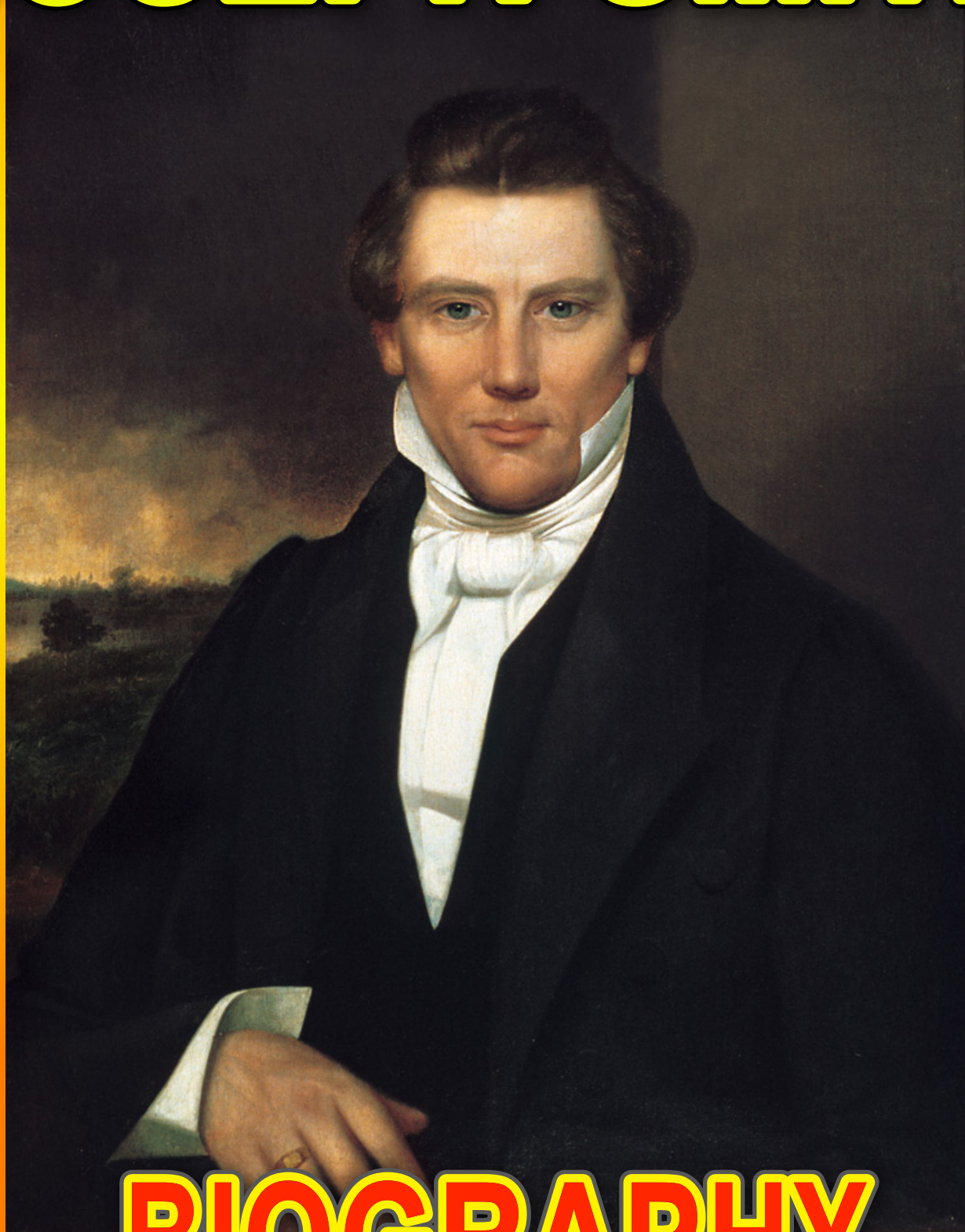


# JOSEPH SMITH



# BIOGRAPHY

# JOSEPH SMITH

Joseph Smith was born in Vermont in 1805, but his family then moved to New York. In the early 1820s, there was a lot of religious activity in the area, with several branches of Christianity emerging. Smith was not sure which to follow, so he prayed to God for an answer.

The story goes that Smith then had a series of visions. They revealed to him the existence of an ancient text written on gold plates. The text was a kind of scripture that described God's relationship with an ancient race in America. Smith claimed to have found the gold plates, and he then set about writing them out. He called the scripture the Book of Mormon, and it was published in 1830.

Straight away, Smith also set up a church based on this scripture, and became its first leader, or president. Its followers were called Latter Day Saints, or Mormons. They moved west during the 1830s, hoping to form a community based on their beliefs. Their first bases were established at Kirtland, Ohio, and Independence, Missouri.

Smith made efforts to increase the following of his church. He set up the first Mormon Temple in Kirtland in 1836. But opponents questioned how the church was being funded, and Mormon followers clashed with non-believers in Missouri. In the end, the violence forced Smith to move, and he founded a new settlement at Nauvoo, Illinois.

But Smith had opponents here, too. Some people did not like Mormon beliefs that went against traditional Christian principles. Others did not like the power that Smith seemed to have in the community. In the end, Smith was jailed in Carthage, Illinois, in 1844. Soon after, an angry mob broke into the jail, and Smith was killed. By the time of his death, there were around 25,000 Mormons.

# 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 '**beliefs**'.

b From that sentence, suggest what '**beliefs**' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word '**beliefs**'.

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

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

Try this for other words, too. 

# 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: ancient	very old

# Sequencing

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

Smith also founded a church based on the Book of Mormon, and established the religion in Ohio and Missouri.

But clashes with non-believers led Smith to move to Illinois.

Smith claimed to have had visions that led him to an ancient text inscribed on gold plates.

Smith faced more persecution in Illinois, where he was killed while in jail.

Joseph Smith grew up in New York in the early 19th century, when there was a lot of interest in different religious groups.

In 1830, Smith published a version of the text called the Book of Mormon.

Smith did not know which branch of Christianity to follow, so he prayed for advice.

# Get to the facts

1 What did the visions reveal to Joseph Smith?

2 What did Smith call the book that he produced?

3 When was the book published?

4 Where was the first Mormon temple built?

5 Where was Smith in jail?

# Make a story...

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

## Mormon leader killed

Write a newspaper report for the day Joseph Smith was killed in Carthage jail in 1844.

**Below is a plain text version for printing:**

## Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'beliefs'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'beliefs' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'beliefs'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'beliefs'.
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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 – ancient                      Synonym – very old

## Sequencing:

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

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But clashes with non-believers led Smith to move to Illinois.

Smith claimed to have had visions that led him to an ancient text inscribed on gold plates.

Smith faced more persecution in Illinois, where he was killed while in jail.

Joseph Smith grew up in New York in the early 19th century, when there was a lot of interest in different religious groups.

In 1830, Smith published a version of the text called the Book of Mormon.

Smith did not know which branch of Christianity to follow, so he prayed for advice.



## **Get to the facts:**

- 1 What did the visions reveal to Joseph Smith?
- 2 What did Smith call the book that he produced?
- 3 When was the book published?
- 4 Where was the first Mormon temple built?
- 5 Where was Smith in jail?

## **Make a story...**

### **Mormon leader killed**

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