

# DISCOVER AMERICA

## Course 24 - Teacher Guide

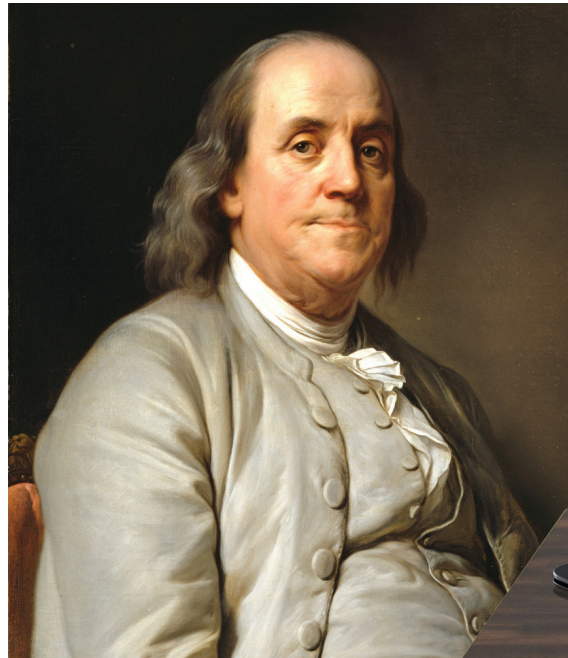


Franklin's Footsteps:  
Exploring the Legacy of Ben  
Franklin

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**Key Themes**

- Lifelong Learning
- Innovation and Experimentation
- Civic Responsibility
- Practical Wisdom
- Diplomacy and Negotiation

**Core Values**

- Community
- Liberty

# Learning Objectives

## **Students will be able to**

- Identify Benjamin Franklin as a Founding Father and describe his inventions, scientific discoveries, and roles as a diplomat and writer.
- Discuss Benjamin Franklin's involvement in important historical events and documents, such as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
- Discuss how Franklin's curiosity, intelligence, and public-mindedness influenced his life and work. Students will be encouraged to think about how these qualities can be applied in their own lives to solve problems and contribute to their communities.
- Explain the importance of civic responsibility and community service, encouraging them to consider ways they can actively participate in and contribute to their own communities.



# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

## Key Terms

- 01 **bifocals:** definition eyeglasses made by joining two different lenses within one frame.
- 02 **Committee of Five:** a group of five men appointed by the Second Continental Congress to draft the Declaration of Independence.
- 03 **diplomat:** a person whose job is to handle relations with the governments of other countries.
- 04 **Founding Fathers:** the special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution.
- 05 **lightning rod:** a metal rod set up on a building or a ship and connected with the Earth or water below to decrease the chances of damage from lightning.

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

# Introduction

## TELL Students

Alright, class, buckle up because we are about to go on an extraordinary adventure on Benjamin Franklin's Time Machine! We are going to transform our classroom into a magical time-traveling contraption using some everyday items. *[Provide students with cardboard boxes, tubes, construction paper and other craft materials. Guide the class to use the materials to create a time machine by stapling the cardboard together to create a large box that everyone can enter. Decorate the time machine as a class.]* As we step inside our time machine, we are going to journey back to Philadelphia in the 1700s.

## ASK Students

Who was Benjamin Franklin? What do you know about him?

## TELL Students

That is right, Benjamin Franklin was not just any ordinary person. He was a man of many talents and accomplishments. He discovered electricity and invented the lightning rod and bifocals. A **lightning rod** is a metal rod set up on a building or a ship and connected with the Earth or water below to decrease the chances of damage from lightning. **Bifocals** are eyeglasses made by joining two different lenses within one frame. One lens corrects distance vision, or nearsightedness, and the other corrects near vision, or farsightedness.



# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

# Introduction

## ASK Students

What did Benjamin Franklin invent?

## TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin was also a skilled diplomat and a Founding Father of our country. A **diplomat** is a person whose job is to handle relations with the governments of other countries.

## ASK Students

What have you learned about our Founding Fathers?

## TELL Students

The special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution are called the **Founding Fathers**. Benjamin Franklin is important because he served our country in many ways. Please turn to your neighbor and discuss what you know about the Founding Fathers. [Give students three to five minutes to discuss.]



# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

# Introduction

## ASK Students

Who are the Founding Fathers that you have learned about?

## TELL Students

Yes, that is correct! We have learned about George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about Benjamin Franklin.

## WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 24: Benjamin Franklin





# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson



## TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin was a smart and curious man who helped America become a country. He was born in Boston in 1706 to Josiah and Abiah Franklin. Even though his family did not have much money for schooling, Ben loved to learn and read books on his own. At age 12, he started working for his brother James, who ran a newspaper. Ben wanted to write for the newspaper but his brother thought he was too young. So Ben began sending in articles under the name "Mrs. Silence Dogood." James and the rest of the newspaper staff believed the articles from "Mrs. Silence Dogood" were very good. They published the articles in the newspaper.

## ASK Students

Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person?

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## TELL Students

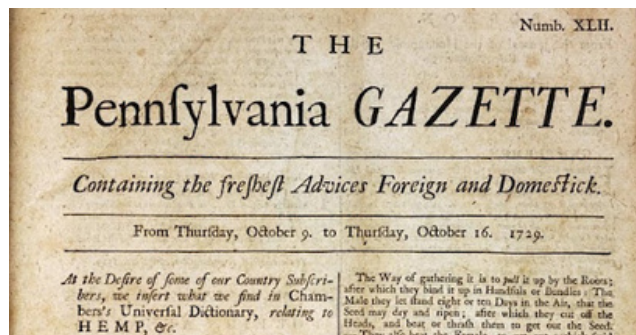
Ben's editorials as Mrs. Dogood commented on life in the colonies and were popular with readers. When Ben revealed to his brother that he was "Mrs. Silence Dogood," James grew upset at having been tricked. Ben's position at the newspaper quickly ended and he went to Philadelphia. His stay in Philadelphia did not last long, but it had a lasting impact on his life. After multiple unsuccessful attempts at finding work in Philadelphia as a printer, Ben decided to set out for London.

## ASK Students

What are some obstacles that Ben had to overcome?

## TELL Students

By age 20, Ben decided to leave London and returned to Philadelphia. He purchased *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, an unsuccessful Philadelphia newspaper. The *Gazette* quickly turned into one of the most popular publications in the colonies with Ben's hard work and leadership. Working as the successful *Gazette's* printer, Ben gained an understanding of the issues on the minds of colonists.



## ASK Students

How did Ben learn about the issues that were important to the colonists?

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## TELL Students

In the 1730s, Benjamin Franklin became well-known. In 1732, he created the first *Poor Richard's Almanack*. This book came out every year and had information about the weather, stars, and math. It also had many clever sayings, like "He that lies down with dogs, shall rise up with fleas." Benjamin wrote it using the name "Richard Saunders," and many people enjoyed reading it. Benjamin also helped start the Union Fire Company in 1736 because people in Philadelphia were worried about how to deal with fires. This group was one of the first teams of volunteer firefighters. The next year, Benjamin got the job of postmaster of Philadelphia, helping to take care of the mail.

## ASK Students

Why do you think Benjamin Franklin wrote under other people's names?

## TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin became very successful and began spending a lot of time in England. While he was there, the English government passed the Stamp Act, which placed a new tax on the colonies. This tax made people pay extra for things like newspapers and legal documents. Benjamin, like many colonists, was strongly against this tax. Even though he was far away in England, Benjamin wrote articles against the Stamp Act that were published back in the colonies in a newspaper called *The Pennsylvania Chronicle*. These articles were very popular with the people back home. Benjamin also stood up for the colonists by speaking to the English government. He explained why the Stamp Act was unfair and should be removed. His efforts paid off, and the government eventually canceled the tax.

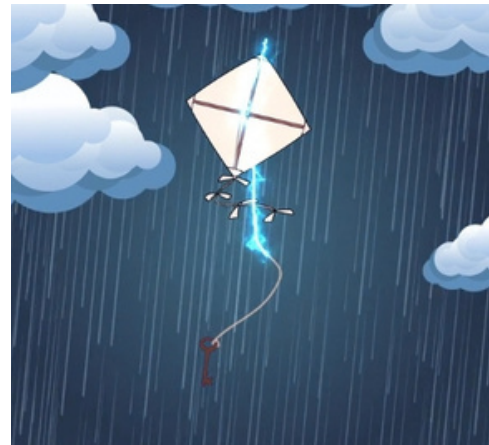
# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## ASK Students

What did Benjamin Franklin do in England to help the colonies?

## TELL Students

Benjamin continued to work hard in England to support the interests of the colonies. His dedication made him a hero to many colonists, who admired him for standing up for their rights. He also continued to work on his inventions to find ways to solve problems for himself and others. In 1752, Ben conducted a test for which he is still remembered today: the kite experiment.



Ben wanted to show that electricity and lightning were the same thing, so he flew a kite during a thunderstorm to test his idea. The kite caught electrical energy from the storm, which helped prove Ben's idea. He also invented important things like lightning rods to keep buildings safe during storms and glasses with two different focuses to help people see better.

## ASK Students

What are bifocals and who invented them? Who do they help?

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## TELL Students

Benjamin loved teaching and learning. In 1749, he helped start the Academy and College of Philadelphia. This school, which opened in 1751, later turned into the University of Pennsylvania. Benjamin also stopped working at *The Gazette* newspaper after he made a lot of money from it and from his famous *Poor Richard's Almanack*.

## ASK Students

What do you think Benjamin Franklin liked to do when he was not working?

## TELL Students

In 1775, with the colonies and England at war, Ben was chosen to represent his state in the Second Continental Congress. Ben was so respected that he was one of five men selected to author the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

The **Committee of Five** was a group of five men appointed by the Second Continental Congress to draft the Declaration of Independence. Soon, the Continental Congress appointed Ben to be the first U.S. Minister to France. While still serving as Minister to France, he received the additional post of U.S. Minister to Sweden in 1782.



# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## ASK Students

What is the Declaration of Independence? Why is it important?

## TELL Students

At the end of the Revolutionary War, Benjamin Franklin signed the Treaty of Paris, which marked the end of the war. He returned to Pennsylvania in 1785 and was elected as the president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, similar to a state governor. In this role, he played an important part in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, where the United States Constitution was formed.

## ASK Students

What is the Constitution? Why is it important?



## TELL Students

Ben is the only individual to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France in 1778, the Treaty of Paris, and the United States Constitution. So, what does all of this tell us about Benjamin Franklin? It tells us that he was very important in making our country what it is today. He helped America become independent, he made friends with other countries, and he helped create the rules that we still follow today. Benjamin Franklin was definitely a hero in American history!

## ASK Students

What impact did Benjamin Franklin have on the freedoms we have today?

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin contributed to the freedom we enjoy today in many ways. As a Founding Father, he played a key role in drafting the Declaration of Independence, which declared America's independence. He also served as a diplomat, helping to get important partnerships with countries like France during the American Revolutionary War. His scientific discoveries and inventions, such as the lightning rod and bifocals, also helped many people in the United States.

## ASK Students

How did Benjamin Franklin help others? How does he inspire you?

## TELL Students

In 1790, Benjamin Franklin passed away at the age of 84 in Philadelphia. Today, he is honored on the \$100 bill, and many towns and institutions are named after him. He is also featured on postage stamps.



Remembered for his humor and significant contributions to his country in various areas, Benjamin Franklin is often called "the only President of the United States who was never President of the United States." Without Ben Franklin, America would not be the nation that it is today. What are the contributions you hope to make to your community, to your school, or to our country?

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade Lesson

## WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: Benjamin Franklin's Role in the Constitutional Convention





# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

## Benjamin Franklin Day

**Objective:** Students will learn about the various roles Benjamin Franklin played in his life and how he contributed to society.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Costume items: Vests, glasses, paper kites, pretend quill pens, etc.
- Cardboard or paper lightning bolts
- Pictures or posters of Franklin's key contributions (e.g., bifocal glasses, the lightning rod, the printing press)
- A simple timeline of Franklin's life on a white board or butcher paper

### **Activity Set Up:**

1. Costume Corner: Set up a corner with costume items that students can wear to look like Benjamin Franklin.
2. Contribution Stations: Create different stations around the room, each representing one of Franklin's contributions or roles (Inventor, Writer, Diplomat, Scientist).

### **Instructions for the Activity:**

1. Introduction: Briefly review Benjamin Franklin, highlighting his roles as an inventor, writer, scientist, and statesman.
2. Dress-Up Time: Allow students to pick and wear items from the Costume Corner to dress up like Benjamin Franklin.
3. Station Exploration: Divide the students into small groups. Rotate the groups through each Contribution Station. At each station, have a simple explanation and a related activity:
  - Inventor Station: Show the bifocal glasses and lightening rod. Let students create a paper model of a lightening rod.

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

## Benjamin Franklin Day (Continued)

- Writer Station: Display copies of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and excerpts from *Poor Richard's Almanack*. Have students use quill pens (or markers styled as quills) to write simple phrases or draw what they think a front page of their own newspaper would look like.
- Scientist Station: Explain the kite experiment with a paper kite that they can decorate with stickers and markers.
- Diplomat Station: Show a map of Franklin's travels and have students place stickers on the countries where he went.

4. Group Discussion: Gather the students and ask them to share what they learned about Franklin at each station. Discuss how Franklin's different roles helped improve society and the kind of qualities he showed (like curiosity, bravery, intelligence).

### **Conclusion:**

- Recap all the roles Benjamin Franklin played.
- Encourage students to think about how they can be curious and helpful like Franklin in their own lives.

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade



## Discovering Ben Franklin



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

Ben Franklin was a smart and curious man who played a big part in helping America become its own country. He was born in Boston in 1706 and loved to read books. Even though he didn't go to school for long, he never stopped learning.

### Read and Learn

Ben started working at his brother's newspaper when he was just 12 years old. He wanted to write articles, but his brother thought he was too young. So, Ben wrote stories under a fake name, Mrs. Silence Dogood, and everyone loved them!

**Question 1:** Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person? Circle Yes or No.

Yes

No

Ben moved to Philadelphia and tried many jobs. He even started his own newspaper and wrote a book every year called *Poor Richard's Almanack*. It had weather forecasts, advice, and funny sayings.

**Question 2:** What kind of book did Ben Franklin write every year? Circle the correct answer.

A. A novel

B. An almanac

C. A science textbook

Ben was also a scientist. He did an important experiment with a kite during a storm to learn about electricity.

**Question 3:** What did Ben Franklin use to discover more about electricity? Circle the correct answer.

A. A balloon

B. A kite

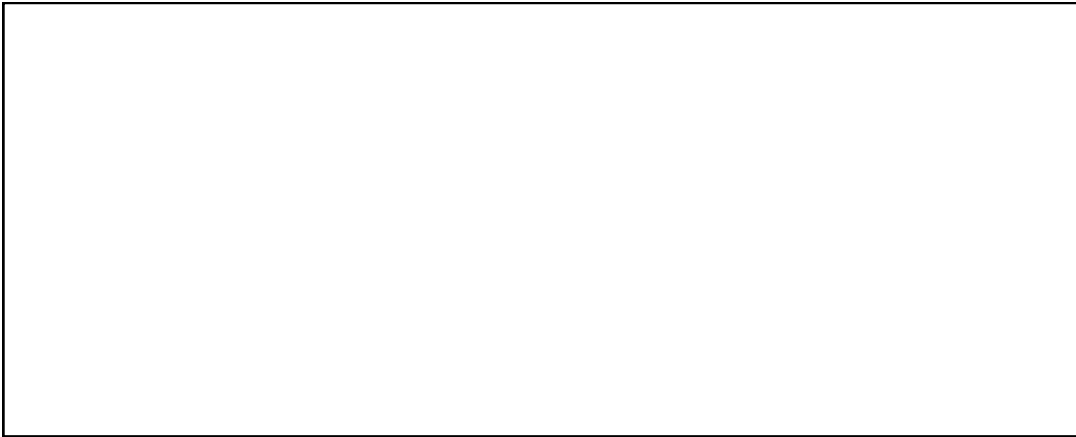
C. A boat

# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

# Discovering Ben Franklin

### **Activity Time: Draw and Imagine**

Ben Franklin invented many things to help others. Imagine you are an inventor like Ben. Draw your own invention below:



Describe what your invention does to help people:

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### **Fun Fact**

Ben Franklin helped write the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, two very important documents for America.

**Question 4:** Why is the Declaration of Independence important? Circle the correct answer.

- A. It was the first book Ben wrote.
- B. It helped America become independent.
- C. It is a map of the United States.

### **Closing Thought**

Ben Franklin did many great things. He wrote, invented, and helped create a new country. What do you want to do to help your community or school? Explain your idea below:

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# Benjamin Franklin - Second Grade

# Resources

1. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography-benjamin-franklin/>
2. <https://books.google.com/books?id=qW4VAAAAYAAJ&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>
3. [https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy\\_files/migrated/bfandapprenticeship.pdf](https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy_files/migrated/bfandapprenticeship.pdf)
4. [https://www.masshist.org/online/silence\\_dogood/essay.php?entry\\_id=203](https://www.masshist.org/online/silence_dogood/essay.php?entry_id=203)
5. <https://archives.upenn.edu/exhibits/penn-people/biography/benjamin-franklin/>
6. <https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/benjamin-franklin/benjamin-franklin-and-family>
7. <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/becomingamer/ideas/text4/juntolibrary.pdf>
8. <https://www.fi.edu/en/benjamin-franklin/famous-quotes>
9. <https://www.ushistory.org/franklin/philadelphia/fire.htm>
10. <https://www.fi.edu/en/benjamin-franklin/kite-key-experiment>
11. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120205112444/>
12. <http://www.archives.upenn.edu/primdocs/upl/upl125.pdf>
13. <https://www.nypl.org/events/exhibitions/galleries/beginnings/item/3562>
14. <https://www.fi.edu/en/benjamin-franklin-faq> <https://legacyclub.boston/benjamin-franklin>

# Notes

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