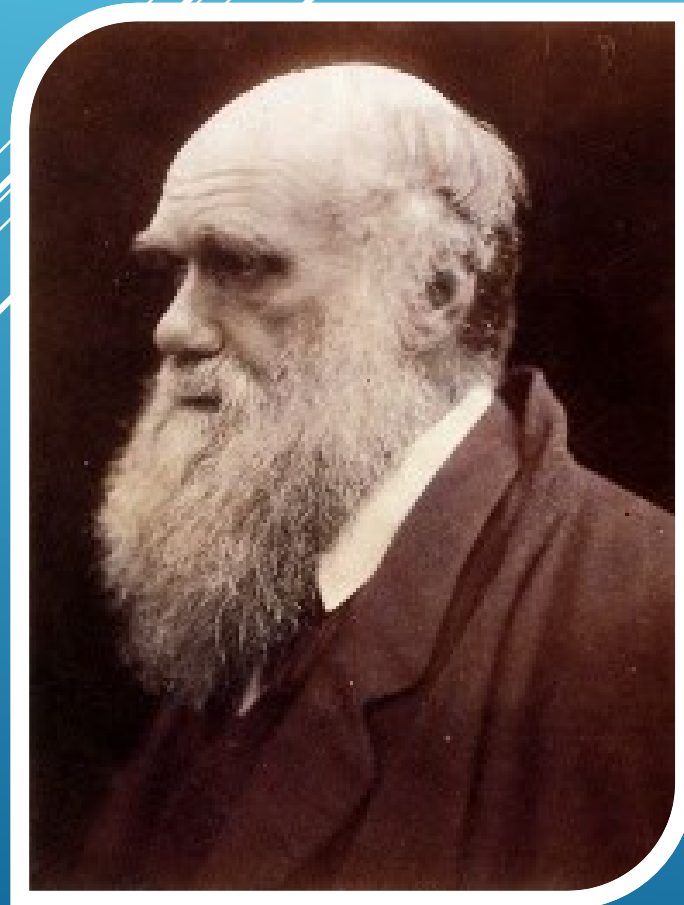


WIKIPEDIA

Writing about
People





- ▶ For people, the person who is the topic of a biographical article should be "worthy of notice" or "worthy of note" – that is, "remarkable" or "significant, interesting, or unusual enough to deserve attention or to be recorded" within Wikipedia as a written account of that person's life.

NOTABILITY

- ▶ "Notable" in the sense of being "famous" or "popular" – although not irrelevant – is secondary

The **opening paragraph** should establish notability, neutrally describe the person, and provide context.

The opening paragraph should usually have:

- ▶ Full Name(s) and title(s), if any
- ▶ Dates of birth and death, if known.

OPENING PARAGRAPH – THINGS TO INCLUDE

The **opening paragraph** should also have:

- **Context (location or nationality);**
 - In most modern-day cases this will mean the country of which the person is a citizen, national or permanent resident, or if notable mainly for past events, the country where the person was a citizen, national or permanent resident when the person became notable.
- **The notable positions the person held, activities they took part in or roles they played;**
- **Why the person is notable.**

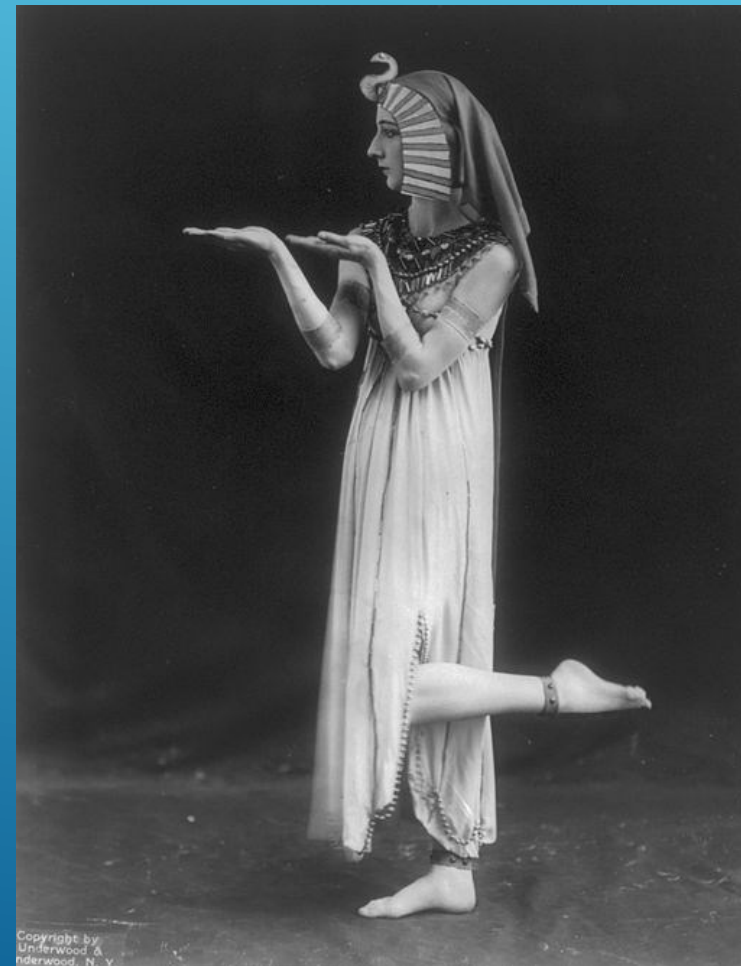
OPENING PARAGRAPH

1. Avoid overloading the lead sentence with various sundry roles; instead, emphasize what made the person notable.
2. *Ethnicity*, religion, or sexuality should generally not be in the lead unless it is relevant to the subject's notability.
3. Similarly, previous nationalities or the country of birth should not be mentioned in the opening sentence unless they are relevant to the subject's notability.

THE OPENING PARAGRAPH – THINGS TO AVOID

Cleopatra VII Philopator (December 70 BCE/January 69 BCE – c. August 12, 30 BCE) was a queen of ancient Egypt. She was the last member of the Macedonian Ptolemaic dynasty to rule Egypt ...

AN EXAMPLE
OF GOOD PRACTICE



1. **Name(s) and title(s), if any**
2. **Dates of birth and death, if known.**
3. **Context (location or nationality);**
 1. In most modern-day cases this will mean the country of which the person is a citizen, national or permanent resident, or if notable mainly for past events, the country where the person was a citizen, national or permanent resident when the person became notable.
4. **The notable positions the person held, activities they took part in or roles they played;**
5. **Why the person is notable.**

YOUR TURN! FIND AN ARTICLE ON WIKIPEDIA THAT YOU FEEL SATISFIES THESE CRITERIA

BRAINSTORM

ARE BIOGRAPHICAL
ARTICLES ON
LIVING PEOPLE
DIFFERENT FROM
BIOGRAPHICAL
ARTICLES ON THE DEAD?



Editors must take particular care when adding information about living persons to *any* Wikipedia page. Such material requires a high degree of sensitivity, and must adhere *strictly* to all applicable laws, to this policy, and to Wikipedia's three core content policies:

1. **Neutral point of view (NPOV)**
2. **Verifiability (V)**
3. **No original research (NOR)**

BIOGRAPHIES OF LIVING PEOPLE

- ▶ We must get the article *right*.
- ▶ Be very firm about the use of high-quality sources.
- ▶ All quotations and any material challenged or likely to be challenged must be explicitly attributed to a reliable, published source, which is usually done with an inline citation.
- ▶ Contentious material about living persons (or, in some cases, recently deceased) that is unsourced or poorly sourced – whether the material is negative, positive, neutral, or just questionable – should be removed immediately and without waiting for discussion.
- ▶ Users who persistently or egregiously violate this policy may be blocked from editing.

BIOGRAPHIES OF LIVING PEOPLE

- ▶ Biographies of living persons ("BLPs") must be written conservatively and with regard for the subject's privacy.
- ▶ Wikipedia is an encyclopaedia, not a tabloid.
- ▶ The burden of evidence rests with the editor who adds or restores material.

BIOGRAPHIES OF LIVING PEOPLE

Biographies of living persons should generally be written in the present tense, and biographies of deceased persons in the past tense.

If a person is living but has retired, use "is a former" or "is a retired" rather than the past tense "was".

Correct – **John Smith** (1946–2003) was a baseball pitcher ...

Correct – **John Smith** (born 1946) is a former baseball pitcher ...

Incorrect – **John Smith** (born 1946) was a baseball pitcher ...

Historical events should be written in the past tense in all biographies:

- Smith played for the Baltimore Orioles between 1968 and 1972 ...

TENSE

When discussing the work of a writer or philosopher, even if they are dead, the present tense may be used:

"In Calvin's *Institutes* he teaches ...".

The general rule is to describe statements made in literature, philosophy and art in the eternal present.

TENSE

Utilise existing pages as examples of good practice e.g. **Charles Rennie Mackintosh**

Search:

Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Biographies

Wikipedia:Biographies_of_living_persons

**REMEMBER TO ORGANISE THE
PAGE INTO RELEVANT SECTIONS**

Ask yourself:

- ▶ Is this person notable?
- ▶ Does the first paragraph explain their notability?
- ▶ Is my use of tense consistent?
- ▶ Have I organised my page into clearly demarcated sections?
- ▶ Is my article clear and accessible for all to read?
- ▶ Does it make sense to me? Will make it sense to other readers?

NO HARD AND FAST RULES



[reddit]

THANKS FOR LISTENING