

# State Library of Pennsylvania Ben Franklin Collection

*Teaching with Primary Resources  
Lesson Plan Template*

## **Description**

Lessons and units connected to Common Core Standards for Science and Social Studies focused on materials by and about Benjamin Franklin from the State Library collection, digitized in commemoration of his 300<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **Location of the digital materials**

[The State Library of Pennsylvania – Ben Franklin](#)

## **General Curriculum Framework:**

- **Big Ideas:** Declarative statements that describe concepts that transcend grade levels. Big Ideas are essential to provide focus on specific content for all students.
- **Concepts:** Describe what students should know (key knowledge) as a result of this instruction specific to grade level.
- **Competencies:** Describe what students should be able to do (key skills) as a result of this instruction, specific to grade level.
- **Essential Questions:** Questions connected to the SAS framework and are specifically linked to the Big Ideas. They should frame student inquiry, promote critical thinking, and assist in learning transfer.

# LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE

## Section 1:

### Primary Resource Set:

*Include one sentence to describe the digital collection resource used for the lesson plan.*

***The following lesson was designed and based upon the PA State Library digitalized collection of excerpts from Ben Franklin's memoirs.***

### Teacher's Guide:

*Include one to two sentences to introduce the lesson.*

***This lesson was developed to help students realize that the news media is not always completely accurate in their reporting. This lesson helps students understand that we should be skeptical of the media and that like today reporters have misled their audiences at times throughout history.***

### Historical Background:

*Include two to three sentences to frame the background of the lesson.*

***Ben Franklin like countless others that have been involved in passing along information to others, has made some mistakes along the way. Franklin wrote about elephant remains being found in Peru and frogs that could survive for years inside of rocks. Despite being skeptical of both, Franklin still reported his findings. Today's news media often does the same. They report things with out being completely sure that it is correct. This lesson is designed to help students realize that everything they hear or read is not always true.***

**Primary Sources:**

<b>Title of Primary Source – Cite the digital resources/the permanent URL</b>	<b>Annotations for instructional use – how will you use the primary resource with your students?</b>
<a href="#">Toads in Stone</a>	Students will work independently and in groups to analyze and compare Ben Franklin's various works with modern technologies.
<a href="#">Elephants</a>	Students will work independently and in groups to analyze and compare Ben Franklin's various works with modern technologies.

## **Section 2:**

**Lesson Plan Title:** Ben Franklin – *The Zookeeper of the 1700s*

**Subject:** Social Studies

**Grade Level/Course:** 9-12

### **Related Academic Standards:**

CC.8.5: Reading Informational Text: Students read, understand, and respond to informational text – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

CC.8.6: Writing: Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

3.1.9: Compare and contrast scientific theories. Know that both direct and indirect observations are used by scientists to study the natural world and universe.

### **Assessment Anchors:**

R11.A.2: Understand nonfiction appropriate to grade level.

R11.B.1: Understand components within and between texts.

R11.B.3: Understand concepts and organization of nonfictional text.

### **Eligible Content:**

Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.

Cite evidence from text to support generalizations.

Explain how structure determines function at multiple levels of organization (e.g., chemical, cellular, anatomical).

### **Big Idea:**

Ben Franklin was very inquisitive in the biological and natural sciences in that he studied living toads and elephant artifacts. Some of his early thoughts and ideas on these animals have been expanded upon today.

### **Essential Questions:**

- What observations did Ben Franklin conduct concerning toads and were his observations noteworthy?

- Were Ben Franklin's studies on the different types of elephants in the world totally accurate based on how he studied these animals?

**Concepts:**

Discover the early thoughts on toads, elephants and other early biological theories.

**Competencies:**

- Identify and describe the main idea of a reading passage.
- Organize and generalize important findings and details of the passage.
- Compare and contrast details of various passages across different groups in the classroom.
- In both writing and oral process, summarize and present main idea and concepts of reading passages to class as a whole.
- Utilize classroom technology in a manner that supports exploration and learning in a classroom environment.

**Objectives:**

- Students will be able to decipher the findings of Ben Franklin concerning toads and elephants. They will then compare and contrast what they knew in colonial days compared to modern society.
- Students will be able to evaluate the impact of false reporting by the media.

**Vocabulary:**

- quarry, limestone, flounce, inclemency
- carnivorous

**Duration:** 45 minute class period

**Materials:** Pencil, Notebook, Internet, Computers, Smart Board, Classroom Library

**Related Units and Lesson Plans:**

- Prior to this lesson the students have defined and have been quizzed upon the vocabulary terms from this and the five lessons discussing Ben Franklin.
- Prior to this lesson students have learned about the [life of Ben Franklin by watching, summarizing, and discussing the following video.](#)

- This lesson is in collaboration with five other lessons that highlight the memoirs of Ben Franklin which can be found at the PA State Library and its website.
- Prior to this lesson students have already learned the proper way to solve academic dilemmas on their own through the use of classroom resources including but not limited to: Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Historical Biographies, and the Internet.

**Formative Assessment:**

- Throughout the lesson the teacher and teacher's assistant will be assisting students that may be off track, struggling, or confused. The teacher and teacher's assistant will document any abnormalities they may notice during this process.
- Students understanding and growth during the lesson will be assessed through the grading of individual work that was completed and turned in.
- This process can be a great asset when identifying at risk students before it is too late.

**Suggested Instructional Supports:**

- Throughout the lesson the teacher and the teacher's assistant will be checking student progress and assisting with any road blocks that may arise.
- The teacher and the teacher's assistant will often be stopping and assisting students with comprehension and understanding of the assigned readings.
- The teacher may feel it is necessary to not have the groups chosen randomly. This may be true in the case of students needing more support from their classmates and/or the instructor, or the student/s may need to be separated from certain individuals.
- The classroom should have some sort of reference library available to the students including but not limited to: Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Historical Biographies, and the Internet.

**Instructional Procedures:**

- The class is based on certain routines and procedures thus, as the students enter the room they will know to get their materials and to be prepared to learn.
- (10minutes) Upon entering the classroom the students will be randomly given the URL or a printed copy (if internet access is limited) of one of the two excerpts from the Ben Franklin memoir collection listed above. Students are to read the excerpt and write at

least two sentences describing the main idea of the excerpt and their opinion on whether the excerpt is reliable source or not.

- (5 minutes) The students are then asked to break up into two big groups according to which excerpt they have read. Within these two groups students should divide themselves again according to who thought the excerpt was reliable and who thought the excerpt was not reliable.
- (10 minutes) There are now four groups in the classroom. Each group will come up with at least two sentences backing up their argument of why they believe the excerpt they read was true or why they believe it was false. The students are to use evidence they have found while using our classroom resources.
- (8 minutes) Students will then select a spokesperson to present their finding to the class in a short 2minute summary.
- (6.5 minutes) [Students will watch the following film to help them realize that fallacies in media and pop culture may affect our society.](#)
- (3.5 minutes) The class will come to a close as the teacher asks the students to write one or more sentences answering the following question: Does the media and mainstream pop culture have an impact on our society? Why or Why not? What happens why the media or mainstream pop culture relays false information to the public.
- (2 minute) As the [class comes to a close the students will watch the following film.](#) This is a time to relax and learn a little more through the use of some humor.
- For homework students will be assigned to [listen to the podcast.](#)