

DISCOVER AMERICA

Course 24 - Teacher Guide



Franklin's Footsteps:
Exploring the Legacy of Ben
Franklin

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Third Grade **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.
- 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.
- Analyze how Benjamin Franklin's contributions continue to influence our lives today.



Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Key Terms

- 01 **bifocals:** definition eyeglasses made by joining two different lenses within one frame.
- 02 **chandler:** someone who makes (and sells) candles, soap, oils, and paints.
- 03 **Committee of Five:** a group of five men appointed by the Second Continental Congress to draft the Declaration of Independence.
- 04 **diplomat:** a person whose job is to handle relations with the governments of other countries.
- 05 **Founding Fathers:** the special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution.
- 06 **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 - Third Grade

Introduction

TELL Students

I am going to give you a riddle to solve. This riddle will introduce today's learning topic. Are you ready?

*I wore many hats, but not just for style,
A printer, inventor, diplomat with a smile.
I tamed the wild lightning with a key and a kite,
And helped pen a document to give people their rights.*



ASK Students

Who am I?

TELL Students

That is right! Today, we are going to learn about Benjamin Franklin. Now, 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?

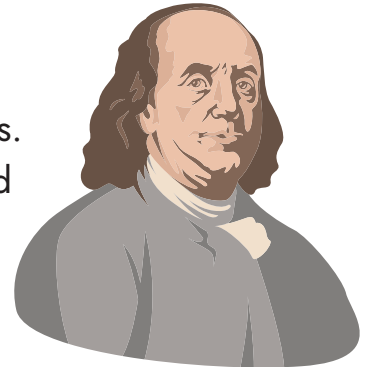


Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Introduction

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.



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.



Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Introduction

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.]

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 - Third Grade Lesson

TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin was a smart and curious man who helped America become a country. He was born on January 17, 1706 in Boston, Massachusetts. His father, Josiah, had moved from England and worked as a chandler, making candles and soap. A **chandler** is someone who makes (and sells) candles, soap, oils, and paints. His mother, Abiah took care of their home and raised the children. Ben was one of seventeen children!



ASK Students

What do you think life was like for Benjamin Franklin growing up with 16 brothers and sisters?

TELL Students

Ben's family did not have a lot of money, especially with so many kids at home. Josiah decided that he could only afford to send Ben to school for two years. So, Ben went to school until he was 10 years old, and that was all the formal education he got in his life. But Ben was very curious and loved to learn, so he began reading everything he could find to teach himself more about the world. 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 - Third Grade Lesson

ASK Students

Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person?

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 - Third 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 - Third Grade Lesson

ASK Students

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

TELL Students

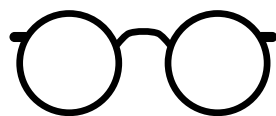
Benjamin continued to work hard in England to support the interests of the colonies. His dedication made him a hero to many colonists, who admired him for standing up for their rights. He also continued to work on his inventions to find ways to solve problems for himself and others. In 1752, Ben conducted 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 - Third Grade Lesson

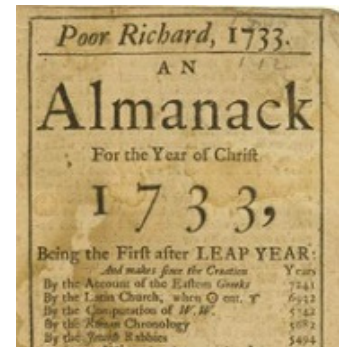
TELL Students

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 - Third 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 - Third 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 - Third Grade Lesson

WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: [Minister to France](#)



Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Benjamin Franklin Quiz

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each question and answer set carefully. Circle the letter next to the correct answer.

1. What did Benjamin Franklin invent?
 - A. The computer
 - B. The lightning rod and bifocals
 - C. The car
 - D. The telephone
2. What job did Benjamin Franklin have that involved working with other countries?
 - A. Teacher
 - B. Diplomat
 - C. Chef
 - D. Doctor
3. Who are the Founding Fathers?
 - A. The leaders of music bands
 - B. The first settlers of America
 - C. The leaders who helped America become a country
 - D. Famous athletes
4. What is *Poor Richard's Almanack* known for?
 - A. Recipes
 - B. Jokes and weather forecasts
 - C. Fairy tales
 - D. Game rules

Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

5. What did Benjamin Franklin use to prove that lightning is electricity?
- A. A car
 - B. A boat
 - C. A kite
 - D. A bicycle
6. Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
7. What are some obstacles Benjamin Franklin faced when he was young?
- A. He was too tall
 - B. He couldn't go to school for long
 - C. He didn't like reading
 - D. He had too many video games
8. What did Benjamin Franklin do to learn about the issues important to colonists?
- A. He watched TV
 - B. He read newspapers
 - C. He worked as a printer and publisher
 - D. He went shopping
9. Why did Benjamin Franklin write under different names?
- A. He forgot his real name
 - B. He liked making up characters
 - C. To publish his writing without bias
 - D. He was playing a game
10. What did Benjamin Franklin do in England that helped the colonies?
- A. He went sightseeing
 - B. He argued against the Stamp Act
 - C. He bought tea
 - D. He painted portraits

Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

11. What are bifocals used for?
 - A. Seeing in the dark
 - B. Helping people see things near and far
 - C. Swimming
 - D. Running faster

12. What did Benjamin Franklin like to do when he wasn't working?
 - A. Play video games
 - B. Read and invent things
 - C. Sleep all day
 - D. Watch TV

13. What is the Declaration of Independence?
 - A. A book
 - B. A movie
 - C. A document that declared America's independence
 - D. A speech

14. Why is the Constitution important?
 - A. It tells us about fashion
 - B. It is the set of rules that governs the United States
 - C. It describes different animals
 - D. It is a guide to the planets

15. How did Benjamin Franklin's work affect our freedoms today?
 - A. It made sports more popular
 - B. It helped create important laws and freedoms
 - C. It changed weather patterns
 - D. It introduced new holidays

Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Benjamin Franklin Quiz Answer Key

1. What did Benjamin Franklin invent?
B. The lightning rod and bifocals
2. What job did Benjamin Franklin have that involved working with other countries?
B. Diplomat
3. Who are the Founding Fathers?
C. The leaders who helped America become a country
4. What is Poor Richard's Almanack known for?
B. Jokes and weather forecasts
5. What did Benjamin Franklin use to prove that lightning is electricity?
C. A kite
6. Is Mrs. Silence Dogood a real person?
B. No
7. What are some obstacles Benjamin Franklin faced when he was young?
B. He couldn't go to school for long
8. What did Benjamin Franklin do to learn about the issues important to colonists?
C. He worked as a printer and publisher
9. Why did Benjamin Franklin write under different names?
C. To publish his writing without bias
10. What did Benjamin Franklin do in England that helped the American colonies?
B. He argued against the Stamp Act

Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Benjamin Franklin Quiz Answer Key

11. What are bifocals used for?
B. Helping people see things near and far

12. What did Benjamin Franklin like to do when he wasn't working?
B. Read and invent things

13. What is the Declaration of Independence?
C. A document that declared America's independence

14. Why is the Constitution important?
B. It is the set of rules that governs the United States

15. How did Benjamin Franklin's work affect our freedoms today?
B. It helped create important laws and freedoms

Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade



Ben Franklin's Role in American History



Name: _____

Date: _____

Introduction

Benjamin Franklin was not only a famous inventor and scientist but also played a big part in creating the United States! He helped write two very important papers: the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Let's learn more about what these documents are and how Ben Franklin helped make them.

Question 1: What is the Declaration of Independence?

- A. A letter to a friend
- B. A rule book for games
- C. A document declaring independence from Britain
- D. A storybook

Question 2: Why is the U.S. Constitution important?

- A. It explains how to cook recipes
- B. It has rules for sports
- C. It sets up the government's rules
- D. It tells us about the weather

Activity: Draw and Imagine

Imagine you are Benjamin Franklin at the big meeting where everyone is deciding on the rules for the new country. Draw a picture of Benjamin Franklin discussing with other leaders at the meeting.



Benjamin Franklin - Third Grade

Ben Franklin's Role in American History (Continued)

Describe in a sentence or two what you think Benjamin Franklin might be saying to the other leaders in the picture you drew:

Fun Fact

Benjamin Franklin was the only Founding Father who signed all four major documents of the American Revolution: the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Paris that ended the American Revolutionary War, and the U.S. Constitution.

Question 3: What did Benjamin Franklin sign?

- A. Just the Declaration of Independence
- B. Just the U.S. Constitution
- C. Both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
- D. All four major American Revolution documents

Question 4: What do you admire most about Benjamin Franklin?

- A. His writing skills
- B. His inventions
- C. His role in creating our country
- D. His funny stories

Benjamin Franklin - Third 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
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/>
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>

