Welcome to 8th grade Pre-AP! Your summer 1st 6 weeks’ assignment is a comprehensive autobiography. Here is your chance to tell your life story.

Although this is called a “summer project,” you will have additional time to work on it the first three weeks in the fall (outside of class). In the past, parents have told us they have contact with families who can help with this project during the summer (visits, reunions, vacations, etc.) which is why you are receiving it now.

Why an autobiography? Why a project at all?
First, in line with the expectations for Pre-AP, both district-wide and Tascosa Cluster, it is recommended students receive a project to help keep skills sharp over the summer.

The choice for an autobiography is based on many factors. One is that it allows students and parents to work on the project together. It’s a great time to relive those special memories – look through pictures, share some stories and laughs, and enjoy the time before the chaos of high school sets in.

Second, students don’t often take time to reflect on the positive events that have occurred during their lives. This gives them an opportunity to pull out pictures and awards that have been hiding in drawers and revel in their accomplishments – emphasizing their uniqueness.

Finally, it is now more important than ever that people all over the world begin to recognize and appreciate those differences, personal and cultural, that make us who we are. As students share these differences, we hope to gain a better understanding of, not only who we are, but why we are, so we can celebrate those attributes that make each one of us special. (Students often comment that “share day” is the best!)

Have fun with this project. Include pictures of Great Aunt Bertha, awards for being the fastest scooterboarder in the second grade, the note from your teacher telling your parents you “forgot your homework.” Include your favorite recipe, the first time you printed your name, the stick picture drawing of your family from kindergarten. The purpose is to tell who you are so – just about anything goes.

Believe it or not, many parents have commented they were glad this project was assigned (after the initial moaning and groaning, of course.) Some former students have kept their autobiography up-to-date since leaving 8th grade.

This packet will help guide you through your autobiography. If you follow these guidelines step by step, you will have no difficulty completing the project. It actually works best if you work on small parts at a time. Please check the grading sheet at the end of the packet so you will know how this project will be graded.

Remember – this is your life story. Let your personality come through!

Suggestion – Read the entire packet before beginning, so you can be on the lookout for bits and pieces. It is recommended you share this packet with an adult at home because you may need their help obtaining information. Chapters need to be at least ½ page in length, but the more detailed, the higher the grade.

There are also pages containing cartoons and graphs. You are welcome to use these in any way. You may also use your own creations to tell us who you are.

Have fun!
"I'm doing research on myself."
Recommendations for Writing Your Autobiography

This packet should be read by parents or adults at home before you begin.

It is important to remember that this book will be read by others. Although you may include your personal feelings, be careful not to hurt anyone’s feelings by what you write.

Any questions that you or your family feel are too personal, or are too uncomfortable to include, may be left out of your autobiography.

It is strongly recommended you write rough drafts. Please have an adult read your rough drafts before you complete your final copy. This will help to assure correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

This project will count as a significant grade for the first six weeks. Please complete it to the best of your ability.

Computers may be used.

If you have one-of-a-kind pictures, you may want to consider making copies instead of using the originals. This will protect your family pictures.

Include any awards, certificates, etc. you may have received.

Number the pages as you work on them. This will help you stay organized, making pages easy to find.

Include dates and places; these are also part of your family’s history.

Put in details. Describe things and places with so much detail that you can almost “see them before your eyes.”

Write how you felt when you describe the events.

Write like you talk. Remember – you are telling a story.

If you write like you talk, you will automatically take care of sentences and punctuation. Wherever you would pause in talking, put a comma in your writing. When you finish a though, put in a period. When you start a new sentence, don’t forget to start with a capital letter.

You will find description check lists on the next pages that will help you describe more accurately.

You may want to find a neat scrapbook or notebook in which to put all the information.
Description Checklist

Character

Height
Weight
Foot size
Age
Hand size
Hair color
Eye Color
Color
Intelligence
Cleanliness
Shape of eyes
Teeth (crooked, braces, etc.)
Glasses – shape or color
Shape of mouth
Shape of face
Clothing worn
Jewelry
Habits
Type of walk
Style
Distinguishing features
Fingernails (long, polished)
Shape of ears
Complexion (color – pale, pimples, etc.)
Voice (loud, soft, etc.)
Personality (friendly, shy)
Speech pattern (accent, stutter, etc.)
General appearance

Event

What action took place?
How long did it take?
How did it happen?
How did each person participate?
Mood of the event? (panic, happiness, etc.)
Under what conditions did it happen?
Where did it happen?
When did it happen?
Result of event?
Who was there?
Why did it happen?
What happened before?
What happened after?

Place

General shape
Height
Width
Outside appearance
Colors
Function (job) of place
Mood of the place
Things in the place
Climate
Sounds in the place
Smells in the place
Temperature
What is near
People in the place
Material used (wood, brick)
Arrangement of things
Where the place is
What it is next to
What it is across from
Scenery surrounding it

Object

Temperature
Sound it makes
State of motion
How it works
How many parts it has (list)
Function
Taste
Cost
Weight
Color
Shape
Texture
Smell
Size
CHAPTER 1

Have you ever thought about your name? Really thought about it? Have you ever tried to think about what it means, or where it came from in the first place? Do you know who gave you your name, or whose name it might have been before it was given to you? Names seem like such every day common things that we often don’t think much about the; but every name has a history. You may be able to find books on names and their meanings at home or the public library. The Internet is also an excellent resource for finding the meanings of names.

Using one of the resources above, find out about your name. Once you’ve found it, include all the information about it in this chapter of your autobiography. It will fit in with the guide questions for this chapter.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 1

1. Birth facts: time, where, date, name of hospital. A baby picture and/or copy of your birth announcement is fun to include here.

2. Were you named after anyone? Who?

3. Why did your parents name you what they did? Include your middle name, birth weight, height.
   Include any interesting facts about your birth. For example, was there a blizzard, a special occasion, or even on the day you were born? (Check history books, the Internet, old newspapers in the library.)

4. What did you discover about the history of your name?

5. Do you have a nickname? How did you get it?
Congratulations! You have just completed Chapter 1. You may give each chapter a
title; it will help organize your book and make it more interesting to read.

Titles will also help when you put together a table of contents.

Complete the following poem pattern using information about you.

I AM

1st Stanza (Don’t copy this line)

I am (two special characteristics you have)

I wonder (something you are actually curious about)

I like (something you like)

I dislike (something you don’t care for)

I would like (an actual desire)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

2nd Stanza (Don’t copy this line)

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)

I feel (a feeling you occasionally have)

I promise (something you will do)

I worry (something that really bothers you)

I cry (something that makes you very sad)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

3rd Stanza (Don’t copy this line)

I understand (something you know is true)

I say (something you believe in)

I dream (something you actually dream about)

I try (something you really make an effort for)

I hope (something you actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

MY BIRTH

If you live with a birth parent, interview the person who can best answer these questions.

1. Place of birth (city, hospital, etc.)
2. Time of birth (weather, historical events at this time)
3. Where were they when labor began?
4. How long was labor?
5. People present (family, medical persons, others)
6. Weight at birth
7. Any unusual happenings?
8. How did they pick your name?
9. What were the first six months like? First year?
10. Ask the questions you would like to know about your birth and early childhood, such as diseases, first steps, first words, etc.
11. What sources of information about yourself are available to you, for example, baby books, family records, albums, photos, traditional stories?

If you are adopted or not living with a birth parent, interview the person who can best answer these questions.

1. What do you know about your birth?
   a. Where was it?
   b. Time (What was happening in the world at that time?)
   c. Weight, length, etc.
2. What was it like the first time they saw you? How long had they known you were coming to live with them?
3. Ask about the day you came to live with them.
4. What were your first six months together like?
5. What can they tell you about your name?
6. What do they know about your early life (your first words, childhood illnesses, etc.)?
7. What sources of information are available (for example, baby books, records, photographs)?

CHAPTER 2
Family and Home
1. Describe each member of your family so people will know what they are like – looks, personality, occupation, age.
2. Where do you fit – oldest, middle, youngest, only?
3. Any famous relatives?
4. What is your family’s ethnic background? Do you observe any traditions from other countries?
5. Do you have any pets? If so, what kind, name, how long you’ve had them.
6. Describe the house or apartment you live in now. Where else have you lived – other cities, other houses?
7. How old were you when you moved?
8. What do you remember about other places?
9. Are there any places that are special to you, such as a relative’s home or grandparents’ place?
10. Include anything else about your family or your background. (Hobbies, family projects, vacations, a special time, etc.)

Photographs (or copies) will come in handy in this chapter. Don’t forget to include your grandparents’ pictures, too. They will love it. You could also draw a picture of your house. It is good to have some original artwork in your book.

11. Include your family tree. Several examples follow. You may choose whichever method you like best.

CHAPTER 3
Early Life (ages 1-6)

This is a difficult section since most of you will not remember many things about this time of your life. What you write here requires the help of parents, older brothers and sisters (if you have any), or other relatives. Ask questions about the things you did during this time of your life. Many families have stories about the things children did when they were young.

**Hint – Make sure to ask questions when your parents have the time to answer your questions. While they are doing work around the house is not a good time. Times when you are sitting at the dinner table as a family, or during some free time, are much better to ask questions. Look for the best time for your family.

Examples of life time lines are on the following pages. Study them carefully and use the listed questions to make your own time line. It will fit perfectly with chapters three and four.
Tracing Your Family Tree

One part of knowing about your family history is to know who your relatives are or were, and where they came from. In “Digging Up Your Roots,” begin with yourself by filling out the family tree chart on the following page. If you don’t know all the information to complete your chart, ask your parents. Your parents’ knowledge and personal records found in your home are the best sources of information. The following family records will help you to acquire the information needed for your chart and to go deeper in identifying people one at a time:

1. Family Histories
2. Family Bibles
3. Birth, marriage, and death certificates
4. Diaries, biographies, and journals
5. Baptism records
6. Old letters
7. Funeral memorial cards
8. Military records
   a. Enlistment and induction notices
   b. Orders
   c. Discharges
   d. Pension documents
   e. Separation papers
9. Old age pension records
10. Scrapbooks
11. Weddings announcements
12. Baby books
13. Photographs (old pictures bear the photographer’s address)
14. Newspaper clippings
15. Land and estate records
16. Naturalization, citizenship, and passport papers
17. School yearbooks
MAKING A TIMELINE

(Put timeline in Ch. 3)

The timeline examples will help you in making your own personal timeline. These examples are done on the computer, but you may do your timeline by hand if desired.
If you are doing your timeline in writing, divide the horizontal line on the paper into evenly spaced marks for each year of your life, beginning with your first birthday at the left, and moving across until you come to today.

Write in, above and below the line, all the events of your life that you can remember or have been told. Here are a few things to start with:

- your birthday
- first word
- first pet
- the very first thing you remember happening
- your first toys
- started to walk
- when you began school (What was your kindergarten teacher’s name?)
- the first book you read by yourself
- the year you learned to ride a bike, ice skate, play a musical instrument, swim or whistle
- a train, plane, or car ride somewhere special
- the time you broke your arm or had an accident and how it happened
- the year your voice changes or you grew really fast
- when you met your best friend
- the first movie, baseball game, concert, or play you attended
- when your first tooth fell out
- special events when you finished elementary school
- first haircut
- first vacation
- first trip to a special place like the zoo, circus, or state fair
My Timeline

1. My first birthday
2. Suzie - our chihuahua
3. My first train ride
4. My first day of kindergarten; Mrs. Wymore - teacher
5. My first bike
6. Met my best friend - Gordy
7. Plane trip to California
8. Started middle school
9. Surprise birthday party
MY LIFE ON THE LINE

FIRST PAIR OF SUNGLASSES
FIRST BIRTHDAY

WENT TO FIRST FOOTBALL GAME
LEARNED TO WALK

WENT TO FIRST BASEBALL GAME
FIRST SWIM LESSON

FIRST AIRPLANE TRIP
BROKE LEG AT PARK

FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL
MOVED TO IOWA

FIRST SWIM MEET
BROKE LITTLE BROTHER’S ARM

GOT INTO CHALLENGE CENTER
TRIP TO DISNEYLAND

WENT CAMPING IN COLORADO MOUNTAINS
FIRST CONCERT

MET BRIAN ETHERINGTON
STARTED PAPER ROUTE

FIRST PAIR OF NIKES
FIRST HOMERUN

FIRST FOOTBALL JERSEY
GOT MOPED

WON CB LEAGUE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP
STARTED KIRN JUNIOR HIGH

FIRST LIMOUSINE RIDE TO CONCERT
WENT TO MALL OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 4

Later Life (ages 7 to present)

Describe things you remember that happened to you during your life. Do this in order – people you met, things you did, places you went, events both happy and sad.

Now would be a good time to include a drawing or picture of your past and present schools. Sketches or photographs of friends, teams, postcards from vacations – all fit in here.

CHAPTER 5

Memorable Events

Talk about important things that have happened to you in your life like:

- birthdays
- beginning school
- getting a pet
- moving
- special awards

Anything you consider important in your life, add here. Be sure to include one of the best things that ever happened to you and one of the worst things that ever happened to you, and explain why. This is your book and your feelings are important.

*******CELEBRATE!!!!! YOU’RE HALF WAY THERE!!!!! KEEP WORKING!!!! I’M SURE YOU’RE DOING GREAT!!! I CAN’T WAIT TO SEE THESE AND MEET ALL OF YOU!!!!!

CHAPTER 6

Description of you as you are now

What do you look like? (Describe in detail.) What is your personality? (Shy, outgoing, competitive, sensitive, etc.) What are your faults? What are your interests, hobbies, habits (good and bad)? Do you belong to any clubs or organizations? Have you won any awards? How have you changed in the last year? What makes you YOU?

**Hint: The description checklists will help you here.

This chapter would also be a good place to include awards, playbills for plays, special music events, etc. A self-portrait or recent photograph of yourself would fit here, too.
CHAPTER 7
Likes and Dislikes

What are some of your favorites – color, food, television show, book that you’ve read, season, etc.? Who do you admire, famous and non-famous people? What is your idea of having a good time? What do you find boring? What do you dislike? Include any other likes and dislikes you can think of. What are your pet peeves? (Little things that bother you.) What is something you get angry about?

Include a time capsule page or pages in this chapter. Some things that might be on this page are:
- ticket stubs from concerts, plays, events you’ve attended in the past
- a section from TV guide showing your favorite shows
- a special letter or envelope you’ve received
- labels from boxes, bottles or cans of your favorite foods
- birthday, get well, Christmas cards you’ve received
- your favorite magazine and comics – parts of them

Think of other things that I’ve not thought about. These things will add to your memories. Hopefully you will continue with this in the years to come.

CHAPTER 8
Feelings

What are some things you feel strongly about? What is important to you? Explain. Use a thesaurus to find different words to use when you write about your feelings. In this section you might also include your religious beliefs or convictions.

You may want to use a pattern poem such as:
I feel _______________ when _______________

You may also write your own poetry if you’d like since poetry is usually based on feelings. Include a collection about things that are important to you and how you feel about them.

Chapter 9
Others

How do you think other people see you? Describe and explain why you think people see you the way they do. You might decide to interview your friends or give them a list of basic questions to answer about you.

If you have grandparents that are living, ask them to write a paragraph or so about you. Include this in your book. Do the same with your parents. Someday these writings will be very special.

CHAPTER 10
Future Plans

Discuss your hopes for the future – education, career, accomplishments, possessions you hope to have, family plans, where you hope to live, what you would like to be doing in 10 years, travel plans, etc. Include anything else you are planning for the future – dreams, wishes, ambitions . . .
Finishing Touches

When you get the rest of the autobiography completed, you are ready for the final steps.

Following this page are some examples of tables of contents. You will find things are much easier to locate with a table of contents toward the beginning of your autobiography.

You may also want to design a dedication page. (An example is included.) This will also be placed toward the front of your book. You may want to dedicate this project to someone who has been special to you over the years. THIS IS OPTIONAL.

As mentioned earlier, you may want to find some kind of album in which to organize all your information.

Please include any additional information that you feel is important in telling who you are. I have added quite a few supplemental pages for you to use or not use as you see fit.

If you have favorite sayings or quotes, or cartoons, please include them.

Have fun rediscovering what makes you so special!!!!!

GRADING –

Grading on this project will take into consideration:

- how closely the directions are followed in the format and organization of the book.
- correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling
- clever and effective use of pictures, illustrations and other pages to make work seem like a book.
- neatness of project (writing in straight lines, easy to read, etc.)
- thorough responses for required information – meaning one (1) sentence explanations are not considered enough.

(Example: When I was little, I always go in trouble.) NO

Your explanations should be at least ½ to 1 page in length.
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2. My Family ......................................... 10
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4. Later Life .......................................... 20
5. Memorable Events ................................. 24
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7. Likes & Dislikes .................................... 30
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9. How Others See Me ............................... 39
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4. Chapter Four – The Later Years ....................... 31
5. Chapter Five – My Memorable Moments ............... 39
7. Chapter Seven – Likes and Dislikes .................... 54
8. Chapter Eight – My Feelings and Beliefs .............. 60
10. Chapter Ten – My Future .............................. 74
This book is dedicated to my parents and my teacher for all their help in completing this book.

(example)
DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to:

snowflakes,
hot air balloons,
and magic dragons.
I saw them all through my classroom window.
Forms to use as needed.
ADOPTED FAMILY – FAMILY TREE (EXAMPLE)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Restaurant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>City</td>
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<td>Movie</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<td>Actress</td>
<td>Flower</td>
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<td>Song</td>
<td>Pet</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV Show</td>
<td>Candy</td>
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<td>Ice Cream</td>
<td>Month</td>
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<td>Jelly</td>
<td>Season</td>
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<td>Hobby</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Sport to Watch</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport to Play</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation Place</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookie</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Dreams

It's a dream until you write it down, and then it's a goal. – Anonymous
My Coat of Arms
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.</td>
<td>Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.</td>
<td>Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.</td>
<td>The information appears to be disorganized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Information</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. No detail and/or examples are given.</td>
<td>Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>No grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
<td>Almost no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
<td>A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
<td>Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Organizer</td>
<td>Graphic organizer or outline has been completed and shows clear, logical relationships between all topics and subtopics.</td>
<td>Graphic organizer or outline has been completed and shows clear, logical relationships between most topics and subtopics.</td>
<td>Graphic organizer or outline has been started and includes some topics and subtopics.</td>
<td>Graphic organizer or outline has not been attempted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Unique arrangement of material. Use of text and pictures makes project fun to read (borders, clip art, etc.)</td>
<td>Arrangement of material includes a mixture of text and projects.</td>
<td>Routine format of writing and pictures.</td>
<td>Little effort made to make project different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures/Awards</td>
<td>Pictures and/or awards used to support text throughout project. Letters included.</td>
<td>Pictures and/or awards used throughout project. Letters included.</td>
<td>Pictures and/or awards occasionally in project.</td>
<td>Few/no pictures and/or awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neatness</td>
<td>Arrangement of pictures and text make project easy and interesting to read.</td>
<td>Pictures and text easy to read.</td>
<td>Text has gaps in places, some pages are messy and difficult to read.</td>
<td>Little effort put into making project neat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All chapters included</td>
<td>All 10 chapters and required elements included as well as extra information and pictures.</td>
<td>All 10 chapters and required elements included.</td>
<td>Most chapters and elements included.</td>
<td>Some elements and chapters included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On time</td>
<td>Turned in BEFORE deadline – by extra credit due date.</td>
<td>Turned in on time.</td>
<td>Turned in 1 day late.</td>
<td>Turned in 2 days after date or later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall project</td>
<td>Meets all criteria in 4 category</td>
<td>Meets all criteria in 3 category</td>
<td>Meets all criteria in 2 category</td>
<td>Meets all criteria in 1 category</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:**

**GRADE:**

Name: __________________________