WRITING

PREPARE TO WRITE
A biography

GET READY Look at the text about Kevin Pearce again.

1 How many paragraphs are there?

There _____ .

2 What are the topics of each paragraph?

The topics are: _____ .

3 When in each paragraph is Kevin's name used?

Kevin's name is used _____

4 When is his full name used?

His full name is used _____

5 When is the pronoun *he* used instead of *Kevin*?

The pronoun *he* is used

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KEVIN PEARCE was born in **(1)** New Hampshire on 1st November 1987. He grew up where there was plenty of snow in the winter and loved snowboarding from when he was young. He entered his first snowboarding competition when he was **(2)** nine years old. He moved to California with his brother in **(3)** 2002 and started training full-time at Mammoth Mountain. Over the next **(4)** seven years, he travelled a lot and won events in New Zealand and Switzerland. He was a star of the snowboarding world.

In December 2009, when Kevin was training in Utah, he crashed and was very badly **(5)** hurt. He spent three months in hospital and it took him a year to learn basic skills like **(6)** walking, talking and swallowing again. His brother Adam left work to help look after Kevin.

Kevin slowly got better, but he was not able to take part in snowboarding competitions any more. In 2013, a documentary film about his life called *The Crash Reel* was **(7)** shown. A year later, a foundation called **(8)** Love your brain was started by Kevin and his brother Adam. This helps people who have had brain injuries and teaches activities like yoga and meditation.

(9) Since 2014, Kevin has been busy visiting schools and hospitals. He talks about how important it is for people to look after their brains and to wear helmets. In 2017, he moved to **(10)** live in Vermont.

PLAN **Read the fact file for Serena Williams. You are going to write a short biography about her. Think about:**

- how many paragraphs you will write
- what the topic of each paragraph will be
- when you will use her full name, first name and the pronoun *she*.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FACT FILE Serena Williams



Born: 26th September 1981 in Michigan in the USA
Early 80s: family moved to Los Angeles
1984: began to play tennis
1995: her father became her coach
1999: won her first tournament, the US Open tennis title
2002: won the Wimbledon tennis tournament
2002: became the number one player in the world
2004: started her own designer label, Aneres (Serena spelt backwards)
2005 & 2007: won the Australian Open
2008: opened Serena Williams Secondary School in Kenya
2011: made International Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF
2012: won the singles gold medal at the Olympic Games
Languages: English, some French, Spanish and Italian
Family: husband – Alexis Ohanian, one daughter, born 1st September 2017

LIVEWORKSHEETS

WRITE Write your biography. Use the passive as well as the active in your writing.

IMPROVE In pairs, read each other's biography and check for mistakes. Check that you have both included all the necessary information and that you used paragraphs and pronouns correctly.

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1 Read *A Biography of my Father* again and match the paragraphs (a–d) to the headings.

1 An important event that changes my father's life ___

2 My father leaves home, finishes his studies and starts work ___

3 My father's life today ___

4 My father's early life ___

A Biography of my Father

a

After he left school, he went to Exeter University to study history. He did very well at university, and when his course finished, he moved to Durham and got a job at the university there. He taught history. He really enjoyed helping the students learn, and while he was doing this job, he became a writer. He wrote two books about the history of twentieth-century Europe. Unfortunately, he also stopped playing the piano.

b

Six months after that life-changing evening, he started his own jazz band with friends who were a singer, a drummer and a guitar player. People couldn't believe it when he left his good job at the university, but Dad has worked as a piano player in the band for 20 years now, and it still makes him very happy. He says, 'You have to do what you love'.

c

My father was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 5th January 1970. When he was a boy, his grandmother gave Dad her beautiful old piano. He quickly learned to play it, and he practised every day. He soon became very good at it. When he grew up, he took this piano with him every time he moved house.

d

One evening, before I was born, he went with my mother to a piano concert. This concert changed his life. While he was watching the woman playing the piano, he remembered how much he loved playing it. That night he sat down at the piano that he was given as a child and began playing again.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 **Write a short biography of an adult you know. Use *A Biography of my Father* on page 82 to help you. Write four short paragraphs using the structure and ideas below.**

1. **The person's early life**
   For example: where and when they were born, what they liked doing as a child.
2. **What the person did when she / he left home**
   For example: what job / training they did, where they studied, where they lived.
3. **An important event that changed this person's life**
   For example: they got married, they changed jobs, they moved city.
4. **This person's life now**
   For example: what they do now, where they live, if they are happy.

LIVEWORKSHEETS