

Minilesson:	Episode Biographies
Unit Topic (Genre):	Biography
Grade Level:	4 th grade
Common Core State Standards (CCSS):	W.T.3.4 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
Mentor Text/s	<i>Dolley Madison Saves George Washington</i> (D. Brown)
Introduce the Topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipatory set • Review or connect 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As previously discussed, a biography is a nonfiction account of a person's life that is written by another person. An autobiography is an account of a person's life that is written by that person. 2. Begin with "True Life: I Have Too Many Siblings" video clip. http://www.mtv.com/videos/true-life-i-have-too-many-siblings/1661800/playlist.jhtml#series=2211&seriesId=5232&channelId=1 3. Introduce the term "episode biography" and relate it to clip that was shown (the entire show focuses on one particular moment in those people's lives. It may not be done in one day, but it focuses on one aspect or time of a person's life).
MODELING Share Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain topic • Mentor text • Identify other examples Provide Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate • Clarify misconceptions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Episode biographies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As previously mentioned, a biography is a nonfiction account of a person's life that is written by another person or by that person. • An episode biography focuses on one specific time in a person's life. • The "episode" of that person's life includes a lot of detail and explanation because it only discusses one portion of their life. 2. Read a portion of <i>Dolley Madison Saves George Washington</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give brief overview to students about Dolley Madison (from beginning of the book). She was married to James Madison in 1794 who later became president in 1808. Dolley was very charming and well liked by the people as the first lady. She enjoyed redecorating at the President's Mansion and even reserved a life-size portrait of George Washington to hang in the home. • Start reading at part where the Americans and English begin fighting. • Read to end of story, discussing with students how the main focus of Dolley Madison and the George Washington painting never strayed. • Other details were provided throughout story, but the entire book revolved around Dolley saving this painting because it meant so much to her. 3. Episode biographies are written because they usually have a significant impact on a person's life. 4. Have students get out a new blank sheet of paper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down significant events in their lives (from birth up until now) that mean a lot of them. • Make a graphic organizer detailing this "episode" in their

	<p>life. What emotions does this evoke?</p> <p>5. Students will choose one of these topics to use later in the group work (coaching and scaffolding section).</p>
<p>COACHING & SCAFFOLDING</p> <p>Guided Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pairs or small groups • Checking for understanding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In pairs or small groups, students will choose one of the topics that they wrote down about their personal life, or choose a celebrity / person from history that they want to research. 2. If students choose to write about a celebrity, they must choose one particular time or “episode” in their life that they are able to write in detail about. 3. As students are working, walk around class to see if students are on the right track. If they are struggling to write about one particular moment in a celebrity’s life, suggest that they continue researching a different person or write about someone that they personally know. 4. Have groups share the ideas that they have written down so far or the pieces that they have created.
<p>Independent Writing Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ap <p>ply new topic/skill in revisions or current pieces</p>	<p>Students will take out their writing folders and work on their Biographical Writing drafts.</p> <p>Differentiation: For students who need more support or are English Language Learners, provide a timeline for them to fill in about their life. At each age (if they are unable to remember the very early years, this is okay) have them write down one major or significant event in their life.</p> <p>Remind students that they are writing about one episode or significant event in their lives. They should be highlighting on an episode that they are able to go into further detail about and explain its importance to them.</p>
<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences • Written student reflections • Student sharing • Writing folders 	<p>Ask students to share and begin reading the pieces that they have written so far about their episodes.</p> <p>Ask all students to highlight where they introduced the episode in their piece. In a different color, students will highlight the significant details and events about this episode. Collect these written pieces to review later with students.</p>