

Study Guide

Ben Franklin & His Kite



Did you know? This performance is a public service of the Sampson CenterStage Performing Arts Series and the County of Sampson and is totally funded and underwritten through the financial contributions of many businesses, corporations, civic organizations, and individuals from across Sampson County and is provided **FREE** to students in Clinton City Schools and Sampson County Schools.

Many thanks to all **Class Acts-Sampson CenterStage for Students** Sponsors...On the day of the performance a complete list of Class Acts Sponsors will be distributed to each teacher...

TEACHERS, How you can help? Please take a moment to have **YOUR** students write a note of appreciation to our sponsors...without them this performance would not be possible!

This study guide is provided as a courtesy of the *Class Acts-Sampson CenterStage for Students* series and is designed to aid in preparing students for an exciting performance.

We encourage you to make use of this valuable resource designed to not only enhance each student's theatergoing experience; but to also complement their total educational experience.

GOING TO THE THEATRE (101)



Going to the Theatre

Watching a live performance is very different than watching television or going to the movies. When you see a live performance you play a part too! Your role is an audience member. As an audience member you should obey the following instructions:

When you arrive, follow an usher to your seat. Your group may be assigned to specific areas or seats in the theatre. Please stay in the seat that you are given until the show is over.

Most theaters do not allow cameras, cellular telephones or recording devices. Please leave these at home or in your classroom.

Food, drink, candy and chewing gum are not allowed in the theatre.

Book bags and/or oversized handbags are not allowed in the theatre.

When the theater lights dim, it means the show is about to begin...Please be quiet.

Listen and watch carefully. Talking and making noise disturbs the performers on stage and your fellow audience members. Please hold your comments until after the performance. Of course when something is funny you may laugh. You may even cry when something is sad.

Show your appreciation by clapping when the performance is over and when the performers take a bow.

Stay seated after the show and an usher or your teacher will lead you out of the theater.

SPECIAL NOTE

This show will have a question and answer period following the performance. Please stay seated after the curtain call. If you have a question, raise your hand. Speak loudly and clearly when you are called upon.

Theatre Collaborators



When we see a show, we often think of only the performers on stage. However, many people come together to make a performance happen. Read the list of theatre collaborators and definitions and answer the discussion questions with a partner.

Artist - A person who creates (makes) art.

Professional Artist - A person who creates art as an occupation, that means the person earns his/her money with art.

Storyteller(s) - A teller, or tellers of stories, a relater of anecdotes, a reciter of tales (as in a children's library)

Costume - an outfit worn to create the appearance characteristic of a particular period, person, place, or thing

Director - helps the performers understand their roles and tells them where to move on stage. The director also collaborates with designers to create the entire picture you see on stage.

Costume Designer - imagines and designs the clothing and other items worn by the performers on stage.

Lighting Designer - imagines and creates the lights of a performance to enhance the mood and the setting.

Set Designer - makes a map of each set and its changes

Props - items held or used by the actors on stage that help tell the story

THINK ABOUT IT!

Why is changing the color of lights important for the mood in a scene?

Have you ever been in a play?

Have you ever designed a costume?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS...

1. If you were to work in the theater business, which theater collaborator would you rather be?
2. Which job seems most challenging? Why?



Ben Franklin and His Kite

by Scott Wichmann

Audience: Students in grades K-5

Curricular Connections:

**Biography, History, Government,
Language Arts, Science**

Additional Resources:

Ben and Me: An Astonishing Life
of Benjamin Franklin by His Good
Mouse Amos,
by Robert Lawson

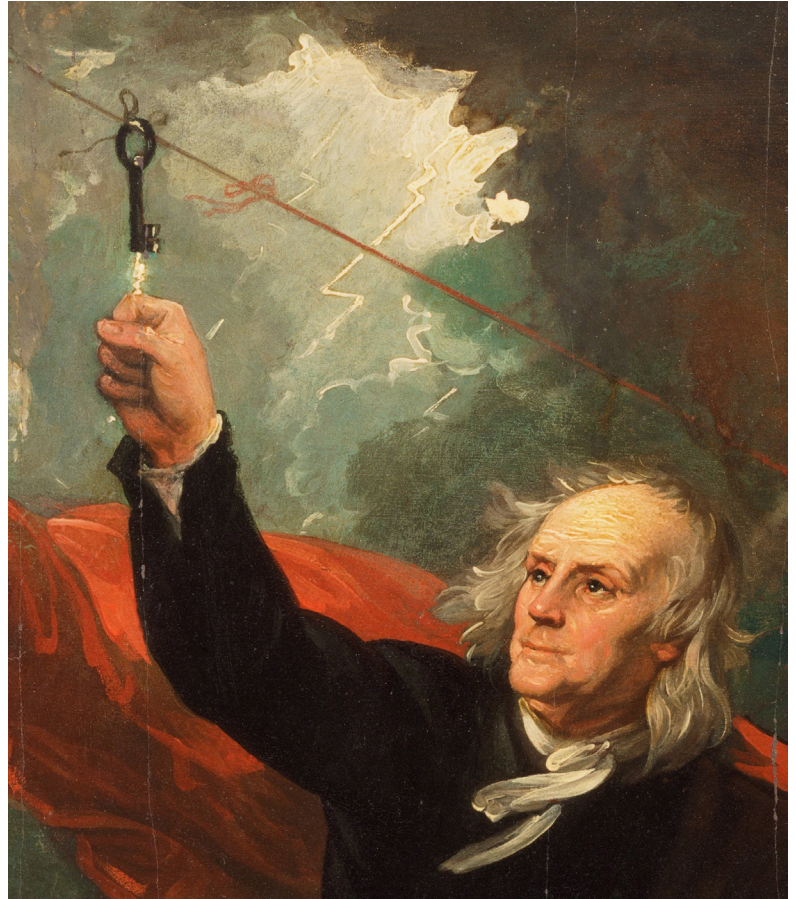
Ben Franklin
Public Broadcast Service (PBS)
*An Extraordinary Life. An Electric
Mind.*
<http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin/>

Energy Kids: U.S. Energy Information
Administration
Science of Electricity
http://www.eia.gov/KIDS/energy.cfm?page=electricity_science-basics

Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions
of Benjamin Franklin,
by Gene Barretta

The Franklin Institute
*History of Science and Technology:
Benjamin Franklin*
<https://www.fi.edu/history-resources/franklin>

Who Was Ben Franklin?
by Dennis Brindell Fradin



By Unknown - crop of File:Benjamin West, English (born America) - Benjamin Franklin Drawing Electricity from the Sky - Google Art Project.jpg, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41818787>

Is electricity the same as lightning? What causes static electricity? How can I create static electricity? How can we protect people from lightning? Benjamin Franklin, a man of undying curiosity, asked all of these questions. Franklin was an inventor, poet, philosopher, statesman, scientist, author, printer, and more.

In June 1752, Ben Franklin "shocked" the world with his discovery that lightning held electricity! Take this "enlightening" journey with Virginia Repertory Theatre into the experiment that changed the course of history 250 years ago. This entertaining and educational play brings the history of Franklin's experiments with electricity to life.

Benjamin Franklin: Struck by Curiosity

The play advises, "Folks, all you have to do is let your curiosity be your guide." That was the spirit of Benjamin Franklin. His curiosity lead him to constantly hypothesize, experiment, and draw new conclusions about the natural world. Use what you've learned about electricity to draw lightning bolts to match each description with a term, below:

current

Something that electricity does not flow through freely.

battery

The path along which a current flows.

insulator

The flow of electrical charge.

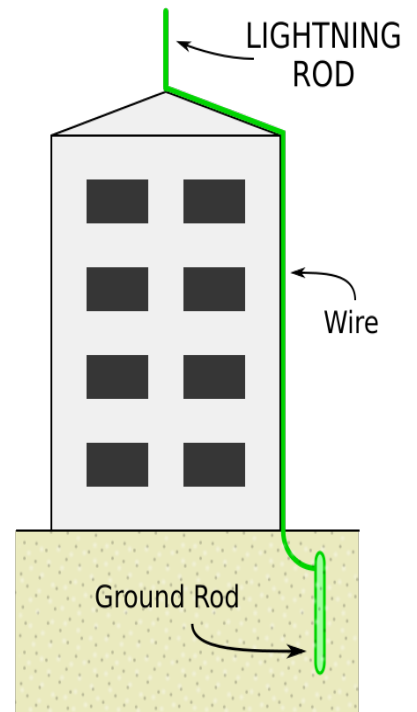
conductor

A device that stores and produces electricity by changing chemical energy into electric energy.

circuit

Something that electricity flows through freely.

One of the things that Franklin invented was the **lightning rod**. Use a highlighter to draw a bolt of lightning, and show where the electrical charge will travel if it were to strike the lightning rod pictured to the right.



Understanding the Scientific Process

Scientists go through the following steps:

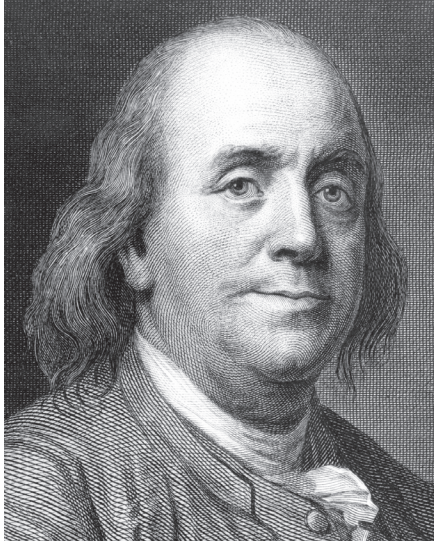
1. Identify a question or problem that they are curious about.
2. Make a prediction or hypothesis about what they think the answer to that question might be.
3. List the materials needed for the experiment, and figure out the procedures involved.
4. Carefully follow the procedures, making observations in the form of notes, diagrams, and pictures.
5. Reflect back on the original problem and hypothesis. Was it solved? What new information was learned? What new questions emerged? Write these conclusions down.

What are you curious about?

Get started by brainstorming with a partner on the back of this sheet.

The Wise Ben Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was more than a scientist. He was also an inventor, poet, philosopher, statesman, author, and printer, to name a few things. He wrote Poor Richard's Almanac, and is famous for his wise words. Below are a few words of wisdom from Benjamin Franklin. Choose one of these quotes, and explain what you think it means in the space below.



"You may delay, but time will not."

"Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

"Well done is better than well said."

"Lost time is never found again."

"It is the working man who is the happy man. It is the idle man who is the miserable man."

Cross out the incorrect statements below about Benjamin Franklin.

He served as a Senator from New Jersey.

He was part of the Boston Tea Party.

He wrote Poor Richard's Almanac.

He fought in the Civil War.

He helped write the Declaration of Independence.

He invented the lightning rod.

He had wooden teeth.

He invented the hearing aid.

He created Philadelphia's first fire department.

He served as Governor of Pennsylvania.

He invented bifocals.

He was a U.S. President.

Virginia Repertory Theatre

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Virginia Repertory Theatre Presents...

Ben Franklin and His Kite

by Scott Wichmann

Virginia Repertory Theatre
Nathaniel Shaw, Artistic Director
Phil Whiteway, Managing Director

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Theater Etiquette



Clap, but know when to do so.

You should clap after a play, act, or song, or right before intermission. If you loved the show, you can give a "standing ovation" at the end. That's when you stand up while applauding.

It's quiet time (sort of).

If the play makes you laugh or cry, that is fine, but you can chat with your friends afterwards. Show the actors respect and quiet they need to focus on their roles. Being quiet allows the rest of the audience to concentrate on the play.

Behind the Curtains

Many people with different skills and talents work together to make a production such as *Ben Franklin and His Kite* come to life. Can you match these theater jobs with their descriptions?

set designer

a person who plays a role or character in stage plays, motion pictures, television broadcasts, etc.

playwright

a person who creates the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance.

stage manager

this person's job is to pull together all the pieces and parts of a play – the script, actors, set, costumes, lighting and sound, and music to create a production.

actor

this job focuses on using light to create effects that match the mood of various scenes in a performance.

costume designer

this person is a writer of scripts for plays. The script tells a story through the actions and words of the characters.

lighting designer

this person creates the physical surroundings of a play, including any scenery, furniture, or props used throughout the play.

director

this person helps the director and helps organize the actors, designers, stage crew, and technicians throughout the production of a play.



AT HOME

Dear Parents,

Recently, your student attended the performance **Benjamin Franklin and His Kite**. This was a musical play performed by cast members with the Virginia Repertory Theatre.

In this performance, actors brought to life the famed scientist, inventor, politician, philanthropist and business man. He is best known as the only Founding Father who signed all three documents that freed America from Britain. Franklin is credited with drafting the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution.

Prior to attending the performance; teachers reviewed proper theatre etiquette with students and introduced background information about Benjamin Franklin's life. Aside from the many benefits for students of simply experiencing theater, the materials addressed in this play supported many goals contained in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

As a parent, you are your child's best teacher. They can also teach you through their experiences.

Ask your student about the play they attended and read through this booklet.

Thank you for your participation in the arts.



DO IT!

A reviewer writes an opinion of the actors, sets, and director for a newspaper or magazine. Write your review of the concert for your family.
