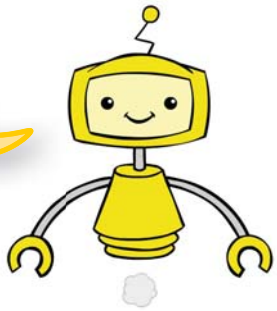
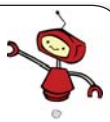
Life stories

It seems as though the budding journalist in Ardi was not yet ready to lay the story of Basuki Hario Hadiningrat to rest. After taking matters into his own hands, and conducting some serious research, Ardi has compiled a much fuller version of Basuki's life story — and what a story it is! Let's see what the 'unofficial' Hadiningrat family biographer has come up with!



LINKS TO:
Stage 2, Module 15
Learning Object 2: A box of treasures



PRIOR LEARNING:
Stage 2
Module 15 Work Sheet 1: *Piecing together a family tree*
Module 15 Work Sheet 2: *Who are you?*

1 Life stories

There are a lot of different kinds of life writing. The most common types are:

Memoir	*Memoar*
Autobiography	*Autobiografi*
Biography	*Biografi*

A memoir (*memoar*) is an impressionistic, subjective portrait of someone's life, focusing on a particular period or aspect of their life. As the name suggests, a memoir often relies on memory more than on historical records, and as such is less reliable and more personal than a biography or autobiography.

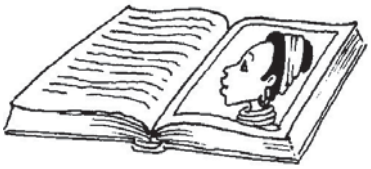
An autobiography (*autobiografi*) is a biography written by the person who is also the subject. It tells the story of their whole life, from birth until the date of writing.

A biography (*biografi*) tells the whole life of a person, from their birth until their death. They are usually written after the subject has passed away, and are based on extensive research. Biographies often focus on particular aspects of a person's life, such as their profession or relationships.

The term 'biography' is often misused to describe what is, essentially, a memoir. For instance, in recent times quite a number of so-called biographies, which are really memoirs, have been published about political leaders and sporting icons when they retire to maximise sales when they are about to leave the scrutiny of the public stage.

A biography is usually a more formal and, at its best, well-researched text than a memoir or autobiography. It will include important information about the subject's life and experiences and will make some attempt to explain — either explicitly or by implication — why and how they achieved the things they achieved during their lifetime. Because biographies are a form of historical writing, they will also often include information and ideas about the times when the subject lived.

Some biographies exaggerate the good qualities and successes of the subject, and leave out anything negative. This is called a 'hagiography' and derives its name from the Greek word *ἅγιος* which means 'saint'.



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What's in a biography?

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Biographies come in a range of shapes and sizes. Many biographies are book-length narratives that explore a person's life in detail, but there are also a range of places where you might read a brief biography, such as on a website, in a dictionary of biography, on a public monument, in a museum display, or in a school newsletter or textbook.

A brief biography usually contains the following information:

- the title stating the subject's name and their year of birth and death. For example: Jane Smith (1908–1967)
- the name of the author of the biography
- a narrative summarising the major events of the subject's life, with particular attention to the significant achievements in their life, depending on the thematic subject of the biography. Information in the narrative would include:
  - their early history and childhood (where they were born, who their parents were, and so on)
  - a paragraph on each of the most significant achievements or events of their life
  - an account of their death
  - a summary of any significant events related to their work or achievements that came after their death.
- a select bibliography including works that the biographer referred to in writing the biography, and which the reader can refer to if they want more information.

Many biographies also contain:

- a summary box that includes information such as alternative names, and basic biographical details such as their place and date of birth and death, their cultural heritage, and their occupations
- an image of the subject or of some item or place significant to their place in history (such as an artwork or book produced by them, a building or invention they designed, or some other object of significance).

Let's take a look at the biography Ardi has written.

Hadiningrat, Basuki Hario (1795–?)

Oleh Ardi Sugianto

Orientation: Name of person and summary of their life

Basuki Hario Hadiningrat (1795–?) dilahirkan pada tanggal 12 September 1795 di Kabupaten Sleman, Yogyakarta. Ayahnya bernama Pangestu Hadiningrat, abdi dalem kraton Kesultanan Yogyakarta, dan ibunya bernama Siti Hartinah. Basuki adalah anak tertua dari enam bersaudara. Diperkirakan bahwa Basuki menikah dengan Louisa Elizabeth van Houten atau Elise van Houten dari Leiden di Negeri Belanda pada akhir tahun 1814 atau awal 1815. Tanggal pernikahan mereka tidak diketahui.

Object focus (passive) verbs are highlighted in green

Sebenarnya juga tidak diketahui secara pasti apakah Louisa Elizabeth van Houten adalah sama dengan Elise van Houten. Keterangan lain mengenai Elise van Houten tidak diketahui selain bahwa dia adalah anak tertua dari pasangan Lars dan Emma van Houten yang pada sekitar tahun 1814an tinggal di Leiden. Lars bekerja sebagai pegawai di laboratorium Sekolah Teknik di Leiden. Dari pernikahan dengan Louisa Elizabeth van Houten itu Basuki mendapat satu anak laki-laki bernama

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Willem Pieter Hario Hadiningrat yang lahir pada tanggal 19 Januari 1816.

Early life, education and work.

Masa kecil Basuki dilewatkannya di Sleman. Anak-anak keluarga Hadiningrat mendapat pendidikan membaca, menulis, dan bahasa Belanda di rumah. Pada tahun 1813, ketika dia berumur 18 tahun, Basuki mendapat pekerjaan sebagai mantri di Rumah Sakit desa di Sleman. Karena cerdas, berbakat dan pandai berbahasa Belanda, pada tahun 1814, ketika dia berumur 19 tahun, dia dikirim ke Negeri Belanda untuk belajar lebih lanjut mengenai obat-obatan di Sekolah Teknik di Leiden. Basuki berangkat dari pelabuhan Sunda Kelapa pada tanggal 24 Januari 1814 menuju ke Amsterdam naik kapal laut 'Batavia'.

Sequenced events in adult life.

Perjalanan ke Negeri Belanda makan waktu 5 bulan. Basuki tiba di Amsterdam pada bulan Juni 1814. Dari Amsterdam dia langsung pergi ke Leiden dan mendapat pondokan di rumah keluarga van Houten. Lars dan Emma van Houten mempunyai 3 anak perempuan. Anak yang tertua bernama Elise dan kemungkinan besar dia dilahirkan pada tahun 1797. Ketika itu Lars bekerja di laboratorium Sekolah Teknik di Leiden.

Berita terakhir mengenai Basuki yang diterima keluarganya adalah sebuah surat tertanggal 18 Nopember 1814. Dalam surat itu dia menyebut dua hal yang penting: Elise van Houten dan perang antara Inggris dan tentara Napoleon dari Perancis.

Dari sebuah surat yang dikeluarkan oleh bagian administrasi Seventh Coalition tertanggal 1 Oktober 1815, diketahui bahwa Basuki mendaftarkan diri sebagai tenaga medik yang dikirim ke garis depan untuk membantu prajurit-prajurit yang terluka dalam pertempuran Waterloo pada bulan Juni 1815. Dan dari tembusan kutipan akta lahir yang dikeluarkan oleh Kantor Pencatatan Sipil Kota Leiden, diketahui pula bahwa dia menikah dengan Louisa Elizabeth van Houten dan mendapat satu anak laki-laki bernama Willem Pieter Hario Hadiningrat yang lahir pada tanggal 19 Januari 1816. Tanggal kepergian ke Waterloo dan tanggal pernikahan tidak diketahui dengan pasti, tapi kemungkinan besar keduanya terjadi antara bulan November 1814 dan April 1815.

Details of death or demise.

Basuki dianggap hilang dalam medan pertempuran dan sampai saat ini tidak diketahui apa yang terjadi padanya, di mana dia meninggal dan di mana dia dimakamkan.

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Summary box

Perincian Riwayat Hidup

Nama
Hadiningrat, Basuki Hario

Tanggal / Tempat Lahir
12 September 1795
Kabupaten Sleman, Yogyakarta

Wafat
Tidak diketahui. Hilang di medan perang pada bulan Juni 1815

Kewarganegaraan
Indonesia (suku Jawa)

Pekerjaan
mantri
tenaga medik

Referensi:
'Waterloo Campaign.' *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Eleventh Edition. 1910.
Kapal Laut Batavia. Tiket Penumpang untuk Basuki Hario Hadiningrat. 24 Januari 1814. Koleksi pribadi Ny.Sugianto.
Seventh Coalition. Surat Hilang Di Medan Perang. Nomor 920/617720/1815. 1 Oktober 1815.
Koleksi pribadi Ny.Sugianto.
Pencatatan Sipil Kerajaan Belanda. Kutipan Akte Lahir. Nomor 186/190116/1816. 1 Januari 2000. Koleksi pribadi Ny.Sugianto

3

Let's focus on events

Indonesian biographies, like biographies in any other country, focus on individuals and on the events that have shaped their lives. They are written using both the object focus (passive voice) and subject focus (active voice) constructions, which have already been covered extensively in previous Stage 2 modules. Remember that in the object focus construction the focus is on the object or, in the case of a biography, the event, rather than on the subject of the sentence. As stated in previous modules, the subject of the sentence is often left unmentioned.

An interesting pattern that emerges in Indonesian biographies is that the subject of the biography is presented as the grammatical object, with the people or events acting upon his life being the unmentioned grammatical subjects. Sound confusing? Let's look at an example:

> *Basuki Hario Hadiningrat dilahirkan pada tanggal 12 September 1795.*
> Basuki Hario Hadiningrat was born on 12 September 1945.

In this example it may seem that Basuki Hari Hadiningrat is the grammatical subject of the sentence, however, this is not the case. The grammatical subject is his unmentioned mother who gave birth to him. Still confused? Let's rewrite the above sentence in the subject focus construction so you can see how Basuki Hario Hadiningrat is actually the object of the sentence.

> *Siti Hartinah melahirkan Basuki Hario Hadiningrat pada tanggal 12 September 1795.*
> Siti Hartinah gave birth to Basuki Hario Hadiningrat on 12 September 1795.

As you can see, both people and events can act upon the individual in Indonesian biographies, and in these instances these people and events are the grammatical subjects of the sentence — whether they are mentioned or not.

4 The *Australian Dictionary of Biography*

Many countries have a book, or series of books, that includes biographies of its most prominent and important citizens. In Australia, this is the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, or the ADB. The ADB used to be published as a series of books. It is also now available as a free, searchable online catalogue. The ADB includes brief biographical sketches of all kinds of people who have contributed to the history of Australia.

The aim of the ADB is to provide biographies of a cross-section of Australian society, and so it includes biographies of a wide range of people, such as convicts, sportspeople, politicians, thieves, artists, bushrangers, dancers, explorers, engineers, entrepreneurs and teachers. It includes more than 12,000 biographies written by more than 4500 authors, and is funded and maintained by the Australian National University.

The nearest equivalent to the ADB in Indonesia is the online *Ensiklopedi Tokoh Indonesia* (Encyclopaedia of Indonesian Figures). Along with biographies, it contains news stories on individuals as well as information about their vision or life mission. As with all other online content in Indonesia, this website is covered by Article 27 of the *Electronic Information and Transaction Act* which states that anyone distributing and/or transmitting and/or creating access to defamatory electronic documents and/or information with or without any intention will face six years in prison.

5 Exercises

Exercise 1

Read the biography of Basuki Hario Hadiningrat in Block 2 and answer the following questions.

1.1 When and where was Basuki Hario Hadiningrat born?

1.2 How many siblings did Basuki Hario Hadiningrat have?

1.3 Do you think Basuki had a privileged upbringing? Explain your answer.

1.4 What is the significance of the names Elise van Houten and Louisa Elizabeth van Houten? Are they the same person? Explain your answer.

1.5 Approximately how long had Basuki Hario Hadiningrat known Louisa Elizabeth van Houten before they were married? How do you know this?

1.6 Do you think their marriage was hastily arranged? Justify your opinion.

1.7 Based on the available evidence explain what you think may have happened to Basuki Hario Hadiningrat?

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1.8 In the table below list all of the instances where the object focus form of the verb is used.

Define what the verb means in each instance.

Verbs that appear multiple occasions need only be listed once.

Object focus verb	Definition

1.9 Why do you think such extensive use was made of the object focus construction in this biography?

1.10 The passive verb *diketahui* is used seven times throughout Basuki Hario Hadiningrat's biography. Why do you think this is?

Exercise 2

Referring back to Work Sheet 2, *Who do you think you are?*, create a biography of either one of your ancestors, or a famous Indonesian person you are interested in.

Some people you might like to research include:

Jessica Mauboy	singer of Indonesian/Indigenous Australian descent
Rudy Hartono	legendary badminton player
Susi Susanti	Olympic gold medallist in Badminton
Dono Warkop	actor and comedian
Raden Ayu Kartini	Javanese and Indonesian national heroine
Cut Nyak Dhien	Acehnese and Indonesian national heroine
Megawati Soekarnoputri	first female President of the Republic of Indonesia
Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono	first President of the Republic of Indonesia elected directly by the people