

## An International Founding Father Benjamin Franklin

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Our founding fathers are revolutionary men that this country will never forget and always be grateful for. One of the founding fathers that could also be know as the international founder is Benjamin Franklin. Franklin has many faces from scientist to loyalist to revolutionary; because of all of these faces, it is hard to really know who Benjamin Franklin is (Revolutionary characters). In this paper however, I will give you a peek into the life and accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin.

During Franklin's early years he learned many trades and became concerned with public affairs. Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston in 1706. He was the youngest of 17 children in his family. Ben attended school until he was 10 and then became an apprentice for a printer. This apprenticeship started him on the way to opening his own printing business for the "The Pennsylvania Gazette;" it is also where he wrote "Poor Richard's Almanac." Franklin also became interested in public affairs especially those concerning science and providing a way for those with scientific discoveries to communicate (Benjamin's autobiography).

Franklin had many accomplishments during his life. He was originally well known in the science world for his work in electricity, inventing the bifocal, franklin stove, lightning rod, armonica, the odometer, and daylight savings (The electric Benjamin Franklin). He also had many political accomplishments both at home and abroad. Franklin created the "Albany Plan of Union" calling for the colonies to unite together. This plan was rejected, but got his name into the public eye. He spent time in England representing many of the colonies as royal colonies. While in England, Ben was a loyal supporter of the British Empire. During this time, he also wrote under over ninety pseudonymous, which made him hard to get to know. He was a close friend of the king and wanted to be part of the expansion of the British Empire. However, after the passing of the Stamp Act in 1765, Ben started to question his loyalty and decided to become a passionate patriot for the colonies. In 1776 he was a diplomat for the colonies in Paris. He became the greatest diplomat for America when he brought King Louis the XVI into the war on the Republic's side. After his accomplishments in France, Franklin went back to America. Ben's many accomplishments led to him being one of America's more influential founding fathers.

During Franklin's later life, he returned to Philadelphia and became a member of the Continental Congress. He also served on the committee for the writing of the Declaration of Independence and negotiated for the Treaty of Paris officially ending the war for independence. In 1787, he was elected as the first president of the *Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of the Slavery*. Shortly after in 1790, Franklin died at the age of 84 (Benjamin's autobiography).

Benjamin Franklin was said to go from being "little Ben to becoming the Great Dr. Franklin." He was also said to be a founder whose, crucial diplomacy in the revolution was second only to Washington in importance" (Revolutionary characters). Benjamin Franklin

and his revolutionary accomplishments will always be remembered as important to the founding and start of the republic in this great country.

### Works Cited

1. Wood, Gordon S.. *Revolutionary Characters: What made the founders different. The invention of Benjamin Franklin.* New York: Penguin press, 2006. Print. Pg 67-90.
2. "The electric Benjamin Franklin: Benjamin Franklin's Inventions, Discoveries, and Improvements."  
*US history.org.* Independence Hall Association, 1999. Webpage. April 10, 2014. <<http://www.ushistory.org/franklin/info/inventions.htm>>.
3. "Benjamin franklin his autobiography 1706-1757." *American history from the revolution to the reconstruction and beyond.* University of Groningen. c 1994. Webpage. April 10, 2014. <<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/biographies/benjamin-franklin/introductory-note.php>>.

### Lesson Ideas

1. [Ad Writing in 1750](#) Author(s): Charlene Helsel Grade Level: 4-6  
Objective: Students will read a page from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and write a translation of an ad in the paper. Students will then create their own ad that would be time period appropriate. Teacher will guide students to understanding of the historical relevance of the ads. (There are a variety of ads of length and degree of difficulty; these are good for differentiation within the classroom.)
2. As a class read *What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin* by Jean Fritz have a class discussion on the book and Ben's findings relating to electricity.
3. [Ben Franklin: A Renaissance Man](#) Author(s): Susan Asunmaa Grade Level: Intermediate (3- 5) Objective: To identify and describe the many ways Ben Franklin contributed to the growth of Colonial Times in America through creating a powerpoint presentation.
4. *Wax Museum*: Have one student choose to represent Benjamin Franklin in the grade wax museum of famous Americans. They will research Franklin, prepare a short paper and speech about his life, and then dress up as Franklin for the wax museum.
5. [Then and Now: The Inventions of Benjamin Franklin](#) Author: Megan Thomas Grade Level: 2  
Objective: Students will be able to name two inventions by Benjamin Franklin. Students will compare and contrast two of Benjamin Franklin's inventions with their modern day form(s).

6. Invention gallery walk: Print out pictures and facts about Franklin's inventions. Have the students take a gallery walk of his inventions and answer questions on a fact sheet.

7. Franklin timeline: Have each student write a paragraph about one of Benjamin's many accomplishments. Make sure each student chooses a different one. After the students finish their paragraphs, then have the students create a collage or illustration depicting the event in their paragraph. Then have the students attach their finished piece to a large piece of butcher paper to create a timeline of Ben's life. Ask each student to share their paragraph as you go through the timeline.

[https://harrisburg.psu.edu/teachingfranklin/Docs/OldLessonPlans/Benjamin\\_Franklin\\_and\\_his\\_Philadelphia.pdf](https://harrisburg.psu.edu/teachingfranklin/Docs/OldLessonPlans/Benjamin_Franklin_and_his_Philadelphia.pdf)