

In this selection, Dorothy Clarke Wilson speaks about her writing. Read the selection to learn about a biographer and answer the questions that follow.

Let's Write a True Life Story

by Dorothy Clarke Wilson

I am a biographer. That is, I write books telling the life stories of real people. After traveling to India, England, and other far places for material, I thought, why not find a subject near at hand? How about that old doctor up in Greenville who has done such interesting things? I wrote to Dr. Fred Pritham, and he agreed to let me write about him.

First I read everything I could find about lumbering and the Moosehead Lake region. I got big maps of the 5,000-mile area where he had been doctoring for over 65 years, traveling by horse, by boat, by car, by train, by wagon, by snowmobile, even by airplane in late years, and thousands of miles on foot. Then I went up to Greenville and spent a month interviewing him with my tape recorder, talking with people who knew him well, visiting many of the wilderness places where he had treated patients, taking pictures.

③ He has had an interesting life, all right! There were hundreds of exciting stories about his adventures, performing operations in lumber camps with no tools except what he could carry in a basket

strapped to his shoulders, jumping trains to get places in a hurry, riding "jiggers," building a snowmobile out of an old Ford car, going through the ice when taking patients to the hospital and nearly drowning them and himself, joining the high school band after he was 65 and tooting his horn in all the school parades.

I gathered all the information, maps, tapes, pictures, came home, and wrote the book, calling it *The Big-Little World of Doc Pritham*, for I wanted to make it not only his story but a history of the whole area and a time which is passing and will soon be forgotten.

I am sure you can think of some person in your town, perhaps a relative, who has done interesting things. Why not go and see that person, ask questions, get him or her to tell you details of life, incidents that would make a good story, and write them down. That is what a biographer calls "research." Of course you need not write a book, as I did about Doc, but if you write just a little about some real person . . . , you also will be a biographer.

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1. What is the **main** message of this selection?
 - A Only write about things far away.
 - B Only write a complete book.
 - C You, too, can have exciting adventures.
 - D You, too, can be a biographer.
2. Why did the author read all about the Moosehead Lake region?
 - A She saw it in her travels.
 - B She was planning to live there.
 - C It was the subject of her book.
 - D It was where Fred Pritham lived.
3. How was Dr. Fred Pritham different from other subjects the author had written about?
 - A Dr. Pritham lived close to the author's home.
 - B Dr. Pritham was the only subject who was a doctor.
 - C Dr. Pritham lived longer than most other people.
 - D Dr. Pritham was more interesting than her other subjects.
4. What was the author's **main** reason for taking a tape recorder with her when she went to Greenville?
 - A to record her favorite songs
 - B to remember what she wanted to ask
 - C to remember directions to Greenville
 - D to record what people said to her
5. Which sentence **best** explains the main idea of paragraph 3?
 - A Dr. Prithman performed many operations.
 - B Dr. Pritham had many adventures.
 - C Dr. Pritham marched in many parades.
 - D Dr. Pritham visited many lumber camps.

6. What word from the selection ***best*** describes the list below?

- read
- ask questions
- take notes

- A research
- B biography
- C operations
- D incidents

End of Set

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Answers to
Grade 3 Reading Comprehension Sample Items

Passage Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Category	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Let's Write a True Life Story	1	D	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.04
Let's Write a True Life Story	2	D	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.04
Let's Write a True Life Story	3	A	Critical Stance	Organizing	3.02
Let's Write a True Life Story	4	D	Interpretation	Analyzing	2.02
Let's Write a True Life Story	5	B	Cognition	Analyzing	2.04
Let's Write a True Life Story	6	A	Cognition	Knowledge	1.03