

DESCRIBE AN INSPIRATIONAL PERSON

This is the fifth and last lesson in the '[Vocabulary for Describing People](#)' series.

It has been a long journey and we will end it on an inspirational note.

This will be done in **6 steps**. As usual, I recommend that you do **1 Step** at a time for better results.

Have a unilingual or bilingual dictionary nearby, in case you need to check the meaning and pronunciation of new words. You can also use the following online versions ([here](#) and [here](#)).

In addition, be an active learner—write down important information and review previous lessons. You can thus measure your progress and consequently make good use of your precious time.

a) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 1): Names of Inspirational People (Part 1)

NAMES OF INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE (1)

MOTHER THERESA	MARTIN LUTHER KING	WINSTON CHURCHILL	
MARIE CURIE	NELSON MANDELA	JOAN OF ARC	ROSA PARKS
MAHATMA GANDHI	ABRAHAM LINCOLN	ANNE FRANK	LOUIS PASTEUR
	VICTOR HUGO	NEIL ARMSTRONG	POPE JOHN PAUL II

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There are some names and faces that we instantly recognise no matter where we come from.

In fact, the owners of these names left such an indelible mark on earth that it is impossible to forget them.

These are remarkable men, women, boys and girls who continue to inspire us to become better versions of ourselves.

Do you know the people that are in the above picture? Hence, what can you say about them?

Examples

- *Nelson Mandela* was a lawyer, a political leader and a staunch fighter against [apartheid](#) in South Africa. He spent 27 years in prison for his beliefs. After his release, he became the first black president in his country.
- You might not know Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi but *Mahatma Gandhi* must certainly ring a bell to you. He was also a lawyer like Mandela. He came from India but lived in South Africa in his early adulthood years where he fought for the rights of the Indian community. Later on, he returned to his home country where he helped his fellow countrymen achieve independence from British rule through nonviolent means.
- You know *Neil Armstrong*, don't you? Yes, he is the first man that walked on the Moon and he was American. What an incredible feat! He was multi-talented and had several strings to his bow. He was not only an astronaut but he was equally an aeronautical engineer and a university professor.
- *Joan of Arc* or Jeanne d'Arc in French, achieved so much for her country despite her young age. She was burned at the stake for her role during the Hundred Year's War which opposed French and English crowns.

Another Great Inspirational leader

- Did you know that *Sir Winston Churchill* was also a prolific writer? He actually received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1953 for not only mastering historical and biographical description but also having brilliant oratory skills and defending human values. However, most people know him as the fearless British Prime Minister who, during World War II, stood by his people through the worst.

Your Turn: Find 5 inspirational figures who are not alive and describe them briefly by saying who they were and what they did. You can record yourself using a mobile phone.

Good job! This must have been interesting.

We are now going to tackle **Step 2**. It is about inspirational people who are currently alive.

I am sure you know most of them. Who are they then?

b) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 2): Names of Inspirational People (Part 2)

NAMES OF INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE (2)



BARACK AND MICHELLE OBAMA GRETA THUNBERG OPRAH WINFREY

WILLIAM KAMKWAMBA CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE BILL GATES

THE 14th DALAI LAMA ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ DESMOND TUTU

MALALA YOUSAFZAI LUPITA NYONG'O J.K. ROWLING



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Michelle Obama is definitely an inspirational figure. Her 8-year stint at the White House left us with a lot of fond memories. We remember her as a supportive wife to Barack Obama, the 44th president of the United States of America, and a hardworking philanthropist.

We also know her as a highly successful attorney and author. As a matter of fact, millions of people around the world have read her bestselling memoir '*Becoming*'.

What else do you know about the people in the above picture? What can we say about them?

Examples:

- We all know the co-founder of Microsoft Corporation: [Bill Gates](#). His full name is William Henry Gates III and he is American. He revolutionised computer programming and his company has become a household name over the years. Not only is he an outstanding entrepreneur, but he is also a philanthropist who has done laudable work in Africa.
- Nobel Peace Prize winner [Malala Yousafzai](#) made international headlines in October 2012 when the Taliban shot her in broad daylight. This was a fifteen-year-old Pakistani girl whose thirst for education had made her the target of men who did not want girls to go to school. Nevertheless, Malala continued to be an education advocate through her [charity organisation](#).
- [Greta Thunberg](#) is another young and fierce activist known for her role in drawing world leaders' attention towards environmental issues.
- [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#) is an award-winning author and inspirational figure for many young women around the world. She is also an unapologetic feminist and her essay entitled: "**We Should All Be Feminists**" was given to every 16-year-old child in Sweden because of its resounding message about gender roles.

Last but not Least

- Talk of windmills and you will hear the name of [William Kamkwamba](#). Surprising, isn't it? William is from Malawi and when he was 14, he dropped out of school for lack of money. Moreover, his family was literally starving because of famine that had hit the country in 2001. William did not despair though and he used this opportunity to study at the library where he stumbled upon a [book](#) that would change his life. To cut a long story short, William managed to build a windmill out of random materials salvaged from a scrapyard in order to produce electricity. Isn't that incredible?

Your Turn: Choose **5** inspirational figures from the above picture and talk about them. You can use the internet to get more information about them. Good luck!

b) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 3): Different Types of Inspirational People



DIFFERENT TYPES OF INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

SOCIAL ACTIVIST POLITICIAN LAWYER NUN INVENTOR PRIEST

FEMINIST PHILOSOPHER TEACHER ARTIST REVEREND SOLDIER

LEADER SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER SINGER ACTOR OR ACTRESS

PRESIDENT NURSE WRITER SPORTSPERSON TOP MODEL



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You don't have to be a great inventor or head of state to inspire someone.

Inspiration comes at any time from anyone.

A five-year-old can amaze you and push you to do something equally amazing.

You can be inspired by your friend or by your teacher—it does not matter. What matters is the inspiration or the inspiring event.

Examples:

- Lupita Nyong'o is a stunning *actress* who looks like a *top model* and she is the first African female to have won an Oscar. Wonderful!
- A *nurse* who looks after a patient in a selfless way inspires us to do good to others.
- People become excellent citizens when their *president* is exemplary and leads the way.

- Mother Theresa was an Albanian-Indian *nun* and her incredible and selfless work with the poor of the poorest still leaves us speechless. She is also a Nobel Peace Prize winner. Amazing:-)
- Brandy Norwood is an R'n'B *singer* whose songs are soul-soothing and inspirational. Moreover, she is also a talented actress whose series 'Moesha' is still loved by many people even today.

Your Turn: Can you identify 5 different types of inspirational people. Why not talk about them?

You can use transitional words such as **MOREOVER, ADDITIONALLY** and **HOWEVER**.

Good, good job! Let's jump straight into **Step 4** then. What are inspirational people made of? Let's find out.

c) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 4): Qualities of Inspirational People

QUALITIES OF INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

HONESTY	TRUSTWORTHINESS	AUTHENTICITY	TRANSPARENCY		
INTEGRITY	VISION	PATIENCE	DETERMINATION	CONSISTENCY	
DEDICATION	FEARLESSNESS	PASSION	EMPATHY	CONFIDENCE	
	COMMITMENT	DIGNITY	POSITIVITY	DRIVE	HUMILITY


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Inspirational people have certain qualities that make them stand out and act as beacons of hope to many people around them.

There is a certain aura around these individuals that makes everyone want to behave like them.

Can we easily talk about these qualities?

Let's see if we can.

Examples:

- Marie Curie worked on the theory of radioactivity with incredible *dedication* and selflessness despite the evident threat to her health.
- Martin Luther King's *commitment* to the Civil Rights Movement helped black people to gain more freedom in the United States of America.
- Jesus Christ, one of the most inspiring historical and religious figures, was driven by *passion*. Millions of Christians still follow his precepts up to date.
- It is said that Thomas Edison tried a thousand times before he succeeded with his light bulb. What are the qualities he possessed? *Patience* and *determination*, of course!

Your Turn: What about you? Choose **5** qualities from the above picture and try to link them to the inspirational people you know.

e) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 5): Adjectives for Inspirational People (Part 1)

ADJECTIVES FOR INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE (1)

HONEST	TRUSTWORTHY	AUTHENTIC	BOLD	BRAVE	TRANSPARENT
INTEGROUS	VISIONARY	PATIENT	DETERMINED	CONSISTENT	
DEDICATED	FEARLESS	PASSIONATE	EMPATHETIC	CONFIDENT	
COMMITTED	DIGNIFIED	POSITIVE	SELF-DRIVEN	HUMBLE	



As we have already seen, inspirational people possess great qualities.

These are often larger than life figures and it is actually easy to characterise them.

How about trying? Let's do it!

Examples:

- Barack Obama was a very charismatic and *confident* president. In fact, it was incredible to see how much fervour he aroused in a great number of people.
- Victor Hugo was a *committed* and prolific French writer who wrote about social and political injustices and was a staunch defender of freedom and human dignity.
- J.K. Rowling is inspirational because she remained *positive* whilst building her literary career.
- The Dalai Lama is a religious figure who is respected by many people. In fact, he seems *trustworthy, empathetic* and *humble*.
- Greta Thunberg is a *passionate* and *fearless* environmental activist who continues to inspire millions of people around the world.

f) Describe an Inspirational Person (Step 6): Adjectives for Inspirational People (Part 2)

ADJECTIVES FOR INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE (2) 

ALTRUISTIC SELFLESS COMPASSIONATE SOCIABLE LONG-SUFFERING

TOLERANT RESILIENT DILIGENT EDUCATED INDEFATIGABLE

CONSCIENTIOUS DUTIFUL RESPECTFUL UNTIRING UNRELENTING

 LOVING INFLUENTIAL FASCINATING FORGIVING

What other qualities make a person become an inspiring figure?

As a matter of fact, there are many more **Adjectives** that we can use in order to define these well-known people (or not).

Let's take a closer look at them.

Examples:

- Ernesto 'Che' Guevara was an *indefatigable* and idealist Marxist revolutionary who worked alongside Fidel Castro in Cuba.
- Pope John II was a *conscientious* Catholic leader who left an indelible mark in the hearts of many.
- Mother Theresa was an *untiring, loving* and *selfless* person who looked after the weak and the sick.
- Anne Frank was a very *sociable* and intelligent young girl before she went into hiding in the Secret Annex. It is very sad that her promising future was cut short by an unforgiving and heartless war.
- Louis Pasteur was a *diligent* French microbiologist who is behind many health and medical breakthroughs such as vaccination and pasteurisation. Chapeau monsieur!

Your Turn: Just like in the previous step, describe **5** additional inspirational figures using the above

Adjectives! Don't forget to enjoy yourself!

Congratulations for your commitment!

This was the last step in our '**Describe an Inspirational Person**' lesson. Well done for doing all the steps!

Which step did you like the most?

Thank you for sticking around and until the next lesson, take care!



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