

## Unwritten

By Julie Kilcullen, 2006, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain and demonstrate an understanding of the difference between fact and opinion. The student will be able to compare and contrast factual accounts versus fictional accounts of historical individuals. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the genre of biography through their writing and discussion.

The student is expected to represent text information in different ways such as in outline, timeline, or graphic organizer. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (10)(L)**

The student is expected to interpret text ideas through such varied means as journal writing, discussion, enactment, media; connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across text. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (11)(B,D)**

The student is expected to form and revise questions for investigations, including questions arising from interests and units of study; summarize and organize information from multiple sources by taking notes, outlining ideas, or making charts; produce research projects and reports in effective formats using visuals to support meaning, as appropriate. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (13)(A,E,F)**

The student is expected to write to inform such as to explain, describe, report, and narrate. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (15)(C)**

The student is expected to generate ideas and plans for writing by using such prewriting strategies as brainstorming, graphic organizers, notes, and logs; develop drafts by categorizing ideas, organizing them into paragraphs, and blending paragraphs within larger units of text; revise selected drafts by adding, elaborating, deleting, combining, and rearranging text; revise drafts for coherence, progression, and logical support of ideas; edit drafts for specific purposes such as to ensure standard usage, varied sentence structure, and appropriate word choice; use available technology to support aspects of creating, revising, editing, and publishing texts; refine selected pieces frequently to "publish" for general and specific audiences; proofread his/her own writing and that of others; select and use reference materials and resources as needed for writing, revising, and editing final drafts. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (19)(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I)**

The student is expected to apply criteria to evaluate writing; respond in constructive ways to others' writings; evaluate how well his/her own writing achieves its purposes. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (20)(A,B,C)**

The student is expected to frame questions to direct research; organize prior knowledge about a topic in a variety of ways such as by producing a graphic organizer; take notes from relevant and authoritative sources such as guest speakers, periodicals, and on-line searches; summarize and organize ideas gained from multiple sources in useful ways such as outlines, conceptual maps, learning logs, and timelines; present information in various forms using available technology. **TEKS: §110.6. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4, (21)(A,B,C,D,E)**

**Focus:** Students will be shown a montage of photographs from the *Texas Tides* site. The teacher will then read the lyrics to the song “*Unwritten*” or play the song for students. The teacher will ask students what they believe it means to be “unwritten”. They will be told that the photographs they just viewed were of people whose stories/ biographies are unwritten. That it will be their responsibility to write their stories/ biographies. Teacher will discuss the idiom “A picture is worth a thousand words”, and then ask the class what that means. Students will share their responses until the nature of the idiom is revealed. The teacher will then ask the students whether they believe that they could use “a thousand words” to tell the stories of the people in the photographs.

**Instruction:** Students will be asked to select a photograph of an individual from the *Texas Tides* site. The students will be given no information about the individual they have selected. They will be told that they must write this individual’s life story based only on the photograph they have selected. Their biography must include the name they choose for the individual, the date of birth, the date of death, their occupation, and at least three important events from their life. The teacher may choose to do a mini-lesson on biographies to ensure students understand the genre. (The teacher should be advised that created this piece and completing this lesson may take several class periods.) Students will create a rough draft. While students are writing the teacher will interact with students to monitor progress or difficulties. Teacher will hold individual writing conferences with students who complete their rough draft. After students have completed their fictional biographies they will share them with their classmates in the “*author’s chair*”. When all the students have shared their pieces the teacher will instruct the students on how to use the *Texas Tides* site to locate the individual they used for their biography. Students will then read the real biography of this person.

**Assessment:** Students will be asked to create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the biography they created with the actual biography of the person. Students will also explain which entries on the diagram are facts or fiction. They will then share their diagrams with the class in large group.

**Enrichment/Extensions:** Students will select a photograph of a fellow classmate and be asked to interview the student with the intention of gathering information to write the biography of that student. The teacher will help students to develop interview questions to ensure that adequate information is obtained for their writing pieces. When students have completed the biographies of their classmates they will publish them in a class “*Biography Anthology*” for the students to share.

**Lyrics for "Unwritten"**  
**By Natasha Bedingfield**

**"Unwritten"**

I am unwritten, can't read my mind, I'm undefined  
I'm just beginning, the pen's in my hand, ending unplanned

Staring at the blank page before you  
Open up the dirty window  
Let the sun illuminate the words that you could not find

Reaching for something in the distance  
So close you can almost taste it  
Release your inhibitions  
Feel the rain on your skin  
No one else can feel it for you  
Only you can let it in  
No one else, no one else  
Can speak the words on your lips  
Drench yourself in words unspoken  
Live your life with eyes wide open  
Today is where your book begins  
The rest is still unwritten

I break tradition, sometimes my tries, are outside the lines  
We've been conditioned to not make mistakes, but I can't live that way

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Live your life with arms wide open  
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