press, 1998.

Social Studies

1. Read in a reference book or on the Internet about the history of the U.S. Marine Corps and its band. Prepare a short presentation for your classmates on what you learned.



John Philip Sousa leading the Marine Band in 1893

Steven Spielberg

born 1947 • Film Director

As a youngster, Steven Spielberg became enchanted with movie making. His father, Arnold, an electrical engineer, bought a twenty-dollar 8-millimeter camera, which ended up in Steven's hands. Steven began using film to tell stories about the family's camping trips. His mother Leah, who was an excellent pianist, his three younger sisters, and neighborhood friends became his actors. He used film to earn a Boy Scout merit badge in photography.

In 1964, with better movie equipment, Steven made a science-fiction film he titled *Firelight*. He arranged for a theater so he could show his film. It was about mysterious aliens traveling to Earth to capture humans for their zoo in space. When his grades dropped too low, however, his father and mother threatened to take his camera away from him. School was not a high priority for Steven, but he managed to maintain a C average.

Steven enrolled at California State University at Long Beach, where he majored in English. The Universal Studios lot was nearby and he got a non-paying job in the editing department. Here he observed the film industry from the inside. He met people who offered him a job at \$275 a week. He promptly dropped out of school, much to the disappointment of his father, who wanted him to be an engineer.

One of Steven's first assignments was directing Joan Crawford, a legendary actress, in a TV episode. She was sixty-two at the time and had more than forty years of acting experience. He brought her a rose every day in a Pepsi bottle. Joan was on the Pepsi company's board of directors. Steven and Joan got along well.



By 1971, Steven made his first television movie, *Duel*. It was about a salesman terrorized by a truck on a lonely mountain road. The driver of the truck was never clearly seen, which made the film really scary. The TV film became a very successful feature in Europe, Australia, and Japan.

Duel was followed by *The Sugarland Express*, starring Goldie Hawn. This film showed police cruisers chasing Goldie and her husband. Steven's childhood movies had often included car chases.

Steven's next project, *Jaws*, was about a man-eating shark. Because he could not use real sharks, he had mechanical ones made. They did not always work in salt water, so John Williams created a music background that let the audience know each time the shark was coming into a scene. John Williams won an Oscar for his music. The expenses for the film were high, but the movie took in more than \$100 million. Now Steven could choose the films he wanted to do.

Other films followed. These made Steven Spielberg famous as a director: *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977); *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982); *The Color Purple* (1985), nominated for eleven Academy Awards (also called Oscars); *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989); and *Jurassic Park* (1993). A film about the Holocaust, *Schindler's List* (1993), won Steven Oscars for Best Picture and Best Director. The film *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) won him an Oscar as Best Director.

Steven married Kate Capshaw in 1991 and they have seven children. Steven went back to college in 2002 and earned his bachelor of arts degree. A number of charities benefit from his financial gifts.



Reading

1. Draw two pencil portraits from photographs of Steven Spielberg as a teenager and as an adult. Add a caption below each sketch.
2. If Steven were your older brother, what would you prefer to do together? Make a list of three activities and compare them with those of a classmate.
3. Fold a sheet of blank paper in half. On the left side write three key words or phrases from the biography. Unfold the paper and on the right side write about the key words and phrases on the left. Share your written thoughts with those of a classmate.

Social Studies

1. *Schindler's List* was a film about the Holocaust. Read about that tragedy in a reference book and tell your classmates five facts that you found important.
2. Pretend you are a newspaper reporter interviewing Steven Spielberg. Write a news article about him for your class, including answers to these questions: who? what? when? where? why? Allow a classmate to check your article to see if you answered each question before reading your article to the class.
3. Steven knew early in his life what he wanted to do. If you were asked what you intended to do when you finished your education, how would you answer? Discuss your answer with your family or friends.
4. Assuming you were a film director and could make any film you wished, what would your choice be? Discuss this with your classmates.

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Harriet Beecher Stowe

1811–1896 • Writer

Reverend Lyman Beecher, Harriet's father, was a preacher in New England. Her mother, Roxanna, died of tuberculosis when Harriet was only five years old. Lyman was left to raise Harriet, her two sisters, and three older brothers. A year later, Lyman remarried, and he and his second wife had four more children.

Around the time Harriet was six, she had memorized more than two dozen hymns and several long passages of Scripture. At thirteen she went to a school that her older sister, Catharine, started. A few years later Harriet was teaching full-time at the school.

In 1832, Lyman was offered the presidency of Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. At that time, this area of the country was considered part of the West. Catharine and Harriet decided to go with the family. Catharine opened a new school she called Western Female Institute and Harriet was a teacher. Because Harriet enjoyed writing, Catharine asked her to write a textbook, *Primary Geography for Children*. Harriet published the book and received \$187 for writing it, almost as much as her sister received for running the school for a whole year.

Harriet also wrote stories for magazines and won prizes for her writing. Living in Ohio, Harriet was in a northern state that had outlawed slavery. Just across the Ohio River was Kentucky, a southern slave state. Cincinnati, Ohio, became a part of the Underground Railroad, one of the secret routes for slaves escaping their owners in the South. Harriet had to cross the river to visit her students at several plantations.

In 1834 Harriet's good friend, Eliza Stowe, died of cholera. A year later, Eliza's husband Calvin married Harriet. Between the years 1836 and 1850, she gave birth to eight children. She continued to write sketches, short stories, and articles for magazines. On one of her visits to a Kentucky plantation, Harriet observed slaves working in the fields. Her memory of them became the characters in a book she was composing.



In 1849 her eighteen-month-old son Charley died during a cholera epidemic. Soon after that, Calvin was offered a position at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. The family was ready to leave.

One Sunday morning, while sitting in church, a scene came to Harriet's mind. She envisioned a gentle slave being whipped by two other slaves as the white slave owner watched and supervised the beating. She called the gentle slave Tom and the slave owner Simon Legree. She said later it was as if God gave her the words and they just poured out of her pen. The story was printed in a magazine, *National Era*, in monthly installments. Then it came out as a book called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The book sold 5,000 copies in the first two days of publication and 300,000 copies in the next nine months.

Some years later, during the Civil War, Harriet visited President Lincoln at the White House. He took her hand and said, "So this is the little lady who made this big war." Her books and other writings brought Harriet fame and financial security. In 1896, she died at the age of eighty-five.



Reading

1. Write three things about Harriet Beecher Stowe's personality that you think made her stand out as a person. Share your list with a classmate.
2. Pretend you have crossed the Ohio River with Harriet Beecher Stowe to visit two of her students. One student's parents are kind to their slaves and the other's parents are unkind. What will you talk about? What will you ask her about her students? about the slaves on the plantations?
3. At age twelve Harriet read the novel *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott. She read it seven times in one month. List three books you think you could read five times in one month and not get bored. Compare your list with those of your classmates. How many of your titles overlap?
4. Read three or four of the biographies about writers in this book. List two or more habits they developed as young persons that contributed to their becoming professional writers as adults. Discuss your list with your classmates.
3. Calvin Stowe did not manage money well, prompting Harriet to write for publication to help pay their bills and hire a servant. Make a list of five rules that Calvin should have followed to better manage his finances.
4. If Harriet Beecher Stowe were alive today, what problems in our world would she probably write about? Discuss these with your classmates.

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Social Studies

1. Cholera was a disease that frequently took the lives of children and adults in the 1800s. Read about the disease in a reference book, encyclopedia, or Web site and share what you learn with your classmates.
2. With a classmate, look at a map and trace your fingers along the route you might travel from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Brunswick, Maine. Each of you take different routes. What states would each of you pass through? Explain why you chose your route.

Maria Tallchief

born 1925 • Ballerina

Elizabeth “Betty” Marie Tall Chief was born on January 24, 1925, in Fairfax, Oklahoma. Her grandparents were full-blooded Osage Indians. Betty’s father, Alexander Tall Chief, and his wife Ruth had three children: Gerald, Betty Marie, and Marjorie.

Ruth arranged for Marie to take piano lessons at the age of three. Betty had “perfect pitch” and was very bright. Six months later the little girl began ballet lessons. Betty was more interested in the ballet than piano.

Mrs. Tall Chief thought the children would have more opportunities for development in a larger city than in the small town of Fairfax. Betty was eight when they journeyed to Beverly Hills, California.

Betty’s new ballet instructor was appalled that she had danced on her toes at four years of age. He was afraid Betty would be hurt doing this at such a young age. He began her ballet training anew with the basic positions ballet students must learn at the *barre*, the French word for a horizontal wooden bar attached to the wall and positioned waist high for proper support.

Betty’s mother insisted that she continue her piano lessons. At twelve Betty played Frederic Chopin’s *Concerto* at a recital and then slipped off the piano bench and began to dance. When she was in high school, her mother realized it was time for Betty to concentrate on ballet, her first love.

Betty Marie left for New York in the summer of 1942 after her high school graduation, hoping to train with the Ballet Russe. The plans were for her to return to California in the fall to enter the University of California at Los Angeles. In that

summer, the United States was at war. French and Russian dancers had difficulty getting visas to travel to Canada from the United States. Betty got an audition with the Ballet Russe. She was hired. The ballet company began its tour in Ottawa, Canada, so she dropped her college plans.

The ballet company asked that she change her name to one with a more theatrical sound, so she became Maria Tallchief. The next spring, in 1943, one of the prima ballerinas was not able to dance because of foot problems. This

gave Maria the opportunity to debut in Philadelphia in a performance of the Chopin *Concerto*. She was a huge success.

Maria met George Balanchine, the director of the New York City Ballet. She danced the title role in *The Firebird*, which he choreographed. They married in

1946, but, unfortunately, her marriage to Balanchine did not last. They remained friends and he continued choreographing with her.

In 1949, Maria became the first American dancer to achieve the title of prima ballerina. She danced in films and television in the 1950s and toured Europe and other countries. The Oklahoma State Legislature set June 29, 1953, as Maria Tallchief Day. The governor, jokingly, made her “commodore” of the Oklahoma Navy. (Remember that Oklahoma is surrounded by other states and has no navy!)

Maria remarried and had her only child, Elise Maria, in January 1959. In retirement, Maria Tallchief teaches and coaches ballet and does, as she says, “only the things I want to do.”





Reading

1. If you could interview Maria Tallchief, what questions would you ask her? Make a list and discuss the possible answers with your classmates.
2. Maria was an exceptional student in piano and as a ballet dancer. Assuming you were also gifted in these two areas, which one would you choose if you were in a position to do so? List your reasons and then exchange lists with a classmate and discuss both your reactions.
3. What one incident in the life of Maria Tallchief impressed you the most? Discuss your answer with those of your classmates.

Social Studies

1. Read about Oklahoma in an encyclopedia. Discuss with your classmates or parents what interested you most about its history.
2. Find Fairfax, Oklahoma, on a map. Where is it located in the state? Compare its location with Maria's travels to Beverly Hills, California; New York City; and Ottawa, Canada. Which of those cities would you most like to visit? Which one would you prefer to live in? Why? Discuss with your classmates.
3. Read about the Osage Indians in an encyclopedia or reference book. List five facts about them that you think are interesting. Share the facts with your friends and family.

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Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

1840–1893 • Composer, Conductor

Pyotr (also spelled Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Russia on May 7, 1840, in the town of Votkinsk, east of Moscow. The family lived comfortably on the father's income as an inspector for the government's iron mine in the area. Peter had four brothers and a sister.

There was wonderful music in the home as their mother played the piano and sang. Peter learned to speak French and German. The family moved to Moscow in 1848 and later to St. Petersburg. Along the way Peter learned to play the piano. But at the age of ten, his father decided Peter should prepare for a government career. He continued to study music part-time and it became his passion. At twenty-three he became a full-time music student, graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and was awarded a silver medal in composition.

As he grew older, Peter fell in and out of love. He had a nervous breakdown and experienced deep feelings of despair, especially when his compositions were not met with approval. When he began to compose his first symphony, he suffered severe headaches and was sure he would die before it was finished.

Peter's music was emotional and romantic and used the rhythms and harmonies of Russian folk music. Although audiences were enthusiastic, his work did not receive praise from critics. Some of his compositions were not even played until after his death. His musical works designed for stage productions, such as the orchestral work *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Swan Lake* ballet, were disapproved of by his teachers, but he gained a wonderful reputation in western Europe. In his later career, he composed ballet music:

The Sleeping Beauty (produced in 1890) and *The Nutcracker* (produced in 1892).

In 1877 Peter married one of his students, Antonia Milyukova, and within weeks left her. Then he tried to catch pneumonia by standing up to his chest in the cold Moscow River. He wanted to die, but he didn't even get sick. Peter sent his brother Anatol to Antonia to explain that he didn't want to be married. She accepted the information calmly and even joked about it. Later, she became insane and died in 1917.



A very wealthy widow, Nadezhda Fillaretovana von Meck, enjoyed Peter's music immensely. They never met but wrote letters to each other for fourteen years. Madame von Meck paid Peter to write piano compositions she could play in her home. Then she began paying him enough money yearly so he could devote himself to composing full time. The

one condition she insisted on was that they would never meet. Although they did accidentally pass each other on the street once or twice, they turned away abruptly. In 1890, she stopped all payments for what she said were her financial difficulties.

Peter became well known throughout Europe and the United States, not only as a composer but also as an orchestra conductor. His operas were also popular. In 1891 he traveled to the United States, conducting his works in New York City, Baltimore, and Philadelphia.

In 1893 at age fifty-three, Peter contracted cholera, an infectious intestinal disorder, and died in St. Petersburg. His life had had only brief moments of happiness, but his music continues to touch the emotions of millions of people around the world.



Reading

1. Write three titles for Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's biography. Compare your titles with those of a classmate. Explain to each other why you wrote what you did.
2. Listen to Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with a friend. Each of you write what you "see" in your mind as you hear the music. Compare and contrast with your classmate what you both experienced.
3. Search the biography of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky for one thing he did that you would like to do sometime in the future. What would you need to accomplish that goal?

Social Studies

1. On a map or globe of Russia, or in an encyclopedia or atlas, find the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. What is the large ocean north of Russia?
2. Read about Moscow and St. Petersburg in an encyclopedia, reference book, or Internet Web site. Which of the two cities sounds most interesting to you? Why?
3. Study the editorial cartoons in the newspaper you receive at home or in your school's library. Create a cartoon about Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and share with your classmates.

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J. R. R. Tolkien

1892–1973 • Writer, Language Scholar

Arthur Tolkien was an English banker. To advance in his profession, he accepted a position as manager of an English bank in South Africa. His fiancée Mabel followed him there, and they were married. Their first son was John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, whom they called Ronald. Three years later, Ronald's brother Hilary was born.

One day three-year-old Ronald picked up a poisonous tarantula in the garden, and it bit him. A servant quickly sucked the poisonous venom from the wound. Mabel decided to take the children back to England; Arthur would follow later. After Mabel and the boys got back to England, Arthur became ill with rheumatic fever and died soon after.

By the age of four, Ronald could read and soon was writing. Mabel taught him Latin and French and read books to him, such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. At age seven Ronald was writing his own stories. At age nine he read and wrote in Latin, Greek, and French. He even loved to make up his own languages.

In 1904, Mabel died of diabetes mellitus. Ronald and Hilary lived with an aunt for a few years and then went to a home for orphans. Ronald met a girl named Edith, who was three years older than he. They fell in love but could not be together until he was older. On January 3, 1913, the day he became twenty-one, he contacted Edith, and they were married three years later, on March 22, 1916. Edith was twenty-seven, and Ronald was twenty-four.

World War I began in the summer of 1914. Ronald thought it best to complete his coursework at Exeter College as he was close

to graduation. He was in the Officer's Training Corps and practicing military drills as well as his college studies. A few weeks after the wedding, he was heading for France.

During the battle of the Somme River, Ronald caught "trench fever." He was sent to a hospital in England, and Edith came to care for him. While in the hospital, he put stories about elves, fairies, and dwarves in his notebook. In 1917, Edith gave birth to her first son, John Reuel (*Reuel* in Hebrew means "friend of God"). Later they had two more boys and a daughter.

Ronald was twenty-eight when he was asked to be a professor of English at the University of Leeds in England. In 1925 he went to Oxford as a professor, working beside another professor, C. S. Lewis, the writer of *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

At home he told stories to his children and made extra money grading examination papers. When he came to a blank page one day, he began writing, "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." This became the first line of *The Hobbit*. It was published in 1937 and sold quickly.

Ronald wrote another book, but it took him seventeen years to complete. *The Lord of the Rings* was much too long. The publisher thought it should be divided into three books and become a trilogy. Ronald finally agreed. The trilogy became three novels: *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), *The Two Towers* (1954), and *The Return of the King* (1955). Ronald Tolkien died on September 2, 1973.





Reading

1. Begin a page of a story using the words that introduced *The Hobbit*: “In a hole in the ground there lived a . . .” Share with your classmates.
2. Ronald unknowingly picked up a poisonous spider as a child. Write about an accident that happened to you when you were young. Exchange your paper with a classmate. Discuss your experiences together.
3. Read about diabetes mellitus in a reference book. Discuss with your classmates what you learned. Do you have relatives or friends with a similar disease? Discuss how they control the problem.

Social Studies

1. J. R. R. Tolkien spent as much time with his children as possible. Write a description of one of your parents or grandparents. Indicate in your writing how he or she influenced you. Discuss your thoughts with him or her.
2. Time yourself as to how long it takes you to write one page and make it as perfect as you can. Figure out how many hours it would take you to write 1,000 pages.
3. Find the Somme River on a physical map of France. What direction is Paris from the river?

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One artist's idea of what a hobbit looks like

Vincent van Gogh

1853–1890 • Painter

The Van Goghs raised six children in the small village of Groot Zundert in Holland. The oldest was Vincent. He got along well with his brother Theo, who was four years younger. Even so, Vincent was known for his bad temper.

In his early twenties, Vincent worked in art galleries in London and Paris. Because his father was a minister, he decided to try that as a profession, too. He became an evangelist in a poor coal-mining district in Belgium. The miners worked from morning till night in dangerous conditions. Vincent felt sorry for them. He gave them his clothes and ate only what they ate. He even moved into a house just as poor as theirs. He drew sketches of the miners and their working conditions. His brother Theo, now an art dealer in Paris, came to see him. Vincent showed Theo his artwork. Theo convinced him he should be an artist and sent him money to support himself. Vincent returned to Holland and worked in an art gallery his uncle owned.

By 1880, Vincent was sure his calling was to be an artist. With Theo's support, Vincent drew pictures of poor people working in the fields or having a meal at home. One picture, now considered a masterpiece, is *The Potato Eaters* (1885). In the painting five people are seated around a table eating potatoes. The picture is painted in dark, somber colors.

Theo took Vincent to Paris to see how artists there were experimenting with color. Before this, artists drew pictures that looked just like the person or scene in front of them, much like a photograph. Artists began painting with a style known as *impressionism*—shimmering, colorful pictures.

By 1888, Vincent was in the south of France at Arles. Every day he went out to paint the fields, or the farmers, or a woman washing clothes in a river. When he could not get out during the day because of the weather, he went out at night with candles stuck on his hat, which he lit so he could see his canvas. His paintings began to brighten with color. Vincent drew his portrait *The Postman Roulin* (1888) in colorful blues.

Vincent became very ill with heat stroke, fainting spells, and seizures. In anger, he cut off part of his ear with his razor.

After Vincent's ear had healed sufficiently, his doctor advised him to avoid excitement and alcohol and to wear his hat in the sun.

(He did not always heed the doctor's advice.) Vincent painted his own portrait titled *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear* (1889).

In June 1889, Vincent painted *The Starry Night*. The next year he moved to Auvers, France, just outside Paris, to be near a doctor who tried to help him. Vincent continued to work hard at his painting and created more than seventy paintings in several weeks. He was doing well until he found that Theo was having difficulty in his work and that Theo's new baby was ill. This sent Vincent into a depression. At age thirty-seven, he took his own life.

Theo was heartbroken and died six months later. His wife buried the two beside each other. Although Vincent painted hundreds of pictures, he only sold one during the time he lived. Now a single van Gogh painting is worth millions of dollars.





Reading

1. Create a list of five titles that would capture the attention young readers in a biography of Vincent Van Gogh. Make each title less than ten words. Exchange the titles with your classmates and read and comment on them.
2. Write the letters of Vincent's name vertically on a page. Then write a word or short group of words beginning with the letters of his name. For example, V—vibrant colors. Exchange your vertical list with your friends.
3. Study the paintings of Van Gogh, such as *The Starry Night*, that are vivid with color. Try copying some of his paintings in the style he used.

Social Studies

1. Pretend you are going to have lunch with Vincent Van Gogh. Prepare a list of questions you might ask him. Compare your questions with those your classmates say they would ask.
2. Vincent was quite concerned for the miners who dug coal in Belgium to the point he would give them what little he had. What other persons in history were self-sacrificing? With two classmates, make a list of them and read about them. Discuss what you found with your classmates and parents.
3. Read about impressionism in a reference book or on the Internet and discuss what you learned with your classmates.

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Van Gogh's *Starry Night*

Phillis Wheatley

1753–1784 • Poet

The seven-year-old African girl, perhaps eight, walked onto the Boston Harbor wharf holding only a ragged rug around her body. Her last memory of her mother was watching her worship the African sun god in Senegambia on the west coast of Africa. Slave traders swooped down on her village and whisked the girl away to a slave ship bound for the American colonies.

The lady at the Boston dock was Mrs. Susannah Wheatley, wife of John Wheatley. The Wheatleys became her owners. Susannah gave the little girl the name Phillis Wheatley, which was the name of the ship that brought her from Africa and the Wheatley family name.

In the North, owners could teach their slaves to read and write. This was not so in the South. Susannah made sure Phillis learned to speak English, her new language, and learned how to read and write it. Amazingly, Phillis was very quick to learn English. Phillis was soon writing alphabet letters with chalk and charcoal, and by the age of twelve she was writing poems of her own.

Phillis had poor health. Her coughing may have been from asthma or some other malady. This followed her throughout her life.

Under the guidance of the Wheatleys and their children, Mary and Nathaniel, Phillis attended the Puritan church. She was required to sit in the section reserved for slaves. Phillis became a Christian. She was especially moved when she heard George Whitefield speak. He told his congregations that everyone was equal in the sight of God. Phillis composed her first major poem for him.

Phillis put her poems together in book form for a publisher in England. In 1773, Nathaniel was traveling there, so Phillis went with him. This voyage was far different from the one that brought her to the colonies.

The people of England welcomed her with open arms. The lord mayor of London gave Phillis a valuable edition of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Milton was a favorite poet of Phillis's. She also met Benjamin Franklin, who was the colonial agent for Pennsylvania at that time. But

after being in London less than a month, a letter telling her that Susannah was quite ill made Phillis decide to return. On her return, the Wheatleys released Phillis and made her a free woman.

Life in Boston was fast becoming turbulent. King George was trying to control the colonists who were rebelling against his heavy taxes.

Phillis's book, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, was being prepared for publication. By September 1773, the book was in print and advertised widely in England. In March 1774, sixty-five-year-old Susannah passed away, with Phillis by her side. In May 1774, Boston residents received word that their harbor would be closed because of the Boston Tea Party uprising against taxes. Fortunately for Phillis, 300 of her books arrived from England just before the closure of the port.

In the next few years John Wheatley and his daughter Mary, a close friend of Phillis's, passed away. Although Phillis was free, she had no skills with which to earn a livelihood. In 1778 she married John Peters, a black businessman. After giving birth to her third child, Phillis died at the age of thirty-one. Sadly, all her children died in infancy.





Reading

1. Write the following: I will not forget. . . . Then choose three facts about Phillis from the biography and complete the sentence. Share with your classmates and parents.
2. How do you think Phillis felt when she was set free as a slave? Discuss with your classmates what she might say and what she could do with her life.
3. Create a short play about Phillis and the Wheatleys. With three or four classmates act out the parts for the others in your class.

Social Studies

1. Find Senegal and Gambia on a map of Africa. What body of water forms their western borders? Read about these two countries and share facts about them that you think will interest your classmates.
2. What do you think was the most difficult thing Phillis had to endure as a slave? Discuss your answer with your classmates.
3. Write a poem about the life of Phillis Wheatley as a little girl leaving Africa and coming to America on a slave ship with no friends or relatives.

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E. B. White

1899–1985 • Writer

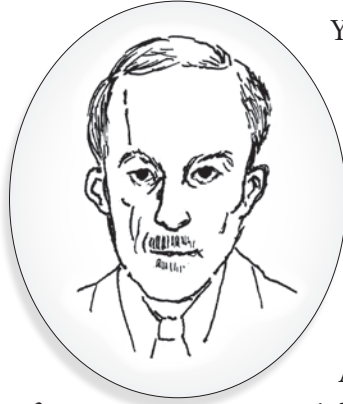
Elwyn Brooks White was the name his parents gave him when he was born on July 11, 1899. Later in life, he preferred his initials E. B. When he began classes at Cornell University in 1919, his friends decided to call him Andrew White, who was the first president of Cornell. It got shortened to “Andy” and that’s what most people called him.

Elwyn loved animals. When he was eight years old, his father brought home fifty eggs and an incubator. Soon little chicks were picking their way out of the shells. Elwyn’s journal filled with information about this wonderful experience.

Upon entering Cornell University, English was his major because he enjoyed writing. Andy was still writing in his journal daily. He also wrote for the school newspaper, the *Cornell Daily Sun*, as a reporter. In his junior year, as editor, Andy wrote 180 editorials. One of his professors was William Strunk, who wrote *The Elements of Style*. In it the professor advised students to write simple and direct sentences, use correct grammar, and “omit needless words.” (After Professor Strunk died, Andy was asked to update the book. He wrote an introduction, reorganized sections, and added some examples. It sold in the millions.)

With college behind him, it was time to find a job. Andy was not excited about writing for newspapers or ad agencies, so with his college classmate friend, Howard Cush, they set out to travel across the United States. Andy bought a Model T Ford he named “Hotspur, the Swift” (a warrior in Shakespeare’s *Henry the IV*).

On the trip, Andy dislocated his elbow; sandpapered a dance floor in Cody, Wyoming, to buy food; and wrote a poem on a napkin about a horse. He sold the poem to the editor of the *Louisville Herald* for five dollars to get money to eat. Andy and Cush finally had to sell their typewriters to survive. Cush returned home but Andy got a job as a reporter for the *Seattle Times*. A few months later, he and others were laid off at the newspaper. Next, he went to Alaska but soon returned to his parents in Mt. Vernon, New York. He still had difficulty finding a job that satisfied him.



A new magazine hit the news stands in February 1925: *The New Yorker*. Andy submitted his writing to the magazine. Within weeks his essays and poetry were published. Editor Harold Ross and Editorial Assistant Katherine Angell offered him a job. He accepted.

Katherine and Andy fell in love and married and then bought a farm in Brooklin, Maine, spending as much time there as they could. Andy loved the animals, just as he had as a child. There were chickens, geese, sheep, pigs, and mice. Andy and Katherine worked for *The New Yorker* while living in Maine. In 1945, E. B. White wrote his first book for children, *Stuart Little*. In 1952, *Charlotte’s Web* was published. It was about a pig named Wilbur, a spider named Charlotte A. Cavatica, and a farm. *Charlotte’s Web* became a Newbery honor book in 1953. His third children’s book, *The Trumpet of the Swan*, was published in 1970.

Katherine died in 1975, and E. B. White, the shy, private person and writer, died of Alzheimer’s disease ten years later.



Reading

1. When E. B. White was eleven, he wrote a poem about a mouse. It was published in a children's magazine. Write a poem about your favorite animal. Read it to your classmates and family.
2. Copy and complete the following sentence.
"I enjoyed (did not enjoy) the biography of E. B. White because. . . ." Share your thought(s) with that of a classmate.
3. Read one of E. B. White's three children's books. Discuss with your classmates what you learned about him as a writer from reading one of his books.
4. Copy from the biography of E. B. White a factual sentence and an opinion sentence. Discuss your choices with a classmate.
4. E. B. White once wrote: "I like animals, and it would be odd if I failed to write about them." Exchange the word *animals* for an item you prefer (tree, cars, clothes, etc.) and write about them. Share your writing with a classmate.

Further Reading

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Tingum, Janice. *E. B. White: The Elements of a Writer*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1995.

Social Studies

1. In what ways are you like and unlike E. B. White? Make a list under the words *like* and *unlike* and discuss what you wrote with a classmate who has done this same activity.
2. Where would you place yourself on a scale of 1 to 10, with "happy with people" as 1, and "prefer to be alone" as 10? Discuss with a classmate why you placed yourself where you did.
3. For your classmates, role-play a situation in the life of E. B. White. Discuss with the class what went through your mind as you role-played the situation.



Laura Ingalls Wilder

1867–1957 • Writer

A few months after the end of the Civil War, Laura Ingalls was born into a pioneer family in Wisconsin. She was the second daughter. When Laura was three, they moved to Kansas, in Osage Indian Territory, where her baby sister Carrie was born. Her father Charles, called Pa, built a log house there. The Indians were friendly, but as more settlers came, the Indians became upset. There was talk of war. Pa took his family back to Wisconsin, and the family moved back into their previous home.

Pa hunted and trapped animals for their fur. Mary and Laura helped their mother churn butter, wash dishes, sew, and keep a clean house. In the evenings Pa would play his fiddle. A baby boy, Freddie, was born and died, and in 1877 Grace was born. More settlers came. Pa Ingalls decided it was too crowded, so the family packed their belongings into the covered wagon and set out west.

This time they went to Minnesota to a farm along Plum Creek, near the town of Walnut Creek. The house was one room dug out of the side of a small hill beside the creek. They lived there until Pa could build them a new house. The girls went to school and the family went to church in Walnut Creek. Laura walked with her sister Mary, two miles to school and back each day. In December the snow was often too deep to walk to school and the temperature dropped to forty degrees below zero.

The family moved again, this time to Burr Oak, Iowa. A year later they moved back to Walnut Creek and then on to the Dakota Territory. In

1879 Mary lost her sight when she contracted meningitis. Laura became her eyes and described what was going on around the family. Mary would later go to the Iowa School for the Blind.

The family's last move was to De Smet, South Dakota, in 1880. Pa worked for the railroad. A young boy, Almanzo Wilder, and a friend traveled to another town in the dead of winter to get food for the settlers. Laura fell in love with Almanzo and married him a few years later when she was eighteen.



The young couple had a daughter, Rose, in 1886. A few months later their barn burned down. Then Almanzo got a disease that left him with a limp for the rest of his life. The couple decided to move to Missouri. There they bought property and named it Rocky Ridge Farm.

When Laura was in her forties, she began focusing on writing. Her daughter, Rose, had become a journalist and encouraged her mother. Laura wrote articles about rural life and communities and life on small farms. One of her articles appeared in McCall's magazine in 1919 titled "Whom Will You Marry?"

In 1932, she wrote a book for young girls titled *Little House in the Big Woods*. Laura was in her mid-sixties when she became famous for her books. Her next books were *Little House on the Prairie* and *On the Banks of Plum Creek*. They describe her life as a child and young person. Laura Ingalls Wilder died at her Rocky Ridge Farm on February 10, 1957.



Reading

1. Make a list of four words that describe Laura Ingalls Wilder. Compare your list with those of your classmates.
2. In your mind, what was the most difficult thing Laura had to experience as a young pioneer girl? How do you think you would have handled that experience? Discuss this with a family member.
3. Who among your relatives would most enjoy reading about Laura's life on the prairie? Why? Read the biography to that person and ask what he or she thinks of Laura.

Social Studies

1. Read about the Osage Indians in an encyclopedia. Make a list of things that interest you most about the Osage and share that interest with your classmates.
2. What relationship did Jean Pierre Chouteau have with the Osage Indians? Learn more about him and his son in an encyclopedia or on a Web site, and share what you find with your classmates.
3. Laura's sister Mary became blind after an illness. Read in an encyclopedia, reference book, or Internet Web site about the causes of blindness and the help available for blind or visually impaired persons. Helen Keller and Ray Charles were two well-known people who were blind. Read about them and report the information to your classmates.

Further Reading

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Anderson, William. *Laura's Album: A Remembrance Scrapbook of Laura Ingalls Wilder*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998.

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Oprah Gail Winfrey

born 1954 • TV Talk Show Host, Actress

Her given name was Orpah, an Old Testament name, but either because of the reversal of two letters on her birth certificate, or a misspelling or mispronunciation of her name, she became Oprah. The baby girl was born to Vernita Lee and Vernon Winfrey on January 29, 1954. They lived on a farm in Mississippi.

Oprah's parents separated, so her grandma Hattie, on her mother's side, raised her. In kindergarten, Oprah wrote a note to her teacher the first day of school that she should really be in first grade. The kindergarten teacher agreed. The following year, she skipped second grade for third grade.

At six years of age Oprah went to live with her mother in Milwaukee. She became an avid reader. Oprah lived with poverty and abuse. She became a delinquent. Vernita worked long hours and was not home to care for Oprah, so she was sent to Nashville, Tennessee, to be raised by her father. Vernon and Zelma, his new wife, gave her excellent care. Her father was strict and demanding, but full of love for his daughter. Oprah needed guidance. Vernon required Oprah to read one book a week and write a report on the book. She also had to learn five new vocabulary words each day in addition to the work assigned by her school teachers.

The love and structure her father gave her was the foundation Oprah needed to become an excellent student. She joined her high school drama and debate clubs, became the student council president, and represented Nashville's East High as their "Outstanding Teenager of America." She won an Elks Club oratorical contest and received a full scholarship to Tennessee State University. At Tennessee State, she was crowned

Miss Black Nashville and Miss Black Tennessee. At 19, a college sophomore, she became Nashville's first African-American female co-anchor of the evening news on the local television station.

In 1984, Oprah became the co-anchor on *A.M. Chicago*, a morning talk show. The next year the show became *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. The following year the program was nationally syndicated.

Oprah was asked to act in a film based on a novel by Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*.

Oprah's performance earned her a nomination for an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actress. Other films followed, as well as television movies and videos. Oprah began her own company, Harpo Entertainment Group. (Harpo is her name spelled backward.)

To share her love for books, Oprah began a reading club on her talk show. She told about the books and their authors. Books that normally would only sell a few thousand copies began selling in the hundreds of thousands.

Oprah, who is now a wealthy woman, makes generous financial contributions to a variety of organizations and institutions. One Christmas she heard from a friend that a church was running short of funds to help people who were without food. She sent a large check to buy groceries for distribution to the needy.

Although she has won many prestigious awards, such as *Time* magazine's "America's 100 Most Influential People of the Twentieth Century," she has not forgotten her roots. Often during the week she gives freely of herself in talks to church congregations, youth groups, and those who are living in poverty.





Reading

1. Keep a notebook of words to learn each weekday. Start with one or more a day and work up to five a day as Oprah was required to do. Here are four words from this biography to get you started: *delinquent*, *oratorical*, *prestigious*, *syndicated*. Copy the words and write the dictionary definition after them. Try using them in your writing or speech when appropriate. On Saturday and Sunday review them and begin again.
2. One of the quotes that tells much about Oprah is this: "Just tell the truth. It'll save you every time." What does that mean to you? Write what you believe and compare your answer with those of your classmates.
3. Prepare to read the biography of Oprah to lower-grade children. Read other biographies of Oprah in your library so you can answer questions they may ask about her.
4. Write twenty words that best tell how you feel about Oprah and read what you wrote to a relative.
2. Oprah is very generous with charitable organizations she supports. Talk with your parents about what organizations they think are worthy of support. Then discuss what you learned from them with your classmates. Make a list of those groups whom all of you think are important to help financially or in some other way.
3. Ask your parents' permission to watch Oprah on her television talk show and report to your class your reaction to what you experienced.

Further Reading

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Weil, Ann. *Oprah Winfrey: Queen of Daytime TV*. Parsippany, NJ: Crestwood House, 1999.

Social Studies

1. Locate Chicago on a map and then read about the city in a reference book or on the Internet. Write five facts about the city and exchange your set with those of a classmate. Discuss with each other what you learned.

Grant Wood

1891–1942 • Painter

Grant Wood was born February 13, 1891. As a child, Grant loved to sit on a fence and watch the chickens and turkeys chase each other on his family farm; then off to the kitchen he went to check the fire in the stove. His mother, Hattie, would take out a stick that was burned on one end. This became his pencil. Then he laid out a sheet of brown wrapping paper, or a square of cardboard from an empty box of crackers. Chickens magically appeared in his drawings.

Farming was not easy. At one point, Grant's father could not afford a quarter to buy a bottle of India ink so Grant could enter a drawing contest, but one Christmas Grant got a box of colored pencils. The farm was heavily mortgaged. When Grant's father became ill, the chores fell to the four children. A few months later, Grant's father died. The farm was sold and the family moved to Cedar Rapids to be nearer the grandparents. Hattie took in washing to support the family.

In school, Grant began selling some of his drawings. When he was in eighth grade, he received a prize of \$5 for one and \$8 for another. Grant studied a monthly magazine, *Craftsman*, and bought art supplies listed there. He enrolled in the Handicraft Guild one summer. There he was introduced to Renaissance painters who painted precise and clear drawings.

After graduating from high school, Grant taught on a provisional certificate for one year in a one-room school for \$35 a month. Three nights a week he went twenty-eight miles by train to art classes at the University of Iowa. He never bothered to enroll. He just went to class and

began painting. After three or four months he just stopped going.

When the United States entered World War I, Grant enlisted as a private in the army. During his training he drew pencil portraits of his buddies and the officers. If they offered to pay, he charged privates a quarter and officers a dollar. Only a few offered to pay.

He contracted anthrax and became seriously ill. After his hospitalization, he was sent to

Washington to paint camouflage on artillery pieces. For a few years, before-and-after photos of a cannon he helped camouflage were displayed at the Smithsonian Institution. The war over, he returned to Cedar Rapids.

Back home he taught art at the high school. Then he took a year off to study in Paris. To cover his costs, he sold his paintings as he traveled.

When he returned home, he worked as an interior decorator. This work paid him well, but he worked slowly and meticulously. People complained their homes were a mess.

Finally, Grant discovered what was to be his personal style of painting: regionalism. He painted the people and scenes of his region of Iowa in his own distinctive way. His mother was the subject of *Woman with Plants*, which became a prize winner at the Iowa State Fair. *Stone City, Iowa* won top prize in the landscape category. He painted trees as round and puffy. The one painting that set him apart from other artists was of his sister, Nan, and Grant's dentist: *American Gothic*. Grant died on February 12, 1942, just two hours before his fifty-first birthday.





Reading

1. Write five questions you would like Grant Wood to answer. Read them to your class for discussion to learn what your class members say. What do you think Grant might tell you?
2. Write a review of the life of Grant Wood in thirty words. Compare your review with those of a classmate. How are the reviews alike? Different?
3. One of Grant's famous paintings was titled *Dinner for Threshers*. He said the painting "is from my own life. It includes my family and our neighbors, our tablecloths, our chairs, and our hens." Show the picture to some older relatives or friends and ask them what they know about farmers helping each other at harvest time. Take notes and tell your classmates what you learned.
3. If your library has a copy of the John Duggeleby book (listed on the "Further Reading" list), try drawing a chicken as the author describes in the last part of the book.
4. Grant contracted the deadly anthrax disease while in the army in World War I. Read about how the disease affects humans. Share what you learn with your classmates.

Further Reading

Duggeleby, John. *Artist in Overalls: The Life of Grant Wood*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996.

Venezia, Mike. *Grant Wood*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1995.

Social Studies

1. In a reference book, encyclopedia, or Internet Web site, read about the state of Iowa. Jot down five things that most impress you about the state. Compare what you find about Iowa with your own state and share what you learned with your classmates.
2. When Grant was small, he enjoyed watching the chickens and turkeys on the farm. He especially enjoyed drawing pictures of them. What animals did you like when you were young? Which ones do you prefer at this time in your life? Draw a picture of an animal and compare it with those of your classmates.



Frank Lloyd Wright

1867–1959 • Architect

Frank Lloyd Wright was destined to be an architect. His mother Anna, a teacher, was so sure of this she decorated the wall of his nursery with English cathedrals before he was born. Frank's father William was a Baptist minister, teacher, and musician.

Anna bought a set of blocks that were a variety of shapes: cubes, spheres, triangles, and others. A German educator, Friedrich Fröbel, who founded the kindergarten movement, believed children should be helped to learn naturally and not just by rote memorization. In his program there were activities featuring clay modeling, cutting paper, and weaving. Anna used Fröbel's blocks to help Frank develop a mind-set for architecture.

Frank's middle name at birth was Lincoln, after Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War president. But Frank decided to legally change it to Lloyd, which was from his mother's side of the family.

At nineteen, he took a job as draftsman with an architectural firm. His pay was eight dollars a week. Frank worked diligently, read much, and continued to develop his skills in drawing relating to architecture. He could imagine a building in his mind. When he could "see" it vividly, he would put on paper what he was seeing.

By 1887, Frank was working with an architectural firm in Chicago. Two years later he married Catherine; they would have six children. He opened his own firm and focused on creating private residences and, occasionally, commercial buildings.

In the 1900s, he made trips to Japan. For several years he worked on a design for the construction of the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. He was warned by the Japanese that Japan was subject

to earthquakes. So Frank decided to make the hotel roof of lightweight copper. Tile roofs would fall off during an earthquake and injure or kill those underneath. He found that the ground under the hotel site was a sea of mud. Just above the mud was about eight feet of topsoil. Frank designed the building so it could "float" on the mud during an earthquake, much as a battleship does on water. He also designed plumbing and electrical connectors that were flexible and would give and not break.

He had a reflecting pool built and filled with water in the event of fire so water would always be available.

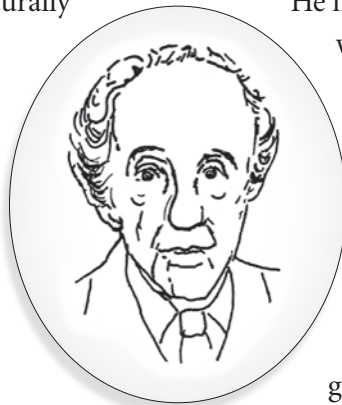
Inevitably an earthquake occurred on September 1, 1923.

Frank got a telegram from the hotel manager at his studio in Wisconsin, which read in part: "Hotel stands undamaged as a monument to your genius. . . ." Many people were made

homeless by the earthquake and given shelter in the hotel days after the catastrophe.

One of Frank's most famous creations was built in a Pennsylvania woods in 1937. The Fallingwater house in Bear Run, Pennsylvania, was a home constructed on solid rock over a waterfall. There were terraces that projected over the falls and glass windows and doors that allowed the occupants to see in three directions from the main floor. The building is now a museum.

Frank Lloyd Wright produced fascinating buildings for seventy years. Among his most celebrated buildings are the S. C. Johnson Administration building in Racine, Wisconsin; his "Usonian" home designs, which he first built in 1937 in Madison, Wisconsin; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City. He died on April 9, 1959, from heart failure.





Reading

1. After viewing the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright in the bibliography references or other sources, write a letter to him about how you like or dislike his designs. Read your letters aloud to your classmates and discuss how you agree and differ.
2. If you were permitted to change your middle name to that of a president of the United States, what name would you choose? Explain to your classmates why you would choose that name.
3. With three or four classmates, skim through an article in an encyclopedia or on an Internet Web site. Each of you study a section and report on it to your class. Areas your group may want to cover are the basic elements of architecture; its history; education and training; and careers in architecture.

Social Studies

1. What four countries lie west of Japan? What sea would you cross to get to one from Japan?
2. Earthquakes bring down buildings on people if the buildings are not well built. Research how engineers design earthquake-resistant structures. Share with your classmates what you learn.
3. There are safety precautions people must take during earthquakes. Read about these precautions in an encyclopedia, reference book, or Web site and share what you learn with your classmates.

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The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright

Answer Key

Hans Christian Andersen

Social Studies

4. Copenhagen

Johann Sebastian Bach

Social Studies

1. Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark
2. Berlin; southwest

Ludwig van Beethoven

Social Studies

3. German

Leonard Bernstein

Social Studies

1. composer, conductor, concert pianist

Ray Charles

Reading

2. as raised dots of paper felt by touch

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain)

Reading

1. safe water

Social Studies

3. Illinois

Leonardo da Vinci

Social Studies

2. Sicily

Charles Dickens

Reading

3. He was miserly, a skinflint.

Social Studies

3. the River Thames

Paul Laurence Dunbar

Social Studies

2. Jonathan Dayton was the youngest signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Virginia Hamilton

Social Studies

1. Dayton, Ohio

Pablo Picasso

Social Studies

3. France, Portugal

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn

Social Studies

3. Hollanders or Nederlanders; Dutch

Maria Tallchief

Social Studies

2. northern Oklahoma, northwest of Tulsa

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Social Studies

1. Arctic Ocean

J. R. R. Tolkien

Social Studies

3. South

Phillis Wheatley

Social Studies

1. the Atlantic Ocean

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Social Studies

2. U. S. Indian agent

Frank Lloyd Wright

Social Studies

1. China, South Korea, North Korea, Russia; Sea of Japan

Art Credits

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Louisa May Alcott (2, 3); Hans Christian Andersen (4, 5); Leonard Bernstein (16, 17); Charlie Chaplin (22, 23); Samuel Langhorne Clemens (26, 27); George Gershwin (40, 41); Yo-Yo Ma (60, 61); Rembrandt van Rijn (70, 71); Steven Spielberg (78, 79); E. B. White (92, 93); Grant Wood (98, 99); Frank Lloyd Wright (100, 101)

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Marian Anderson (6, 7); Martha Graham (42, 43)

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USMC Band (77)

Courtesy of Wikipedia.org:

piano (25); "Mona Lisa" (31); sheet music (49); "Le guitariste" (67); "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp" (71); "Starry Night" (89); statue (47) ; studio (73) 

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