

Mark Twain Resources for Elementary Students:

Biography: The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy) by

Barbara Kerley Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham

ISBN: 9780545125086

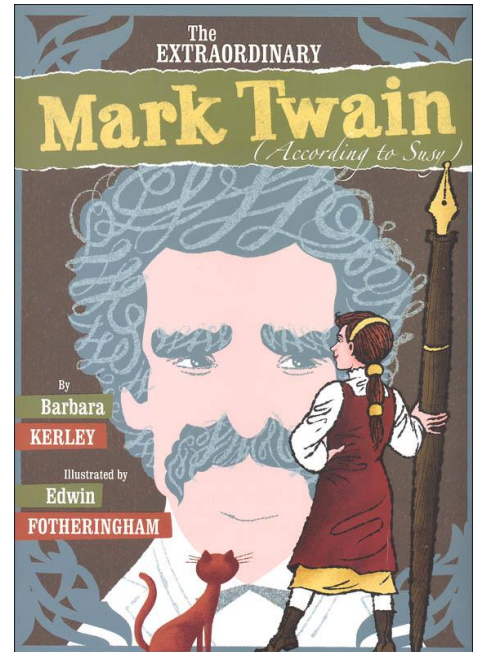
Publisher: Scholastic

Publication Date: 01/01/10

Pages: 48

Lexile 109

Age range 7-10



A wonderful picture book biography of Sam Clemens, the Papa. This biography uses excerpts from Susy Clemens biography of her father to portray him as the public doesn't see him. The humorous pictures and candid style of writing personize Mark Twain to the reader.

Activity:

Students will create a biography of a family member. This activity is a great way to get students excited about writing, especially because humor is encouraged. The only request is that they choose someone they know very well, and can observe on a daily basis.

1. Read and Discuss The Extraordinary Mark Twain by Barbara Kerley Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham.

2. Inform students that they will be writing about an extraordinary person in their own life. Have students complete the guided questions. If they cannot answer the questions, they need to either choose a different person, or like Susy, spend some time observing their extraordinary person from afar. It may be helpful to model appropriate answers to the questions by using the text to create an example of how Susy may have answered the questions.

3. Students will use the guided questions and answers to write a rough draft of their own extraordinary person biography.

4. Student pairs will use whichever peer editing strategy is currently in place in the classroom to assist fellow students through the revising and editing of drafts.

5. Students will publish a final copy of their essay.

Extension-

Using the book *The Extraordinary Mark Twain According to Suzy*, students can create their own version of the book based on their extraordinary person, complete with illustrations.

Name _____ Date _____

“The Extraordinary _____”

By _____

Like Suzy Clemens, write a biography of someone you feel is extraordinary in your family. Begin by answering the questions below based on your observations of your “Extraordinary” person...



1. How does this person “fit” into your family? (Oldest, youngest, mother, father etc.)

2. What habits does this person have? _____

3. Does this person say any particular phrases over and over again?

4. Tell a funny story you remember about this person. _____

5. What kinds of things distract this person from doing the things that he or she loves to do? _____

6. Does this person ever “escape” to a place to get away from others? Where does he or she like to go?

