

Dare to know

Biographical Fiction

Fiction that depicts the lives of real people interspersed with fictional characters and events.

Books in this genre are written in a narrative style that mimics the structure of a traditional biography, but with some fictional embellishments. The primary aim of biographical fiction is to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the life and experiences of real-life people through creative storytelling. One of the key features of biographical fiction is that they are based on real people, events, and places. Authors conduct extensive research on their subjects to ensure accuracy and authenticity, but they also use their imagination to fill in the gaps where the historical record is incomplete or where creative license is needed to enhance the story. Robert Graves's *I, Claudius* (1934), Dee Brown's *Wave High the Banner* (1942), and Irving Stone's *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1961) are highly regarded examples.

Common Elements

Genuine historical characters and period
--

Reimagined historical details
Fictional narrative

Benefits of Reading

Provides readers with insight into real-life characters

Explains to readers the driving motives and traits of characters
--

Helps readers to understand the historical context surrounding characters

Modern Literary Examples

<i>According to Queeney</i> (2001) by Beryl Bainbridge
--

<i>The Big Music</i> (2012) by Kirsty Gunn
<i>Burr</i> (1973) by Gore Vidal

<i>DooDaa: The Balletic Art of Gavin Twinge</i> (2002) by Ralph Steadman
<i>Double Play</i> (2004) by Robert B. Parker
<i>An Equal Stillness</i> (2009) by Francesca Key
<i>The Executioner's Song</i> (1979) by Norman Mailer
<i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i> (1999) by Tracy Chevalier
<i>The Great Lover</i> (2009) by Jill Dawson
<i>Helen of Troy</i> (2006) by Margaret George
<i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> (2010) by Rebecca Skloot
<i>The Invention of Wings</i> (2014) by Sue Monk Kidd

<i>Josephine Baker's Last Dance</i> (2018) by Sherry Jones
<i>Kiss and Tell</i> (1995) by Alain de Botton
<i>Nat Tate</i> (1998) by William Boyd
<i>The Other Boleyn Girl</i> (2002) by Philippa Gregory
<i>Pale Rose of England</i> (2011) by Sandra Worth
<i>The Paris Wife</i> (2011) by Paula McLain
<i>Red or Dead</i> (2014) by David Peace
<i>Ride the Wind</i> (1982) by Lucia St. Clair Robson
<i>Schindler's List</i> (1982) by Thomas Keneally
<i>The Sunne in Splendour</i> (1982) by Sharon Key Penman