

AUTHOR STUDY

Research Unit

PRINT VERSION



Jan Brett



Table of Contents Index Mini

You Will Need:

- Table of Contents & Index Worksheet
- An informational text that includes a table of contents
- A book about an author with large text and pictures

Instructions:

- Have students come to the floor. Tell them how to use two text features: table of contents and index. These text features help them find information they are looking for in the text.
- Open the book to the table of contents and ask students if they know what this page is for. (Then tell the students that it is the table of contents.)
- Show the students that the table of contents is a list of topics found in the book, sorted by page number. In the order of the table of contents, explain that the topics are in the order of the broad topic to the specific topic.
- Ask students to use the table of contents to find a topic they are interested in. Then ask the students to tell you what they found.

Grading Rubric

	10	7	5
Assigned Author Research	The student answers each assigned author question thoroughly in their journal.	The student answers most questions.	The student answers some questions.
Author Report	The student has included information from each page of their journal. They include all required information.	The student has included information from most pages of their journal.	The student has included information from some pages of their journal.
Biography	Biography is complete, creative, and resembles the assigned author. Directions were followed while using art materials.	Biography is mostly complete and creative.	Biography is incomplete and not very creative.
Participation & Teamwork	The student participated throughout the unit and had no problems with teamwork.	The student participated most of the time.	The student participated some of the time.

Notes:

Some interesting facts about _____ are...

What were events that _____ experienced?

My favorite thing about _____ is...

Lower & Upper Grades

Sample Unit Outline & Lesson Plans for Easy Planning

Sample Unit Outline

Here is a sample unit calendar that you can use as a guide during the unit. Your unit may differ depending on your own schedule and which journal version you choose to use. Have students focus on 1-2 questions per day in their journals as you see fit.

M	T	W	Th	F
Assign partners Draw authors Send parent letter	Using Table of Contents and Index Lesson or Using the Internet for Research Lesson	Using Titles and Headings Lesson or Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Online Lesson	Students put together journals Catch up/review text features	What do I already know about my author?
Where and when was my author born?	What was my author's childhood like?	Who are/were my author's important family members?	What was my author's education?	What jobs did my author have?
What obstacles did my author face and overcome?	What are some important events that happened in my author's life?	Some books written by my author are...	Interesting facts Favorite thing	Finish journals
Biography work day	Biography work day	Biography work day	Present to class	Author Fair

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Unit Preparation

Pages to Copy:

- Author Cards: These will be put in a basket and drawn out by the students to assign each pair of students an author. Past and current authors are included with a picture of each one.
- Parent Letter: This letter will be sent home on the first day of the unit. It will inform parents on the unit and ask them to send their student to school with informational texts about authors. It will also inform them about the Author Fair.
- Author Fair Invitation: This is an invitation that will be sent home with students at the end of the unit to invite their parents to the Author Fair.
- Table of Contents & Index Worksheets: To be used with the Table of Contents & Index Mini Lesson.
- Other Text Features Worksheet: To be used with the Other Text Features Mini Lesson.
- Using the Internet for Research Worksheet: To be used with the Using the Internet for Research Mini Lesson.
- Finding Credible & Reliable Sources Worksheet: To be used with the Finding Credible & Reliable Sources and Citing the Source Mini Lesson.
- My Author Research Journal: Each student will need a copy of this journal. There is a half-page option that will need to be cut and stapled in order, or a full-page option that will need to be stapled in order.

Informational Texts About Authors:

- While parents will be asked to send their students with assigned books, not all students may bring them. Ensure that the students have access to books about their assigned author. If you'd like to encourage students to bring books, you may give them an incentive for doing so!

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The unit sample outline gives you an idea of how you could implement the unit into your schedule. (However, feel free to implement the activities however you see fit!) We have included lesson plans to prep your students for their research projects.

Parent Letter and Invitation to Keep Parents Involved and Informed

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are starting a new unit about authors. Students will begin researching an assigned author using informational text. Your child's author is _____. If possible, please send your student with a book about this author. These books could be from the public library, the school library, or from home. We will begin using the texts on _____. If you are unable to help them find a book, we will make sure there are still texts available for your student to use.

After students have finished their research, they will create a biography about their author. This will be presented to the class. After the presentations, we will have an Author Fair in which parents and other classes will be invited to see the student's work.

Please let me know if you have any questions!



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YOU'RE INVITED!

You are invited to our Author Fair!
Students will be showcasing their own biographies created using their research.
Information is below!

Date:

Location:

Time:

Details:



**We Hope
to See You
There!**

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We have included a letter to parents and an Author Fair invitation to help keep your students' parents and guardians involved and informed. You can type the dates and your name right into the letter.

Differentiated Student Worksheets to Teach Each Element of the Research Project

Informational Text Features

Understanding the text features found in informational text is crucial to find the information you'll need about authors. Write the definition for each text feature below. You will use this as a reference while you're doing your research.

Table of Contents: _____

Index: _____

Gloss: _____

Titles: _____

Headings: _____

Photographs: _____

Captions: _____

Graphs: _____

Specifications: _____

Using the Table of Contents & Index

The table of contents and index are both tools that you will find in informational text. Write each criteria below where it belongs in the Venn Diagram.

Table of Contents

Index

found at the beginning of the book
found at the end of the book
helps you find information
1-2 pages long
lots of pages
lists topics and where they can be found
sorted in the order found in the book
sorted in alphabetical order
broad topics
specific topics

Examine the Table of Contents

Name: _____

It is important to understand the text features in order to understand the information within the text. Examine the Table of Contents and answer the questions below.

All About Bats

On what bat bat
What in
What p
What is

Using the Table of Contents and Index

Name: _____

Fill in the information about the Table of Contents and the Index in the boxes below.

The Table of Contents is found at the _____ of the book.

It is used to _____

The Index is found at the _____ of the book.

It is used to _____

Using the Table of Contents and Index

Name: _____

Fill in the information about the Table of Contents and the Index in the boxes below.

table of
sed to
index is
index is
sed to

Using the Internet for Research

Practice coming up with keywords for the following research questions. Remember: be specific! Think about what it is you'd want to know if you were researching.

1. What is the state of Florida like?

2. What are tornados?

3. What are the planets in the solar system like?

4. Where are the world's ecosystems?

Differentiated student worksheets are included for each mini lesson. We have created these worksheets to help your students of all ages learn each element of a research project in a simple easy to understand way.

Famous Author Cards to Randomly Assign an Author to Each Student to Research



We have selected 18 famous authors and included cards spotlighting each of them for you to print, cut, and mix in a basket. Students will randomly choose which author they will research.



Multiple ½ Page and Full Sheet Student Research Journal Pages to Reach all Levels of Learners

**MY AUTHOR
RESEARCH JOURNAL**



This journal
belongs to:





Where and when was
born?





What do I already know about
?



What do I already know about
?



Where and when was
born?



Childhood like



**MY AUTHOR
RESEARCH JOURNAL**


This journal
belongs to:





What do I already know about
?



What was
childhood like?



What do I already know about
?



The student research journal pages include differentiated pages of research prompts for students covering each author. We have also included blank pages to create your own prompts.

Final Project With Grading Rubric for Easy Assessment of Student Understanding

Author Biography

You Will Need:

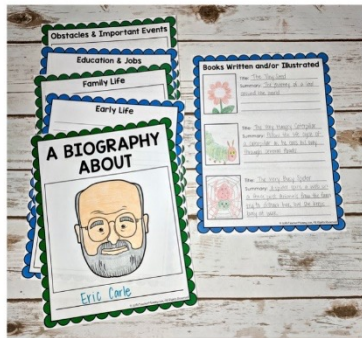
- Biography Final Draft pages
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or crayons

Biography Directions:

- Students will use the information they found while researching to create a short biography booklet about their author. They should include all the information from their research journal.
- Students will write their rough draft on regular lined paper. Students will peer edit their papers (or you may edit them). Then they will write their final draft on the Biography Final Draft pages from this document.
- Hand out the final draft pages of "A Biography About..." to each student once they finish their rough drafts. There are two versions available. The first set is for younger students and have less writing lines and a larger illustration box. The second set is for older students.
- "EDITABLE PORTIONS" The last two pages of the biography final draft pages are editable so you can type your own headings if you'd like! Just type right into the blue boxes. If you would like to save your changes, be sure you are editing in Adobe (NOT your internet browser), rename the file, and save.
- Each of the Biography pages has a blank box for students to draw an illustration. They are essentially creating their own mini biography book about their author.

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Author Biography Example



Eric Carle

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Grading Rubric

	10	7	5	0
Assigned Author Research	The student answers each assigned author question thoroughly in their journal.	The student answers most assigned author questions in their journal, but they are missing some information.	The student answers some assigned author questions in their journal, but they are missing some information.	The student has very little to none of their assigned author questions completed.
Author Report	The student has included information from each page of their journal. They include all required information.	The student has included information from most pages of their journal. They include most required information.	The student has included some information from their journal but left out a lot. There may not be enough writing.	The student has included minimal information about their author or did not complete the report.
Biography	Biography is complete, creative, and resembles the assigned author. Directions were followed while using art materials.	Biography is complete and resembles the assigned author. Directions were mostly followed while using art materials.	Biography may not resemble the assigned author, or the student may have had behavior issues with the art materials.	Biography is incomplete or not done. Student may have had behavior issues with the art materials.
Participation & Teamwork	The student participated throughout the unit and had no problems with teamwork.	The student mostly participated throughout the unit with minimal teamwork problems.	The student had some problems with participation and/or teamwork.	The student had major problems with participation and teamwork.

Total Points: ____ / 50 points

Notes:

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Students will complete their final project by writing a biography about each element of their author's life and then create a book spotlighting them. We have included an easy-to-follow grading rubric to make assessments quick and easy.