

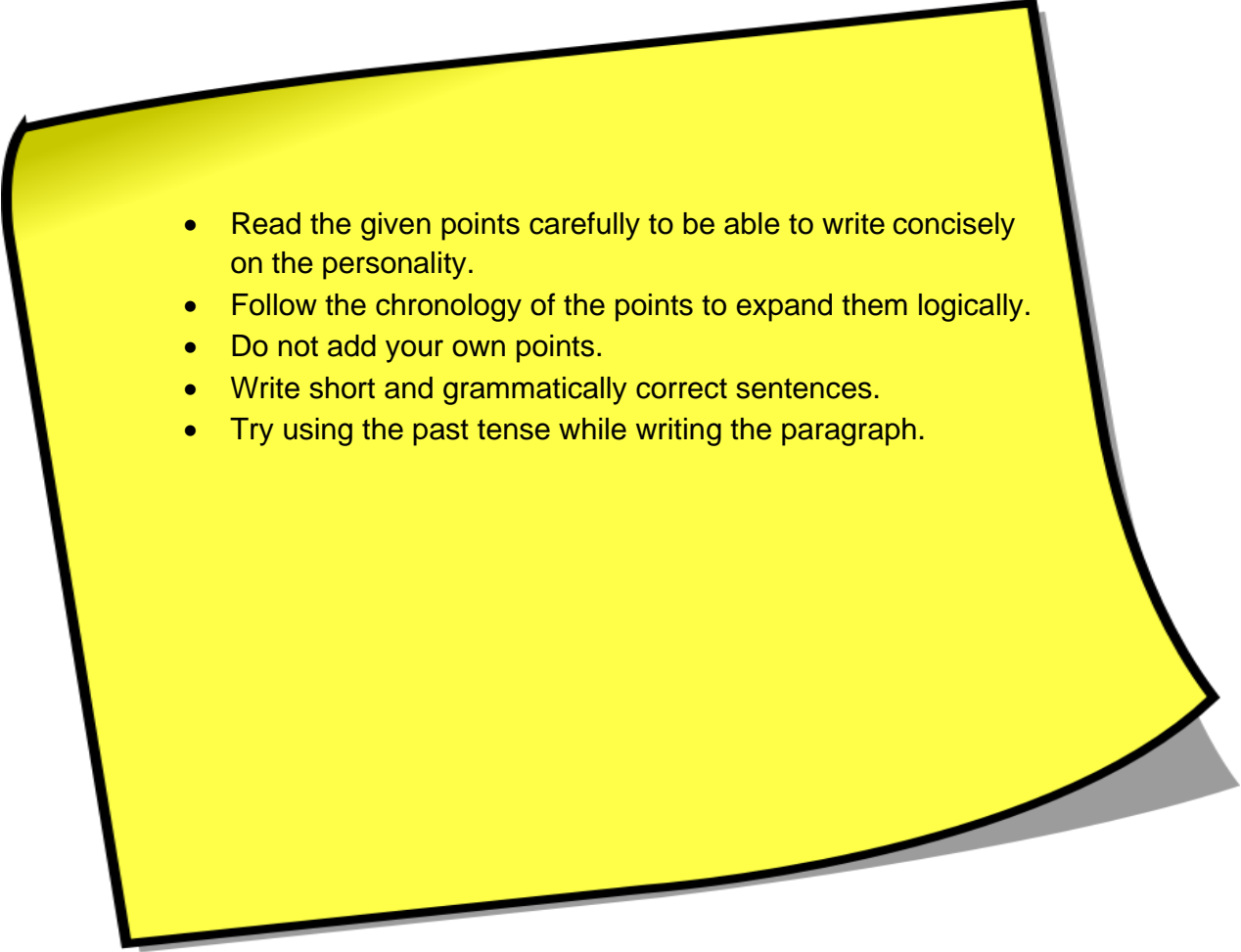
ENGLISH

WRITING A BIO-SKETCH

What is a Bio-sketch?

A biographical sketch is a brief description of a famous person in about 100–150 words. It is written as a short narrative and touches upon the major events in the life of a famous person. As a bio-sketch is restricted to a paragraph, a list of important points is provided for expansion. The points given are usually in the chronological order, and hence, this chronology should be maintained in the bio-sketch.

Guidelines for Writing a Bio-sketch

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- Read the given points carefully to be able to write concisely on the personality.
 - Follow the chronology of the points to expand them logically.
 - Do not add your own points.
 - Write short and grammatically correct sentences.
 - Try using the past tense while writing the paragraph.

Let us look at a few bio-sketches of some famous personalities.

George Orwell

Eric Arthur Blair — pen name — *George Orwell*

Born — 25 June 1903 — Motihari, Bihar

Education — Convent School in Henley-on-Thames; Eton College

Career — Indian Police Service, posted in Burma; left and became a writer

Married to Eileen O'Shaughnessy — 9 June 1936

Writing — prolific writer— poetry, fiction, journalism

Best known books — *Animal Farm*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Died — 21 January 1950 in London

Eric Arthur Blair was a writer who wrote under the pen name George Orwell. He was born on 25 June 1903 in Motihari, Bihar. Orwell received his early education in a convent school in Henley-on-Thames and went to Eton College for higher studies. Orwell joined the Indian Police Service and was posted in Burma. However, he left the service to become a writer. George Orwell married Eileen O'Shaughnessy on 9 June 1936. Orwell was a prolific writer best known for his poetry, fiction and journalism. Some of his best books are *Animal Farm* and *Ninety Eighty-Four*. He died in London on 21 January 1950.



Sir Charles Spencer (Charlie) Chaplin

British comedian/actor and filmmaker

Born — 16 April 1889, London

Childhood — unhappy, poor — parents theatre actors

Debut — at the age of five — Hollywood in 1914 — made 35 films

Famous caricature — tiny figure, bowler hat and cane, moustache, turned out feet

Screen Classics — *The Kid*, *City Lights*, *The Great Dictator*

Honours — Knighted at 80 by Queen Elizabeth

Died — 25 December 1977

Sir Charles Spencer (Charlie) Chaplin was a British comedian/actor and filmmaker. He was born in London on 16 April 1889 and led an unhappy and a poor childhood. His parents were theatre actors. Charlie Chaplin made his professional debut at the age of five and entered Hollywood in 1914. He made 35 films. Charlie Chaplin is remembered as a tiny figure with a bowler hat and cane, a funny short moustache and awkward turned out feet. Some screen classics of Chaplin are *The Kid*, *City Lights* and *The Great Dictator*. Charlie Chaplin was knighted by Queen Elizabeth when he was 80 years old. Sir Charles Spencer (Charlie) Chaplin died on 25 December 1977.

Subhas Chandra Bose, Netaji

Indian freedom fighter

Born — 23 January 1879, Cuttack, Odisha

Education— BA from Scottish Church College, University of Calcutta

Achievements — Established the Indian National Army

Setback — Retreat after the defeat of Germany and Japan

Died — 18 August 1945

Subhas Chandra Bose was an Indian freedom fighter who was also called Netaji. He was born on 23 January 1879, in Cuttack, Odisha. Netaji completed his BA from Scottish Church College at the University of Calcutta. He established the Indian National Army. The retreat after the defeat of Germany and Japan was a major setback for him. Netaji died on 18 August 1945.

Hector Hugh Munro, Saki

British Writer, pen name Saki

Born — 18 December 1870, in Akyab, British Burma

Writing career — started as a journalist and wrote political satires for the *Westminster Gazette*

Short stories — in 1908, he settled in London and wrote short stories like *Reginald* (1904), *Reginald in Russia* (1910), *The Chronicles of Clovis* (1912), and *Beasts and Super-Beasts* (1914)

Died — November 1916, during the Battle of the Ancre by a German sniper

Hector Hugh Munro, also known as Saki, was a British writer born on 18 December 1870, in Akyab, British Burma. He started as a journalist and wrote political satires for the *Westminster Gazette*. In 1908, Saki settled down in London and wrote short stories like *Reginald* (1904), *Reginald in Russia* (1910), *The Chronicles of Clovis* (1912), and *Beasts and Super-Beasts* (1914). He died in November 1916 during the Battle of the Ancre after being shot by a German sniper.

Vikram Sarabhai

Indian physicist and the Father of Indian space programme

Born — 12 August 1919 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in a rich Jain business family

Personal life — married classical dancer Mrinalini Sarabhai in September 1942 and has two children Kartikeya and Mallika

Achievements — established ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation). Set up the first rocket launching station in India at Thumba near Thiruvananthapuram

Founder of many institutions of international repute — IIM, Ahmedabad; Nehru Foundation for Development; Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) etc.

Death — 31 December 1971 in Kerala of heart attack because of excessive stress

Vikram Sarabhai was an Indian Physicist and is known as the Father of Indian space programme. He was born on 12 August 1919 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, in a rich Jain business family. He married classical dancer Mrinalini Sarabhai in September 1942 and they have two children Kartikeya and Mallika. Sarabhai established ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) and set up the first rocket launching station in India at Thumba near Thiruvananthapuram. He is remembered as the founder of many institutions of international repute such as the IIM, Ahmedabad; Nehru Foundation for Development; Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) etc. He died on 31 December 1971 in Kerala of heart attack because of excessive stress.

Lal Bahadur Shastri

Born — Lal Bahadur Varma at Mughalsarai, Varanasi

Second Prime Minister of Independent India

Known for — his slogan 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965

Highlights — participated in the Salt Satyagraha in 1930. Spent almost 9 years in prison for participating in the Indian freedom struggle

Death — 11 January 1966, a day after signing the Tashkent Declaration in Tashkent, Soviet Union (now in Uzbekistan) reportedly because of a heart attack

Lal Bahadur Shastri was the second Prime Minister of Independent India. He was born as Lal Bahadur Varma at Mughalsarai, Varanasi. He is known for his slogan 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. Shastri participated in the Salt Satyagraha in 1930. He spent almost 9 years in prison for participating in the Indian freedom struggle. On 11 January 1966, a day after signing the Tashkent Declaration in Tashkent, Soviet Union (now in Uzbekistan), Lal Bahadur Shastri reportedly expired because of a heart attack.

Ajmal Kasab

Pakistani militant and a member of LeT

Life — 13 July 1987 - 21 November 2012

Known for — his participation in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks in Maharashtra, India

Early life — Briefly worked with elder brother in Lahore but later engaged in petty crime and armed robbery.

Criminal acts — Joined the LeT in December 2007. Attacked the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai along with an accomplice.

Killed three senior Mumbai Police officers, opened fire on people near Metro Cinema and Vidhan Bhavan

Death — convicted and executed by hanging for murder, conspiracy and waging war against India along with other crimes on 21 November 2012

Ajmal Kasab was a Pakistani militant and a member of LeT. Born on 13 July 1987, he briefly worked with his elder brother in Lahore. However, he later engaged in petty crime and armed robbery. He reportedly joined LeT in December 2007. Kasab is known for his participation in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks in Maharashtra, India. He attacked the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai, along with an accomplice. He killed three senior Mumbai Police officers, opened fire on people near Metro Cinema and Vidhan Bhavan. He was convicted for murder, conspiracy and waging war against India along with other crimes and was executed on 21 November 2012.

Shakuntala Devi

Popularly known as the 'human computer'

Born — 4 November 1929 in Bengaluru, India

Known for — having exceptional calculation and memorisation ability

World record — entered the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 1982

Career — wrote many books on Mathematics, puzzles and Astrology as well as novels

First study of homosexuals in India — wrote *The World of Homosexuals* (1977)

Married — IAS officer Paritosh Banerji in mid-1960s

Died — 21 April 2013 in Bengaluru. Survived by a daughter Anupama Banerji

Shakuntala Devi, popularly known as the 'human computer', was born on 4 November 1929 in Bengaluru, India. She was known for her exceptional ability to calculate and memorise. She also earned a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 1982 for her talent. Shakuntala Devi wrote many books about Mathematics, puzzles and Astrology as well as novels. In fact, her book *The World of Homosexuals* (1977) was the first study of homosexuals in India. In the mid-1960s, she married Paritosh Banerji, an IAS officer from Kolkata. Shakuntala Devi died on 21 April 2013 in Bengaluru, and is survived by her daughter Anupama Banerji.

Joanne Rowling

British Novelist

Pen Names — J. K. Rowling, Robert Galbraith

Born — 31 July 1965, Yate, Gloucestershire

Education — St Michael's Primary School, The University of Exeter, England

Works — Best known for Harry Potter (2007), a series of seven fantasy novels

Personal life — Lives in Scotland with her husband and three children

Currently UK's best-selling living author

Joanne Rowling, best known as J.K. Rowling, is a British novelist born on 31 July 1965, in Yate, Gloucestershire. Rowling studied in St Michael's Primary School in childhood and then went to The University of Exeter, England. She is also known by the pen name Robert Galbraith. J. K. Rowling is best known for Harry Potter (2007), a series of seven fantasy novels. She lives in Scotland with her husband and three children.

Malala Yousafzai

Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest ever Nobel Prize laureate

Born — 12 July 1997 in Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Early life — Wrote anonymously for the BBC blog on Taliban's oppression in the Swat Valley

Assassination attempt — shot thrice by a Taliban gunman on 9 October 2012 for strongly advocating girls' education in the valley

Treatment — the event got global attention and Malala travelled to the UK after initial treatment in Pakistan

Education — since March 2013, Malala has been studying in the Edgbaston High School in Birmingham

Nobel Prize — co-recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17 on 10 October 2014

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education. She was born on 12 July 1997 in Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. She used to write anonymously for the BBC blog describing Taliban's oppression in the Swat Valley. On 9 October 2012, she was shot thrice by a Taliban gunman for strongly advocating girls' education in the valley. Her assassination attempt gained global attention and Malala travelled to the UK after initial treatment in Pakistan. Since March 2013, Malala has been studying in the Edgbaston High School in Birmingham. On 10 October 2014, she co-received the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17.