

## Biography

### Ernest Hemingway: Wrestling with Life (2 Parts)

He is one of the most famous and widely read literary figures of the 20th century and his larger-than-life persona was more colorful than any writer could create. Ernest Hemingway lived his life to the fullest, at times to excess. His exploits of masculinity, battles with alcohol and tempestuous relationships with women helped to create and preserve his image as an icon. But beneath the wine, women and song, Hemingway's demons continued to plague him throughout his life until, at the age of sixty-one, he committed suicide.

Ernest Hemingway: Wrestling with Life would be useful for classes on American History, Literature and American culture. It is appropriate for middle school and high school.

### Discussion Questions

1. Some consider Hemingway the “quintessential American writer?” What does this mean?
2. Hemingway's parents, like everyone's parents, had a profound influence on his formative years. Discuss the influence of Hemingway's parents on his life and on his art.
3. How and why did Hemingway become a writer?
4. Hemingway served as an ambulance driver during World War I. How did Hemingway's war experiences shape his life and his art?
5. Why did Hemingway's relationship with Agnes, a nurse he met while he was recuperating from a war wound, end?
6. Hemingway lied about and exaggerated his exploits during the war when he returned home. Why did he do this?
7. The expatriate writer Gertrude Stein and Hemingway were friends for many years before they had a falling out. Discuss the influence of Stein on Hemingway's work.
8. What is meant by the term “the lost generation?” How did this term come into fashion?
9. Hemingway spent quite a bit of time in Spain and was passionate about bullfighting. Why do you think this bloody sport appealed to Hemingway?
10. What was the “Hemingway style?”
11. Discuss the role of alcohol in the life of Ernest Hemingway.
12. Discuss Hemingway's hyper-masculinity. Why do you think he continually strove to be so “masculine?”
13. Why were Hemingway's relationships with women so troublesome?
14. What is the legacy of Ernest Hemingway for American literature and American culture?

### Extended Activities

1. Create illustrations for your favorite Hemingway story.
2. Create a poster advertising one of the bullfights Hemingway was so passionate about.
3. Read one of Hemingway's stories and discuss how that story is reflective of the events in Hemingway's life at the time he wrote the story.

