

Writing a Biography

Objectives:

- Learn to write a biography in German.
- Use the preterite to talk about the past.
- Express dates and significant events.
- Develop research and writing skills in a second language.
- Apply MYP Language Acquisition criteria to biography writing.

1. Approaches to Learning (ATL Skills)

- Communication Skills: Writing clearly and effectively in German.
- Research Skills: Finding and organizing biographical information.

2. Useful Vocabulary

- geboren (geboren werden) – to be born
- sterben (starb, ist gestorben) – to die
- leben – to live
- arbeiten – to work
- heiraten – to marry
- werden – to become
- berühmt – famous
- Erfolg – success
- Kindheit – childhood
- Jugend – youth

3. Expressing Time in German

When writing a biography, it is essential to express dates, years, and time periods correctly. Here are some key points:

Years:

- You can express a year in 2 ways:

1995 or: Im Jahr 1995

Wrong : *in 1995

Full Dates:

- March 5, 2008 → der fünfte März 2008 : der 5. März

- July 20, 1969 → der zwanzigste Juli 1969 : der 20. Juli

- November 9, 1989 → der neunte November 1989: der 9. November 1989

Time Periods:

- From 1980 to 1992 → von 1980 bis 1992

- Between 1900 and 1915 → zwischen 1900 und 1915

- In the 18th century → im 18. Jahrhundert

- During his childhood → während seiner Kindheit

4. The Preterite

Infinitive	Preterite
sein (to be)	war
haben (to have)	hatte
werden (to become)	wurde
arbeiten (to work)	arbeitete
leben (to live)	lebte
heiraten (to marry)	heiratete
sterben (to die)	starb

5. How to Write a Biography?

- Introduction: Introduce the person (name, date and place of birth, nationality).
- Childhood and Youth: Talk about their education and early important events.
- Career and Adulthood: Explain their achievements and success.
- End of Life: Mention the date and place of death if applicable.

Beispiel:

Albert Einstein wurde am 14. März 1879 in Ulm geboren. Er war ein berühmter Physiker.

Er studierte in Zürich und arbeitete später in Berlin. 1921 bekam er den Nobelpreis für Physik. 1933 emigrierte er in die USA. Er starb am 18. April 1955 in Princeton.

6. Übungen

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences with the Preterite

- Ludwig van Beethoven _____ (werden) ein berühmter Komponist.
- Er _____ (leben) in Wien.
- 1802 _____ (erhalten) er seine erste große Auszeichnung.
- Er _____ (sterben) im Jahr 1827.

Exercise 2: Translate the Dates into German

- He was born in 1995. _____
- She died on March 5, 2008. _____
- They lived in Berlin from 1980 to 1992. _____
- The war ended in 1945. _____
- The artist worked between 1900 and 1915. _____

