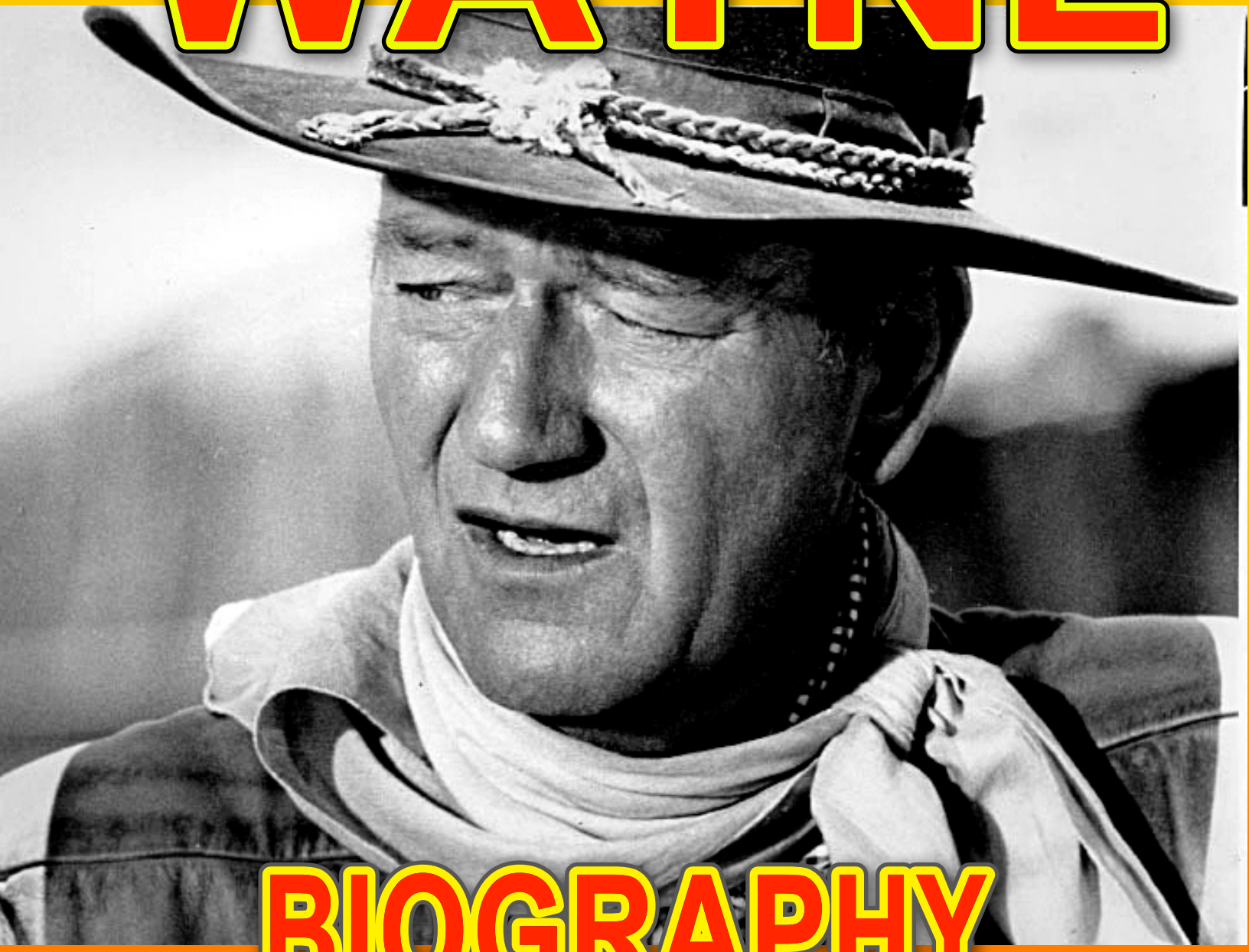
JOHN WAYNE



BIOGRAPHY

JOHN WAYNE

Later nicknamed 'Duke', John Wayne was born in Iowa on May 26, 1907, although the family then settled in California. At school, Wayne starred in stage productions, and at college he worked on film sets as an extra during his spare time.

Such work meant Wayne met directors like John Ford and Raoul Walsh. It was Walsh who first cast Wayne in a leading role, in the 1930 Western film 'The Big Trail'. Although, the film was not popular with audiences at the time, it marked the start of Wayne's career as a Western film actor.

It was not until 1939 that Wayne had another breakthrough role. He played an outlaw called Ringo Kid in the film 'Stagecoach', which was directed by John Ford. This film was more successful, and was nominated for seven Academy Awards.

Throughout his career, Wayne developed his iconic image of a character who was a sort of 'everyman' figure that was not afraid of also being an action hero. Many viewers saw him as showing what they thought of as American ideals.

In the 1940s, Wayne turned to producing films as well as starring in them. In films like 'Red River', he used his acting skill to portray a different sort of Western character than he had before. But it was his performance in a war film, 'Sands of Iwo Jima', that earned him his first nomination for the Best Actor Academy Award. He later won an Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in the 1969 film 'True Grit'.

In 1960, Wayne turned to directing films. He directed 'The Alamo', and starred as the character of Davy Crockett in it. In the later 1960s, Wayne supported Ronald Reagan's campaigns to be governor of California, and later the Republican candidate for president.

Wayne's last film was 'The Shootist' in 1976, in which he played a gunfighter with cancer. Wayne himself had suffered from lung cancer, but recovered after major operations. However, he was diagnosed with stomach cancer in 1978, and he died a year later in California.

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 'starred'.

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

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

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

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'starred' 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: recovered	got better

Sequencing

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

While in college, Wayne worked on film sets in his spare time.

For many years, Wayne starred in films, mostly Westerns.

John Wayne was born in Iowa in 1907, but later moved to California.

Wayne's last film before he died was 'The Shootist' in 1976.

This meant Wayne met the directors who gave him the breaks he needed to start his acting career.

In 1969, Wayne won an Academy Award for Best Actor.

Then Wayne produced and directed his own films.

Get to the facts

1 Where did John Wayne work during college?

2 Who first cast Wayne in a leading role?

3 Which film was nominated for seven Academy Awards?

4 When did the film 'True Grit' come out?

5 Who did Wayne play in 'The Alamo'?

Make a story...

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

Breakthrough role

Imagine you want to be a leading film actor. You have been working on film sets to get experience. One day, a film director says, 'I've got good news. You can star in my next film!'... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

a Write the sentence in which you found the word ‘starred’.
b From that sentence, suggest what ‘starred’ means.
c Write a new sentence using the word ‘starred’.
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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 – recovered Synonym – got better

Sequencing:

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

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Breakthrough role

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