

Steve Jobs' Biography

Steve Jobs was an American businessman and inventor. In the 1970s, he co-founded Apple Inc, which has become one of the world's most successful technology companies. This extract from Steve's biography describes his personality and some key events in his life.

In his early twenties, Jobs almost single-handedly introduced the world to the first computer that could sit on your desk and actually do something all by itself. He revolutionized music and the ears of a generation with a spiffy little music player called the iPod and a wide selection of songs at the iTunes store. He funded and nurtured a company called Pixar that made the most amazing computer-animated movies — *Toy Story*, *Cars*, and *Finding Nemo* — bringing to life imaginary characters like never before.

Though he was neither an engineer nor a computer geek, he helped create one gotta-have-it product after another by always designing it with you and me, the actual users, in mind. [...] [M]ore insanely awesome technology was in the works, including the iPhone, which would put much of the power of a computer neatly into the palm of your hand. The father of four would be repeatedly compared with the inventor Thomas Edison and auto magnate* Henry Ford, who both introduced affordable, life-changing conveniences that transformed the way Americans lived.

Yet for all his successes, Jobs also endured some very public failures. When he was thirty years old, he was summarily* stripped of his duties at Apple for being too disruptive and difficult. He set out to build another computer company and missed the mark, blowing through millions of dollars of investors' money. He could be volatile*, screaming at associates, competitors, and reporters. He sometimes cried when things didn't go his way and he regularly took credit for the ideas of others. He could be both charming and gratingly abrasive*, sensitive and stunningly mean-spirited.

Some parts of his life sounded like a fairy tale right out of the movies: there was a promise made when he was a baby, romances, remarkable rebounds*, and riches almost too big to be believed. Other parts were so messy and ugly, so very human, that they would never be considered family entertainment. He was both loved and hated, intensely admired and widely dismissed. People described him with the strongest words: visionary*. Showman. Artist. Tyrant. Genius. Jerk.

An abridged extract from *Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different* by Karen Blumenthal.

Glossary

magnate — a successful businessman summarily — suddenly
volatile — unpredictable abrasive — harsh rebounds — recoveries
visionary — someone with a clear vision of how the future should be

1 Give one feature of this extract that shows it is a biography, not an autobiography.

1 mark

2 What do you think the word "nurtured" (line 4) means? Check your answer in a dictionary.

1 mark

3 Do you think the author likes the products that Steve worked on? Explain your answer.

2 marks

4 How do you think Steve might have felt when he was "stripped of his duties" (line 15) at Apple? Explain your answer.

2 marks

5 What do you notice about the punctuation of line 26? Why do you think the author has punctuated line 26 in this way?

2 marks

6 Do you think you would have wanted to meet Steve? Give reasons for your answer.

2 marks

Total
out of 10