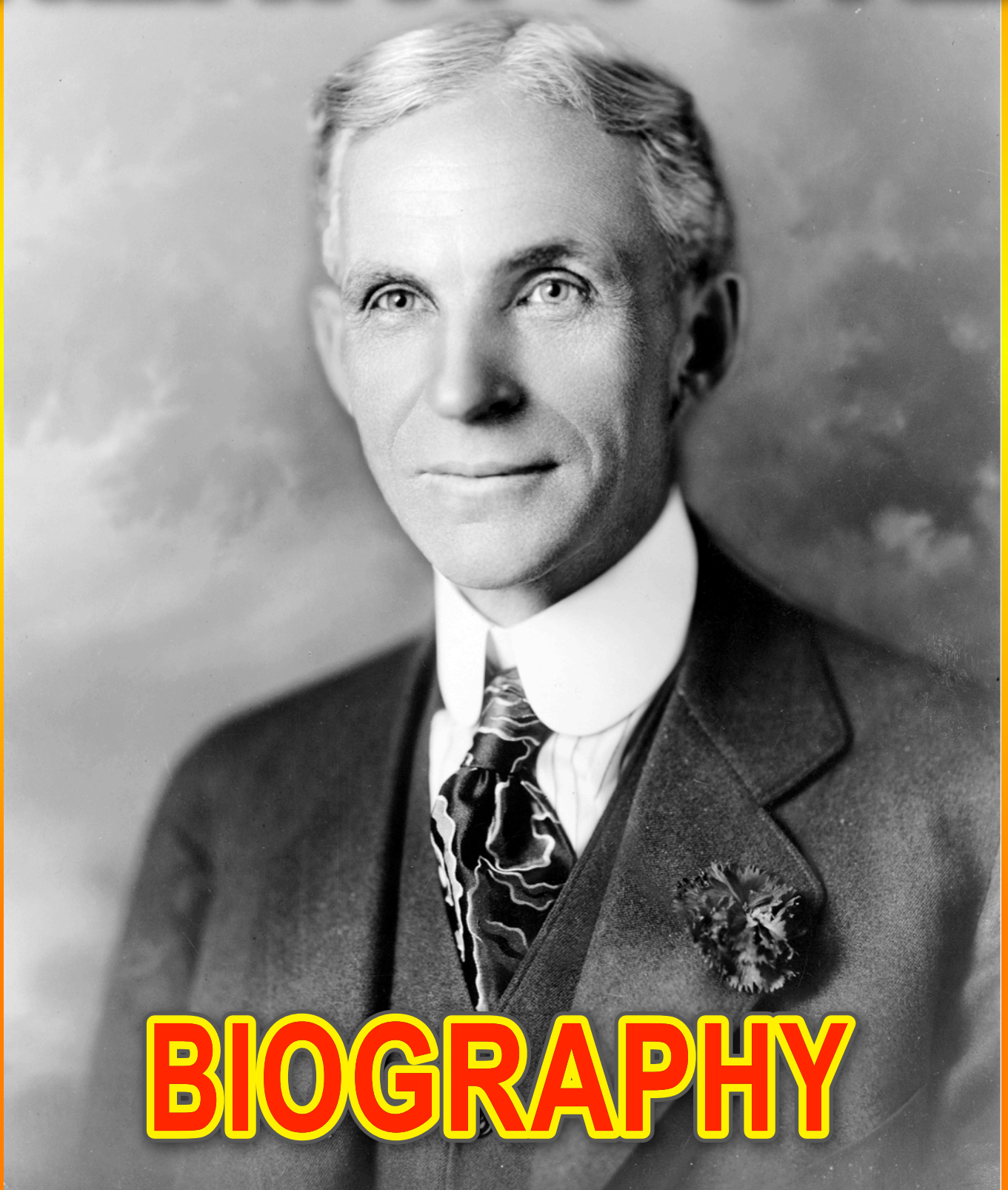


HENRY FORD



BIOGRAPHY

HENRY FORD

Henry Ford was born on the family farm in Michigan on July 30, 1863. As a child, he liked to play with machines and try to understand how they worked. When he was thirteen years old, Ford took apart a watch and put it back together again perfectly.

As he grew older, Ford did work on the farm for his father, but it did not interest him much, so he learned how to fix steam engines instead. In 1891, he started working for the Edison Illuminating Company. Ford was happy to try things out, and then learn from his mistakes if he failed. He was also a quick and keen learner. And so, before long, he had been promoted to the position of chief engineer at the company.

Ford was also interested in vehicles that did not need to be pulled by horses, as most were at the time. He designed and built an automobile powered by gasoline in 1896. He called it the 'Quadricycle', and he demonstrated it to the inventor and businessman Thomas Edison. Edison was impressed, and encouraged Ford to work on more designs.

Over the next few years, Ford tried to set up his own automobile company, but he failed twice. But then, in 1903, Ford founded the Ford Motor Company, and he finally found the beginnings of success. In 1908, his company launched the Model T automobile, which was popular because it was easy to drive and repair.

Ford then concentrated on his manufacturing methods. He started mass producing the automobiles on an assembly line using standardized parts. This made his automobiles cheaper for the general public to buy. It was a revolution, because automobiles were now available to far more people than ever before.

Manufacturing and transportation in America and the world had been changed forever. This is why Ford was thought of as one of the most significant figures of the early twentieth century, both during his lifetime and after his death in 1947.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'fix'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'fix' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'fix'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'fix'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'fix' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: mistakes	errors

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

The company produced the Model T automobile, which was very popular.

Ford also spent time developing a gasoline-powered automobile.

Henry Ford was born to a Michigan farming family in 1863.

In 1891, Ford started working for the Edison Illuminating Company.

Henry Ford developed mass production methods to produce the automobiles needed to meet demand.

In 1903, Ford founded the Ford Motor Company.

As a child, Ford liked to take machines apart and understand how they worked.

Get to the facts

1 What did Henry Ford take apart aged thirteen?

2 What did Ford call his first automobile in 1896?

3 Who did Ford demonstrate it to?

4 When did Ford found the Ford Motor Company?

5 What was the company's first automobile called?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Ford Model T

Imagine you have bought a Ford Model T in 1910, and you are driving it for the first time...(now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'fix'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'fix' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'fix'.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – mistakes

Synonym – errors

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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