

## **Biography - Benjamin Franklin**

Occupation: Statesman and Inventor Born: January 17, 1706 in Boston, Massachusetts Died: April 17, 1790 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Best known for: Founding father of the United States

**Biography:** Benjamin Franklin was a modern day Renaissance Man. He excelled in many areas including science, inventing, politics, writing, music, and diplomacy. He is one of the founding fathers of the United States of America and is often called the "First American".

### **Where did Ben Franklin grow up?**

Ben was born in Boston, Massachusetts on January 17, 1706. His father was a candle maker. Ben stopped going to school when he was 10 and started working as an apprentice for his brother as a printer when he was 12. He gained most of his education by reading a lot of books. Ben ran away when he was 17, breaking his apprenticeship with his brother. He went to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he worked as a printer.

### **What was Franklin's role in the creation of the USA?**

Ben first became known to the public as the publisher of the newspaper the Pennsylvania Gazette. He gained some notoriety as an American spokesman when his testimony to the House of Commons in England helped to get the hated Stamp Act repealed. During the Revolutionary War, Ben Franklin became Pennsylvania's representative to the Second Continental Congress. He was one of the five members that drafted the Declaration of Independence. While Thomas Jefferson was the main author, Ben did make some changes and had an influence on the final draft. One of his key roles in the Revolutionary War was as Ambassador to France. He helped to secure the Treaty of Paris, which got the French army on the side of the Americans.

and helped to turn the tide of the war. Franklin also took part in the Constitutional Convention and is the only Founding Father to sign all four major documents in the founding of the United States. These include the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Treaty of Paris, and the Treaty of Alliance with France.

### **What did Benjamin Franklin invent?**

As if being a prolific writer and a major player in the founding of the United States wasn't enough, Ben Franklin still found time to be a prominent inventor and scientist. Perhaps Ben Franklin is most famous for his experiments with electricity. He did many experiments to prove that lightning is in fact electricity. This led to his invention of the lightning rod, which helps to keep buildings safe from lightning. Other inventions by Ben Franklin include bifocals (a type of glasses), the Franklin stove, an odometer for a carriage, and the glass harmonica. In science he studied and made discoveries in the area of electricity, cooling, meteorology, printing, and the wave theory of light. Other firsts Ben Franklin was involved in include starting the first public library in America and the first fire department in Pennsylvania.

### **Fun Facts about Ben Franklin**

- Ben was his dad's 15th child of 17 total children!
- While still a teenager he pretended to be Mrs. Silence Dogood and got his letters published in his brother's paper. His brother was not happy when he found out.
- Ben Franklin was the first Postmaster General of the United States.
- Later in life, Ben set his slaves free and became a fighter for the freedom of slaves.
- He didn't patent any of his many inventions, letting people use his ideas for free.
- Franklin became fairly wealthy from the publishing of his Poor Richard's Almanac.