

2.2. READING: READING BIOGRAPHIES, TRAVELOGUES, NEWSPAPER REPORTS, EXCERPTS FROM LITERATURE, TECHNICAL BLOGS

READING BIOGRAPHIES

The definition of biography is a story written about someone's life. An example of biography is a book about the story of President Obama's life

EXAMPLE

The following text on Abdul Kalam and trace the development in his career, by providing suitable sub-headings.

A.PJ. ABDUL KALAM: A DREAMER WITH A MISSION

Shakespeare said "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust on them". Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam undoubtedly belongs to the second generation of great men. He was neither born with a silver spoon in his mouth, nor an easy path was chalked out for him, nor a Stroke of luck raised him to the height of greatness. He climbed to the summit of eminence by hard and dedicated work, intellectual brilliance and indomitable spirit.

Kalam was born on 15th October, 1931, in a middle-class Tamil family in the island town of Dhanuskodi in Rameswaram district of Tamil Nadu. His father, Jainulabdeen, a boat owner, was not formally educated. His mother Ashiamma, cared deeply for her children. As a child, young Kalam sold newspapers to augment his family's income. His childhood experience perhaps heralded the greatness he has achieved.

Kalam has tried throughout his early life to emulate his parents in his own world of science and technology. Kalam's schooling started when he joined the Schwartz High School in Ramanathapuram. By the time he completed his education at Schwartz, he was a self-confident boy with the determination to succeed. For further studies, he took admission at St. Joseph's College, Trichy. In 1954, he applied for admission at the Madras Institute of Technology (MIT). He found aeronautics a fascinating subject that developed in him the promise of freedom.

The meticulous teachings of his teachers created in him an excitement about aeronautics. Their intellectual fervor clarity of thought and passion for perfection helped

in a serious study of fluid dynamics, modes of compressible medium, motion development of shock waves and shock, induced flow separation at increasing speeds, shock stall and shock waves drag.

Then he joined Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) at Bangalore as a trainee. There he worked on overhauling of both piston and turbine engines. Later he joined DTD&P (Director of Technical Development and Production) as a Senior Scientific Assistance in 1958. He was sent to Aircraft and Armament Testing Unit (A&ATU) at Kanpur to gain complex exposure to aircraft maintenance. He joined the Indian Space Research organisation (ISRO) in 1963. In 1963-64, he went to National Aeronautics and space Administration (NASA) on an invitation and spent four months.

After spending 19 prolific years with ISRO, he joined DRDO to head India's missile development programme. The Integrated Guided Missile Development programme was largely his brain child. He conceived the programme constituting 5 major projects for meeting the requirements of the defence services. His efforts bore fruit in the shape of successful launches of Agni and Prithvi. He also headed other equally prestigious projects like MBT Arjun and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Trishul, Akash and Nag. He established the Advanced Technology Research Center called 'Imarat' to undertake development in futuristic missile technology areas.

He is rightly called the Missile Man. He also served as Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister and later Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India. In the year 2002, leaving all these prestigious services, he came to work for the development of the younger generation the pillars of tomorrow-at Anna University. Kalam's advice to the youngsters is to "think big". "We are a nation of a billion people and we must think like a nation of a billion people. Only then can we become big". He urged the youngsters to dream because "dreams lead to thoughts and thoughts lead to action." He also established a research centre for formulating a treatment for the mentally challenged children that will enable them to accomplish normal activities with the aid of convergence technology. This brings out Kalam's humanitarianism.

Dr. Kalam put an 18 - hour work per day. A vegetarian and teetotaler, Abdul Kalam recited The Quran and The Bhagvad Gita with equal ease, His lifestyle was simple and austere. Even amidst his busy schedule, there was room for music and literature. He was felicitated with many national awards and honours like Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan and the highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna in recognition of his calibre as a scientist. To top all these honours, Kalam was elected as the twelfth President of our great nation.

(Adopted from "Science Reporter" May, 2002)

TASK

- a) The text on "Abdul Kalam" is in
- (i) the expository mode
 - (ii) the narrative mode
 - (iii) the descriptive mode
- b) What are the distinct features in Kalam's personality?
- c) After reading the text, what kind of feelings, do you get? Discuss.

The following are famous autobiographies:

- The Story of My Experiments with Truth by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
- An Autobiography by Jawaharlal Nehru
- Autobiography of a Yogi by Paramahansa Yogananda
- Atmakatha (Malayalam) by Anna Chandy
- Waiting for a Visa by B. R. Ambedkar
- All from Memory by B. V. Acharya
- A Grain of Sand in the Hourglass of Time by Arjun Singh and Ashok Chopra
- Baburnama by Babur
- Courage and Conviction by General Vijay Kumar Singh
- My Story by Kamala Surayy
- En Sarithiram by U. V. Swaminathan Iyer
- How I Became a Hindu by Sita Ram Goel

- Jakhan Choto Chilam by Satyajit Ray
- Living Shadows by Aribam Syam Sharma
- A Shot at History by Abhinav Bindra

Famous Biographies:

- Rajinikanth: The Definitive Biography
- R. Rahman: The Spirit of Music
- Indira: India's Most Powerful Prime Minister
- Sai Satcharitra
- Swami Vivekananda: Messiah of Resurgent India
- The Tatas, Girish Kuber
- A Complete Biography of Ratan Tata, A.K. Gandhi
- Sir CV Raman, A. Krishna Bhatt
- A Life of The Genius Ramanujan, Robert Kanigel

TRAVELOGUES

Travelogue means a film, book, or illustrated lecture about the places visited by or experiences of a traveller.

William Dalrymple's

- The Age of Kali, Publisher: Bloomsbury. (Price: Rs 325)

The first book on the list is one written by William Dalrymple, a writer who loved this country and made it his own. The title of this book alludes to one of the stages the world goes through as part of a cycle in Hinduism. The author also met writer Shobhaa De in Mumbai and spoke to her about her depiction of socialites in the maximum city.

John Lang's Wanderings in India and Other Sketches of Life in Hindostan,.

Publisher: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge. (Price: Rs 228)

The third book on the list is Wanderings in India and Other Sketches of Life in Hindostan by 19th-century Australian lawyer and writer John Lang, who is now considered to be the first native-born novelist of Australia. Lang's travelogue gives a

fantastic account of India during the colonial times and the many lifestyle habits of the British. If you are to explore the colonial architecture of India in its various hill stations and cities now, it is best to carry this book which might transport you back to a bygone era with all its eccentricities. Lang's grave in Mussoorie has been discovered by writer Ruskin Bond whose many books can also be read while travelling to the Himalayas

William Dalrymple's Nine Lives. Publisher: Bloomsbury. (Price: Rs 314)

The next book on this list of must-read Indian travelogues is *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*, again by William Dalrymple who has added so much to the historiography of India. Through this book, one can experience the spirituality of this diverse land. The book narrates the lives of nine Indians from different religious backgrounds and the uniqueness that each exudes.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS

Report is a spoken or written description of an event or situation. . It is an official document that gives information about a particular subject.

Read the following report and answer the questions given below it to check your comprehension.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE FOR A CLEAN FUTURE

While the world runs out of conventional fuel to meet the needs of the ever-increasing population, electric vehicles are emerging as a safe and clean alternative to the fossil fuel guzzling vehicles of today. In the UK, electric vehicles are exempted from paying parking fees and are vehicles of today given concession taxes. Even sales and road tax exemption are offered for the benefit of consumers. France and China are the other countries that give concession or subsidy to EV users. The rise in economic activity and the burgeoning population have led to a tremendous demand in the transport sector, especially in urban India. By 2020, India's urban population is expected to grow five-fold to a staggering 200 million while pollution is expected to grow seven times.

If India can have three lakh electric vehicles (EVs) on the roads by 2020, including three- wheelers, cars and scooters, we could reduce pollution by 16 lakh metric tonnes, save Rs.3700 crores in foreign exchange earnings, and substantially reduce healthcare

costs. Small electric buses, three wheelers and electric scooters are ideal for city mobility in India but it could take between 5 to 10 years before they become viable for commercial use.

TASK

Say whether the following sentences are True or False:

1. Electric Vehicles can cut down pollution.
2. Electric vehicles are encouraged in the UK.
3. Sales and Road tax are heavy for the EV users.
4. In India using EV can increase health risks.

EXCERPTS FROM LITERATURE

The right book can change your life. Sometimes you read a phrase in a book and it's as if it was Written just for you. Here some literature excerpts that resonate with readers as everywhere.

"A heart is not judged by how much you love; but by how much you are loved by others" -L. Frank Baum, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

"I took a deep breath and listened to the old brag of my heart. I am, I am, I am"-

Sylvia Plath, The Bell Jar

"The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched, they are felt with the heart." -Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince

"Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast. "

- Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

"We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars." - Oscar Wilde,

Lady Windermere's Fan

TECHNICAL BLOGS

Let's take a look at some of the best technology blogs out there!!

1. Wired

- Founder: Louis Rossetto, Jane Metcalfe
- Year Started: 1993
- Domain Authority: 94

Wired is a massively popular publication, good at capturing real insights into the tech world, no stranger to topics like technology, entertainment, science, culture, politics, and social media. Informed and comprehensive, Wired is basically the perfect tech blog to follow.

This unique blog dedicated to modern life and the technology industry and answers every question related to tech trends, gadget reviews, and the latest updates. Wired is ranked as one of the best tech blogs for professionals in every industry and delivers great ideas for presenting the most relevant topics to your audience.

Read more: [Top 11 Tech Summits You Must Visit In 2021](#)

2. TechCrunch

- Founder: Michael Arrington, Keith Teare
- Year Started: 2005
- Domain Authority: 94

Invest yourself in the business-verse of the tech world with one of the most popular technology blogs thriving this year- TechCrunch.

The blog publishes content on businesses related to tech, analysis of emerging trends in tech, technology news, and listings of new tech products in the market. It is one of the first publications to report broadly on tech startups and funding rounds.

TechCrunch offers knowledge about new gizmos and business-related apps. It is like a reservoir of information on Internet companies & startups around the world.

3. Recode

Founder: Kara Swisher

Year Started: 2014

Domain Authority: 93

Currently, owned by VOX media, Recode gives the most updated independent technology news, analysis trends, and reviews from the most respected and informed journalists as well as bloggers in media and technology.

Recode is uncovering and explaining how our tech world is changing by focusing on the businesses of Silicon Valley. Its founder Kara Swisher has all the connections to the latest tech tips and products, making it a robust technology blog to read!

