

DISCOVER AMERICA

Course 24 - Teacher Guide



Franklin's Footsteps:
Exploring the Legacy of Ben
Franklin

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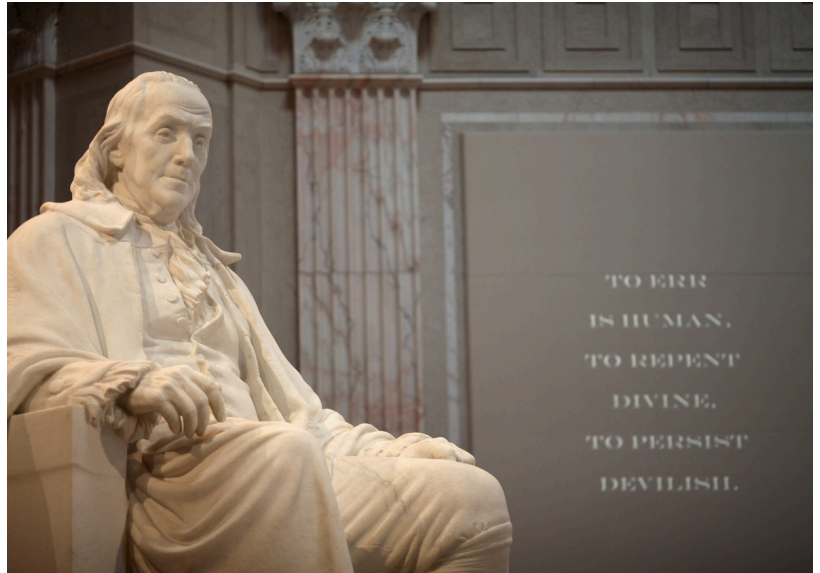
Ben Franklin's Science Lab

Who is Ben Franklin?

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Kindergarten Teacher Guide



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.
- Explain how Benjamin Franklin's contributions, such as the Declaration of Independence and his diplomatic efforts, helped shape American freedom and society.
- Reflect on Benjamin Franklin's legacy and consider ways they can contribute positively to their community, school, or country.



Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten

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 - Kindergarten

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 - Kindergarten

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. 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 - Kindergarten 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.

Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten Lesson

ASK Students

Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person?

TELL Students

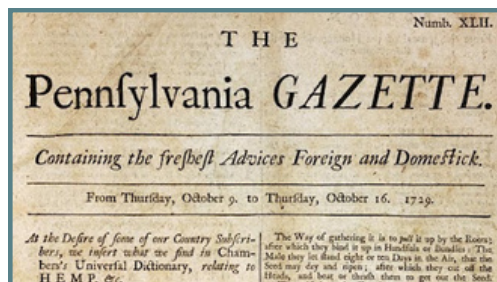
Ben's articles as Mrs. Dogood commented on life in the colonies and were popular with readers. When Ben revealed to his brother that he was "Mrs. Silence Dogood," James grew upset at having been tricked. Ben's position at the newspaper quickly ended and he went to Philadelphia. His stay in Philadelphia 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.



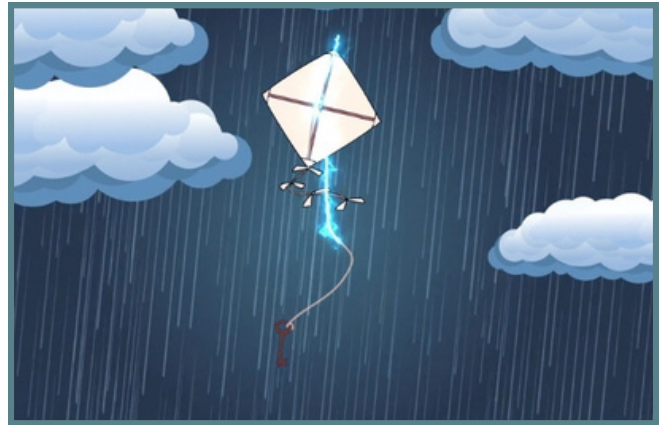
ASK Students

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

Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten Lesson

TELL Students

He began to enter the world of politics while working on his inventions. 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?

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 - Kindergarten Lesson

ASK Students

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

TELL Students

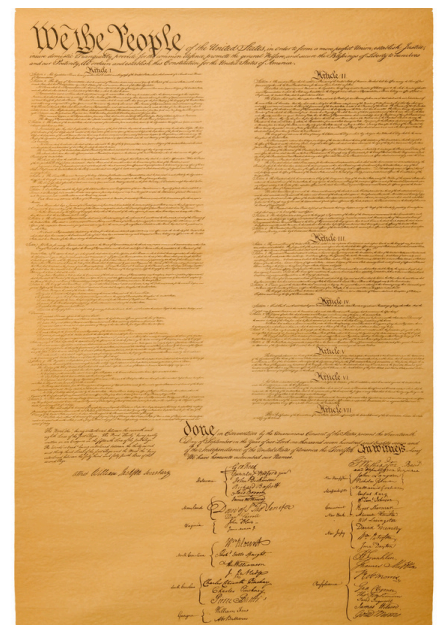
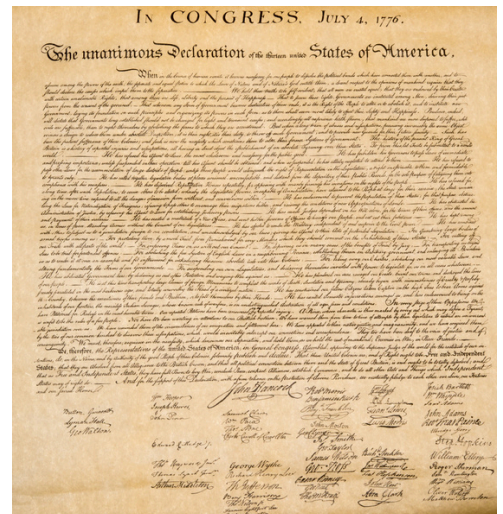
At the end of the Revolutionary War, Benjamin Franklin signed the Treaty of Paris, which marked the end of the war. He returned to Pennsylvania in 1785 and was elected as the president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, similar to a state governor. In this role, he played an important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



Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten Lesson

ASK Students

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

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 - Kindergarten Lesson

WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: [Benjamin Franklin's Inventions](#)



Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten

Activity

Objective: To explore the concept of electricity through interactive experiments inspired by Benjamin Franklin.

Materials Needed:

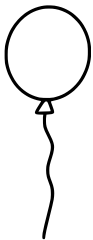
- Balloons
- Wool fabric
- Paper clips
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic drinking straws
- Small pieces of paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers



Introduction

- Gather students and review what they learned about Benjamin Franklin, explaining that he was a very curious person who liked to do experiments to learn new things.
- Show pictures of Benjamin Franklin and talk briefly about his famous kite experiment with electricity.
- Explain that today, we are going to do some fun experiments just like Benjamin Franklin did!

Static Electricity



- Demonstrate static electricity by rubbing a balloon against wool fabric and then sticking it to the wall.
- Give each student a balloon and a piece of wool fabric.
- Instruct the students to rub the balloon against the wool fabric and then try sticking it to the wall or their hair.
- Encourage them to observe what happens and discuss how the balloon sticks because of static electricity.

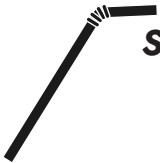
Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten

Activity



Paper Clip Chain

- Give each student a piece of aluminum foil and a paper clip.
- Instruct students to tear the foil into small pieces and then rub the pieces against the paper clip.
- Have them place the paper clip on a flat surface and watch as the foil pieces jump up to the paper clip due to static electricity.
- Let students experiment with different amounts of foil and observe how it affects the chain.



Straw Rocket

- Provide each student with a plastic drinking straw and a small piece of paper.
- Instruct students to roll the paper into a small ball and place it at the end of the straw.
- Have them blow through the straw to launch the paper rocket into the air.
- Encourage them to experiment with different amounts of air blown into the straw to see how far the rocket can go.

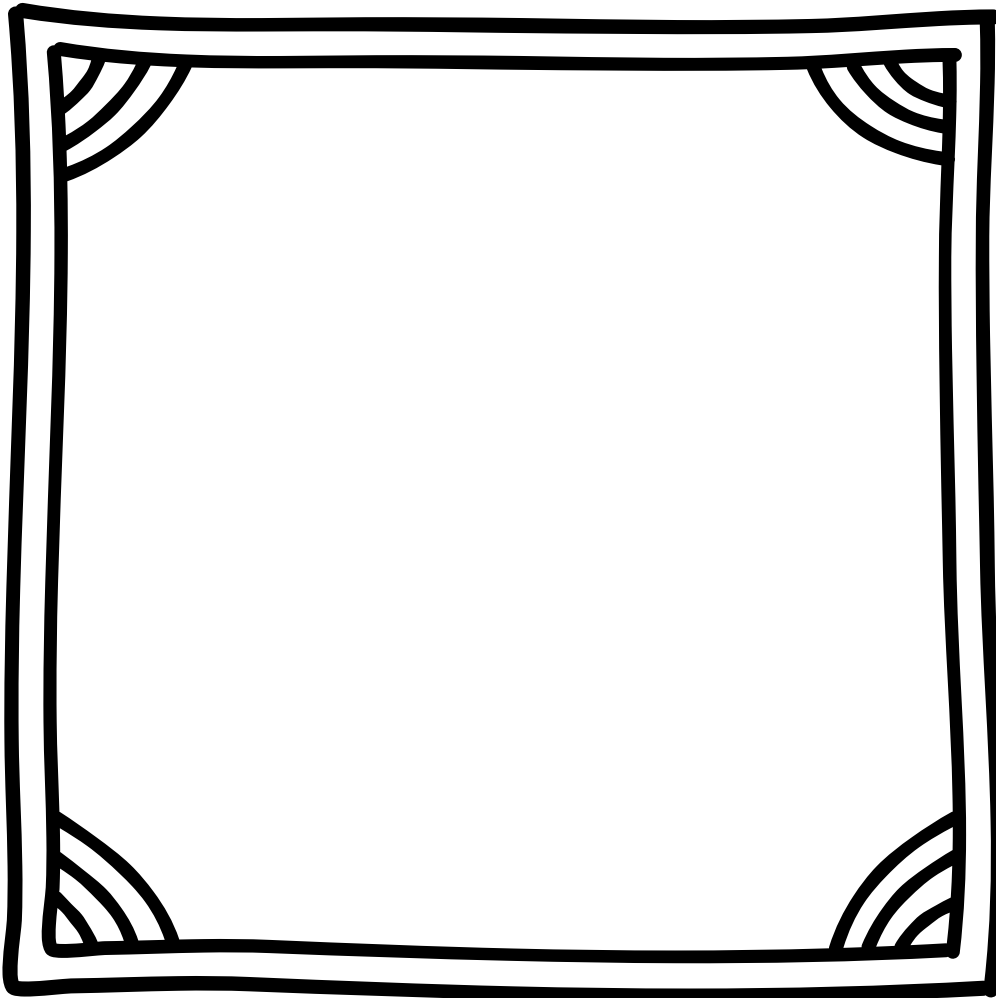


Conclusion

- Gather students together and recap the experiments they did.
- Ask them what they learned about electricity and how Benjamin Franklin's experiments helped us understand it better.
- Conclude by praising their participation and curiosity, just like Benjamin Franklin!

Who is Ben Franklin?

Instructions: Draw a picture of Benjamin Franklin conducting an experiment. Use your creativity to illustrate the scene as vividly as you can. Below your drawing, write a few sentences describing what Benjamin Franklin is doing in your picture.



Benjamin Franklin - Kindergarten

Resources

1. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography-benjamin-franklin/>
2. <https://books.google.com/booksid=qW4VAAAAYAAJ&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>
3. https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy_files/migrated/bfandapprenticeship.pdf
4. 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/http://www.archives.upenn.edu/primdocs/upl/upl125.pdf>
12. <https://www.nypl.org/events/exhibitions/galleries/beginnings/item/3562>
13. <https://www.fi.edu/en/benjamin-franklin-faq>
14. <https://legacyclub.boston/benjamin-franklin>

Notes