

- Benjamin Franklin's Albany Plan of Union was the first attempt to unite the colonies under a single government. Why do students think Franklin wanted to bring the colonies together? Ask students to discuss the concept "United States." What does it mean to say we are "united"?

Follow-up Activities

- In Benjamin Franklin's newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, and in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, he tried to give suggestions that would help people live successfully in America. Provide your class with some of Franklin's more famous and accessible sayings. Ask students to choose their favorites and draw illustrations that explain their meanings. As a follow-up, in the spirit of Franklin, ask students to offer their classmates a sample of their own self-improvement advice. Combine all of your students' ideas into a class book of helpful thoughts.
- Benjamin Franklin dedicated much of his life to improving the city of Philadelphia. Ask small groups of students to think of a way that they could make their own classroom, school or community a better place. Students could write short proposals outlining their ideas and make suggestions about how to put their plans into action. Ask students to vote on the ideas they think would best help improve the classroom, and implement them!
- To introduce students to the concept of electricity, allow them to explore materials used in creating a simple electric circuit. Distribute to each pair of students a 9-volt battery, insulated copper wire, one battery holder, two brass battery clips and one small flashlight bulb. Demonstrate for students how to create a simple circuit, and ask them to create their own. As a follow-up, discuss with students where the electricity comes from and where it goes. Ask students to draw a diagram or write an explanation of what happened during the demonstration.
- After Benjamin Franklin took over *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, he turned it into the most popular newspaper in the colonies. Ask students to put together their own class newspaper, covering classroom activities, school events and local news and weather.
- Benjamin Franklin did so much during his lifetime! Ask students to create a pictorial time line that chronicles Franklin's achievements. Some students could design a time line that focuses on his early life and experiences as a printer in Philadelphia, some students could cover his inventive life and scientific contributions and another group could summarize his life as a politician and diplomat.
- In addition to his many other talents, Benjamin Franklin was an excellent musician. He even invented a popular musical instrument in 1761 called the glass armonica. Students can play and hear an online glass armonica at this site: www.fi.edu/franklin/musician/virtualarmonica.html.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- sln.fi.edu/franklin/rotten.html
The Franklin Institute Science Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania maintains an extensive site that includes pages devoted to the life, times and achievements of Benjamin Franklin.
- www.ushistory.org/franklin
This "Electric Ben Franklin" site, created by the Independence Hall Association, is a tremendous resource that includes links to a wide variety of Franklin-oriented information, such as his Silence Dogood letters, his autobiography, a virtual tour of Franklin's Philadelphia, and experiments, fun and games for young learners.
- bensguide.gpo.gov/benfranklin/index.html
The U.S. Government Printing Office provides this site for young people to learn more about Benjamin Franklin's life as a printer, inventor, librarian and statesman. Also includes a brief time line of his life.

Suggested Print Resources

- Adler, David A. *B. Franklin, Printer*. Holiday House, New York, NY; 2001.
- Barretta, Gene. *Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin*. Henry Holt & Company, Incorporated, New York, NY; 2006.
- Smith, Lane. *John, Paul, George and Ben*. Hyperion Books for Children, New York, NY; 2006.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Jeffrey W. Litzke, M.Ed.

Curriculum Specialist, Schlessinger Media

COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • SUSAN B. ANTHONY | • ABRAHAM LINCOLN |
| • CESAR CHAVEZ | • REVOLUTIONARY WAR HEROES |
| • AMELIA EARHART | • ELEANOR ROOSEVELT |
| • BENJAMIN FRANKLIN | • SACAGAWEA |
| • THOMAS JEFFERSON | • HARRIET TUBMAN |
| • MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. | • GEORGE WASHINGTON |

Teacher's Guides Included
and Available Online at:

libraryvideo.com
The Leading Educational Video Distributor

800-843-3620

SCHLESSINGER
MEDIA
— A DIVISION OF LIBRARY VIDEO COMPANY —

Teacher's Guide and Program Copyright 2003 by Schlessinger Media,
a division of Library Video Company
P.O. Box 580, Wynnewood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620
Executive Producers, Andrew Schlessinger & Tracy Mitchell
Program produced and directed by JWM Productions, LLC



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Grades K-4

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting this program. The guide provides you with a brief historical overview, pre-viewing and follow-up discussion questions, vocabulary, focus questions for assessing comprehension, extension activities and print and Internet resources.

Before Viewing: Give students an introduction to the topic by relaying aspects of the program overview to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.

SCHLESSINGER
MEDIA
— A DIVISION OF LIBRARY VIDEO COMPANY —

Historical Overview

Born and raised in Boston, Benjamin Franklin spent much of his early life as an apprentice in his brother James' print shop. Longing for independence, Franklin traveled to Philadelphia where he eventually set up his own successful printing business, made famous by his hugely popular *Poor Richard's Almanac*.

While in Philadelphia, Franklin set out to improve his adopted city. He promoted education by helping to establish the first public library and the University of Pennsylvania, and also helped start the nation's first hospital and fire department. Because of his civic improvement efforts, Franklin was very well respected, and people trusted and admired him. He was one of the most important Americans of his time.

After dedicating his life to the world of science and invention, Franklin's experiments with lightning and electricity made him world famous. Driven by his desire to help people, Franklin invented many useful, practical and important things, such as the Franklin stove, lightning rod and bifocals.

Franklin's most important contributions may have been in the development of America. When tensions between the colonies and the British increased dramatically, Franklin became part of the committee that helped write the Declaration of Independence, which sparked the American Revolution and led to America's independence. Franklin even contributed to the creation of the U.S. Constitution, helping to design what might have been the greatest of all his inventions — the United States of America!

Vocabulary

humanitarian — A person who works to help other people.

colonies — Places that are settled far from one's home country, but are ruled by the home country. The people who live in colonies are called colonists.

apprentice — A person who learns a trade, craft or art from working with a person skilled in that field.

Silence Dogood — The name Benjamin Franklin used when writing letters published in his brother's newspaper.

almanac — An annual publication containing useful and entertaining facts, including a calendar, and information about seasons, weather, planting and tides.

lightning rod — A device Benjamin Franklin invented that protects buildings from lightning damage.

Franklin stove — An invention of Benjamin Franklin's that was designed to safely heat colonial homes.

bifocals — Eyeglasses that have two lenses. The top part helps people see far, while the lower part helps people see near.

Six Nations — A group of six Native American cultures from the northeastern part of North America, including the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas and Tuscaroras. Also known as the Iroquois Confederacy.

(Continued)

patent — The legal right given to an inventor, allowing the inventor to make money from his or her invention.

Native Americans — The first people in America who arrived thousands of years ago.

revolution — A major change in how a country is ruled.

taxes — Fees that are added to goods or services to help a government raise money to do business.

Stamp Act — An unpopular 1764 British law that placed new taxes on American colonists.

Boston Tea Party — A major protest that involved angry colonists dumping British tea into Boston Harbor.

First Continental Congress — A meeting held in Philadelphia in 1774 in which representatives from the colonies spoke about their problems with the British.

Redcoats — Based on the color of their uniforms, a name used to describe the British army.

militia — A group of citizens that protects its area in times of conflict.

Patriots — Colonists who helped fight the British during the Revolutionary War.

Revolutionary War — The war in which America defeated the British and that resulted in America's independence.

Second Continental Congress — A group of colonial representatives who gathered in Philadelphia in 1775 to talk about their problems with the British. The group voted to form a committee to write the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Independence — A document issued on July 4, 1776, which declared that the American colonies were free and independent states. Thomas Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence.

ambassador — A person whose job is to help his or her country maintain a good relationship with a foreign country.

constitution — A document that describes what government is allowed to do and what it is not allowed to do. The U.S. Constitution is the highest law in America.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students to describe the importance of various places, such as post offices, hospitals and fire departments. Why are these services important to our communities? How would our lives be different if we didn't have these services?
- Ask students to define "inventor." What does an inventor do? Can students name some famous inventors from history?
- Ask students what they know about Benjamin Franklin. Why do they think he is famous? Share with students the idea that Franklin is most remembered for the tremendous variety of his accomplishments, and provide them with a sampling of his achievements.

Focus Questions

1. What is an apprentice? What trade did Franklin learn as a young man?
2. Why did Franklin decide to use the name Silence Dogood?
3. Why did Franklin leave his brother and the city of Boston?
4. What was *Poor Richard's Almanac*? Why were almanacs so popular?
5. Why did Franklin include helpful advice in his almanac?
6. In what ways did Franklin help develop the city of Philadelphia?
7. What did Franklin's kite experiment help to prove?
8. Did Franklin make a lot of money from his inventions? Why not?
9. Why did Franklin meet with the Six Nations? What did he learn from this meeting?
10. Why were the colonists so upset about the Stamp Act?
11. How did Franklin help in the writing of the Declaration of Independence?
12. What did the Declaration of Independence declare?
13. Why was Franklin sent to France during the Revolutionary War?

Discussion Questions

- Review with students a list of Benjamin Franklin's significant inventions, including his stove, lightning rod and bifocals, and his efforts to develop his community in areas such as health, education and safety. Ask students to discuss which of these developments they think were the most important, and why?
- The nature of electricity was very puzzling to people before Benjamin Franklin's experiments. Despite Franklin's work in the field, there would not be a practical way to use electricity for many years. Ask students to think of all the different ways they use electricity in their daily lives and to discuss what their lives would be like without electricity and electrical appliances.
- Benjamin Franklin enjoyed being around people with whom he could share different ideas, so he helped organize a group in Philadelphia that met every week to discuss improving themselves and their city. Why do students think Franklin thought it was important to meet with and share ideas with other people? Ask students to describe different ways they share ideas with others in their classroom. How do students benefit from sharing ideas with others?
- After retiring from the printing business, Franklin wanted to spend all of his time learning about the world through his scientific experiments — with, of course, a special interest in electricity. Ask students to discuss what they are most interested in, and what they would like to learn more about. How could they go about doing so? (Continued)