Biography Writing Prompts: Question Starters for Life Stories

Original tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 1

Write three early-life question starters for a biography about a grandparent. Each question must begin with how, what, or why.

Answer: What was your home like when you were a child? How did you spend time with your family? Why did you enjoy or dislike school?

Reason: The starters target early life and use open-ended words to invite detailed answers.

Check: Check that each question begins with how, what, or why and relates to childhood.

Task 2

A person achieved a goal in 2018 and faced a challenge in 2020. Draw a timeline sketch with two marks labeled 2018 and 2020. Write one short event name under each mark.

Answer: 2018: completed training course. 2020: changed jobs after a health challenge.

Reason: The timeline places events in chronological order with equal spacing between marks.

Check: Check that the marks are in order, labeled with years, and each has one short event name.

Task 3

Rewrite this yes-or-no question as an open question: Did you like your first job?

Answer: What did you like or dislike about your first job, and what did you learn there?

Reason: The rewrite removes the yes-or-no structure and asks for details and learning.

Check: Check that the new question cannot be answered with only yes or no.

Task 4

You have notes for three life stages. Write a three-sentence draft plan: one topic sentence for early life, one for achievements, and one for challenges.

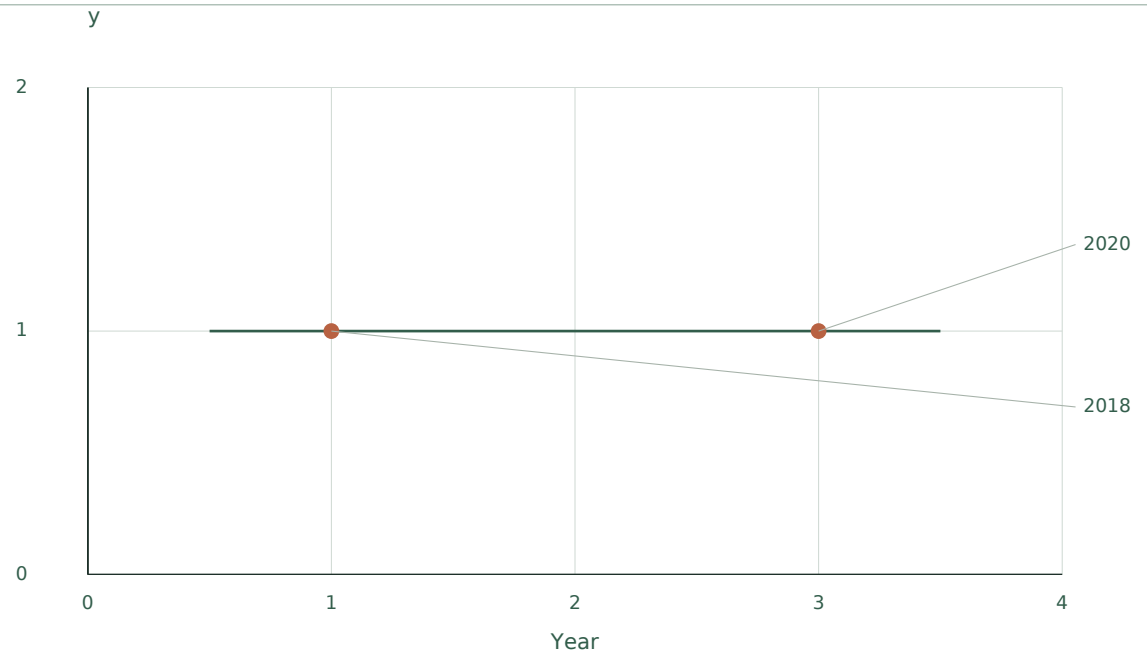
Answer: Early life: The person grew up in a small town and helped at home. Achievements: They completed a training course and started a new job. Challenges: They faced a health problem and changed their daily routine.

Reason: Each sentence names a life stage and gives a main idea that can be expanded with details.

Check: Check that there are exactly three sentences, each linked to a different life stage.

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Timeline sketch: 2018 goal and 2020 challenge



Reference timeline: equal spacing between marks; 2018 completed training course; 2020 changed jobs after a health challenge. Coordinate labels sit outside the plot; thin grey leaders are annotations, not function curves.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Uses at least two question starters from each life stage.
- [ ] Records answers on ruled lines with one fact per line.
- [ ] Completes a timeline sketch with at least three labeled events in order.
- [ ] Writes a draft with an opening, three body paragraphs, and a closing.
- [ ] Handwriting is legible: x-height sits between baseline and midline, and letter style is consistent enough to read. Valid alternatives include print or cursive, as long as spacing and letter forms are clear.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?