

# Biography Synthesis

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**Directions:** Complete the biography of a prominent person in your own words below.

**This is a biography of:**

François Maire Arouet, also known as Voltaire.

**This person is most famous for:**

Voltaire is famous for being a playwright, poet, novelist, essayist and philosopher during the eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment in Europe. His most famous work is "Candide." He is known for supporting freedom of religion and other civil liberties, and is considered to be one of the greatest authors in French literature.

**Some interesting facts about this person are:**

His mother died when he was only seven years old, and he inherited a large amount of money. He was not sent to school as early as most children of French nobility. Instead, his godfather taught Voltaire to read and write. Later, because he had a lot of money, he was able to travel and write. Some of his writings angered the French government so much that he was put into prison, and then sent into exile.

**I would describe this person as being:**

I would describe Voltaire as being several things. He was rich, and he was a good writer. He was courageous to write what he believed, but he may have been seen as a troublemaker for that same reason. It sounds like he couldn't really be stopped from creating the kind of work he wanted to write, even though he was punished for it. So overall, I would describe him as creative, brave, and true to himself.

**I would describe this person this way because:**

I don't know if many people would keep writing even after being thrown into prison and then thrown out of their own country. He thought it was important to keep doing it, though. In the end, he became a big influence on French philosophers and writers, so he made the right decision.

**If I could meet this person and ask one question, I would ask him or her:**

Did you ever worry that you weren't doing the right thing because so many people were against you?

**I would ask this question because:**

I know it's hard to stand up for what you believe all the time. Sometimes it's easier to do what people want you to do and not have any problems.

**This person's accomplishments affect my life because:**

He can be an example to me of how to be educated, creative, and influential through writing. Even though his ideas weren't popular with everyone at that time, he didn't resort to violence. He just kept writing.

**This person's accomplishments have affected the world because:**

His ideas influenced political philosophy around the world, and led people to stand up for civil rights like freedom of speech and freedom of religion.