

# WISCONSIN BIOGRAPHIES

## Purpose: Developing and Using Criteria

### Task:

Students will critically analyze the stories in the Wisconsin Biographies collection to develop criteria for selecting a story for the series, and then use the criteria to choose a new person and write a biography or create a video.

### Sample Essential Questions:

What are criteria? How do criteria affect decision making?

### Standards:

Wisconsin Standards for Social Studies

- SS.Hist2.a.i Describe patterns of continuity over time in the community, state, and the United States.
- SS.Hist2.b.i Describe patterns of change over time in the community, state, and the United States.
- SS.Hist2.c.i Analyze individuals, groups, and events to understand why their contributions are important to historical change and/or continuity.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

- RI.4.8 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text

### Materials:

Animated videos and books/ebooks from [WisconsinBiographies.org](http://WisconsinBiographies.org)

*Developing Criteria* worksheet (attached)

### Directions:

1. As a class, watch all videos in the Wisconsin Biographies series.
2. Create a list of common facts and themes presented in the videos, as well as a list of details about what made the videos fun to watch. Record on the *Developing Criteria* worksheet.
3. Analyze the lists to develop criteria for choosing a new story for the Wisconsin Biographies series. Criteria may be:
  - historical: effect on people, environment, etc.
  - personal: interesting life story, models personal characteristics like bravery, etc.
  - literary: strong theme, surprise ending, etc.
  - media related: dramatic, funny, strong audio, etc.
4. Using the criteria developed, have students choose a historical person to add to the series. Each student or team will either write a biography or create a video and present it to the class. During the presentation, students will describe how the story meets each of the criteria.

### Optional:

- Have the class develop a rubric based on the criteria; use it for self/peer evaluation during presentations.
- Instead of watching the videos, students can read the biographies in order to complete the activity.

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Developing Criteria

Name \_\_\_\_\_

| Things we learned from the video | Things that made the video interesting |
|----------------------------------|--|
|                                  |  |