Writing file 3 | Teacher's notes

Learning objectives in this lesson

Looking at the organizational features of sample biodata, as well as the style of language and the purpose of biodata writing. By the end of the lesson students will have covered the format, layout and language style needed for successful biodata writing.

1 Ask students to discuss their own experiences of writing CVs, résumés, or biodata. Ask them to discuss the differences between them and what should go into each one.

> **Answers**
>
> A **CV** (curriculum vitae – British English) is really the same thing as a résumé (American English). They are short (typically one- or two-page) documents that contain specific types of of information (for example, personal information, education, work experience) used to apply for a job. The information is typically presented in a reverse chronological order.
>
> **Biodata** is a summary of who a person is and can be used for different professional and social purposes, e.g. in a conference programme as delegate information, on a social networking site, in a book or at the bottom of an article you have written. It typically includes relevant career experience, qualifications, awards, achievements, responsibilities, and publications.

2 Ask students to work in pairs and look at the missing headings. Once students have completed the gaps, check answers with the class.

> **Answers**
> 1 Name
> 2 Company
> 3 Title
> 4 Email
> 5 Educational background
> 6 Experience
> 7 Awards

3 Ask students to read the text again and think about what they might ask Dr Pazdera if they were to meet him. Once they have read the biodata, ask them to compare their answers in pairs before taking feedback from the whole class.

> **Sample answers**
> How long have you worked for GAS Holdings?
> Which countries do you find the most interesting?
> Can you tell me more about the projects you've worked on?
> What did you do in Pakistan?
> What are the articles you've had published about?

4 Ask students what tense is used most and why and why the third person is being used. Get them to discuss these questions in pairs before you take feedback.

> **Answers**
> **Tense:** Present perfect, to talk about achievements, changes over time and past actions with unspecified time.
>
> **3rd person:** If it's the standard academic-paper type biodata it should be in the third person. However, if it's more informal, e.g. on a social networking website, you can write it in the first person.

5 Ask students to look at the words and match them to bold words with similar meanings in the biodata. After a few minutes of working in pairs, take feedback.

> **Answers**
> 1 executed
> 2 specializing
> 3 overseeing
> 4 rationalization
> 5 developing
> 6 expertise

6 Ask students to think about their own lives and write three sentences, but instruct them that one should be a lie. Once they have written their sentences ask them to work in pairs, and try to guess each others' lies. Once they have guessed, swap the partners and get them to do it again. It can help students if you demonstrate this activity with three sentences on the board about yourself. Ask your students to ask you about these sentences.

7 Tell students that they are going to write their own biodata and should come up with as much information as they can think of about themselves. Get them to write it in note form at this stage and compare it with a partner. Then get students to work together to decide what is and isn't useful and how the information should be ordered. Finally, instruct them to write their biodata. This can be done as homework or in class.

Evaluation tips

Students' biodata should
- be simple and to-the-point
- not be too pretentious or self-praising
- be free of irrelevant information
- use the present perfect appropriately (experience)
- use 'power words'.

Remember to comment on content as well as accuracy.