

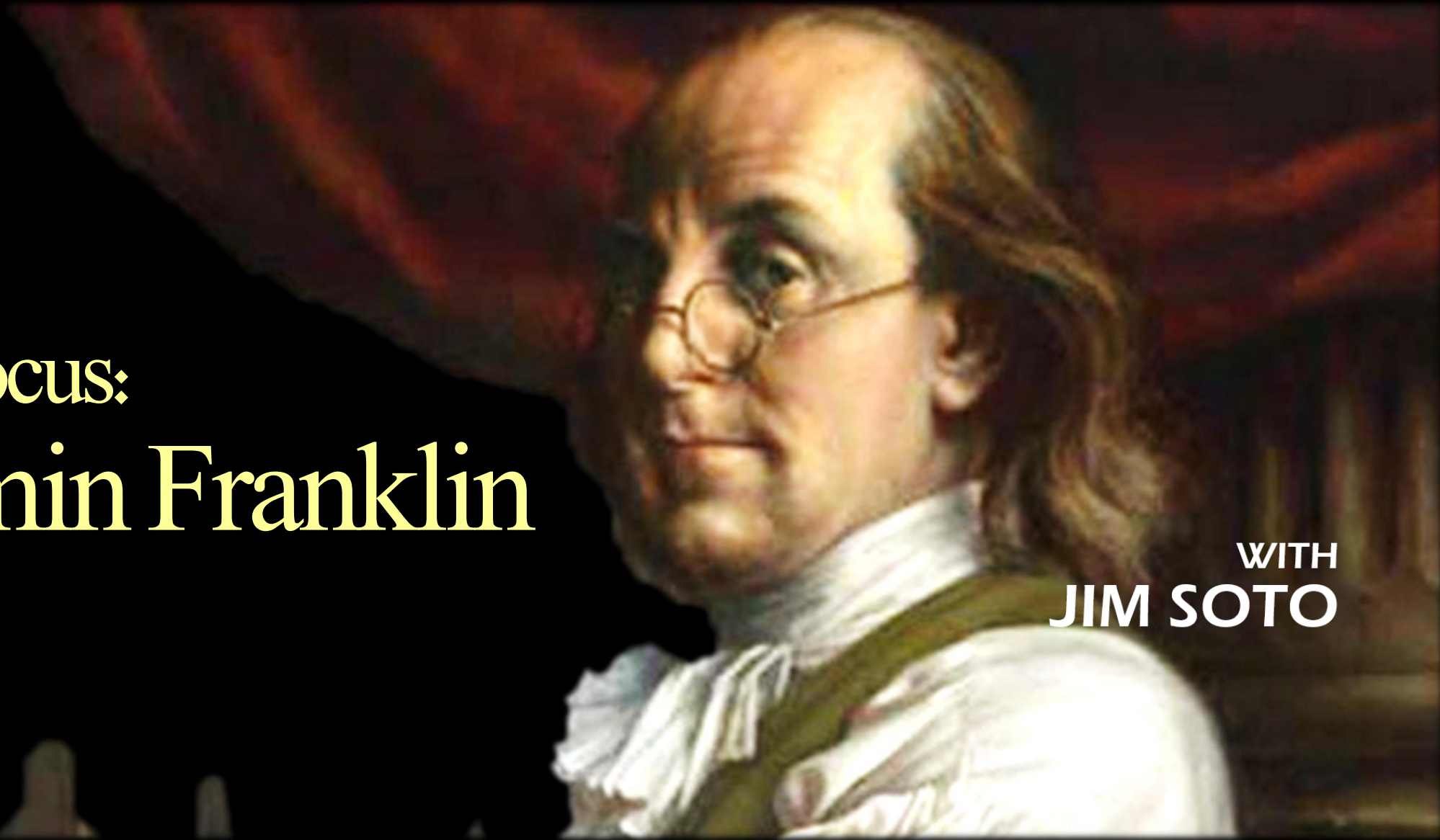
UNIT 1 Shaping the New World
Origins of the American Tradition to 1800

A SEEM school
FROEBEL
BILINGUAL SCHOOL
Home of the Space Generation



Author Focus:
Benjamin Franklin

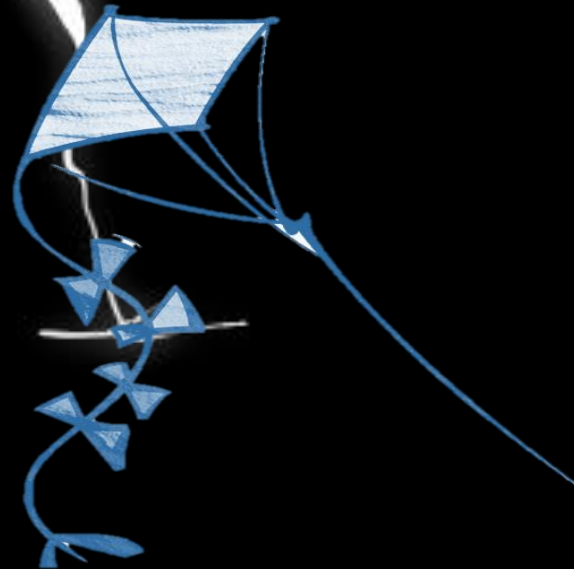
WITH
JIM SOTO



SPEAK YOUR MIND

Benjamin Franklin was a remarkably accomplished man in many areas. Think about your own personal goals. What actions have you taken or might take to meet these goals...even if it might offend or get you in trouble with others?

Take a minute to consider and answer the question.



A REMARKABLE FOUNDING FATHER

Polymath.

Inventor.

Scientist.

Printer.

Politician.

Diplomat.

Founding Father.

His name was Benjamin Franklin.

Oh, and he helped to draft the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Lets watch a video about the man.



LITERARY WORKS

Benjamin Franklin was a writer, scientist, inventor, and statesman. The tenth son of a soap and candle maker, he entered the printing trade as his brother's apprentice at age twelve. At sixteen, he submitted a series of clever essays to his brother James's newspaper. At seventeen, Franklin moved to Philadelphia, where he set up a printing business of his own.

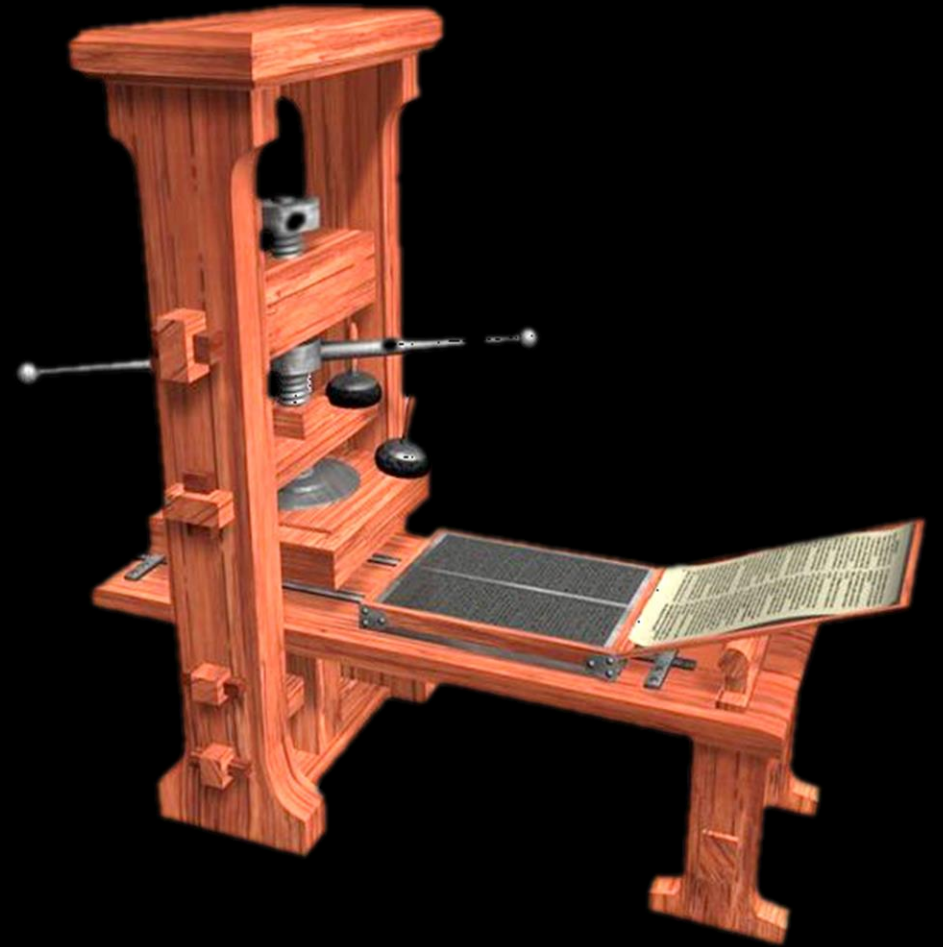
Noted works include:

- Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (1791; 1868)
- Experiments and Observations on Electricity (1751)
- Father Abraham's Sermon (1758)
- Poor Richard's Almanack (1733–1758)



from THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

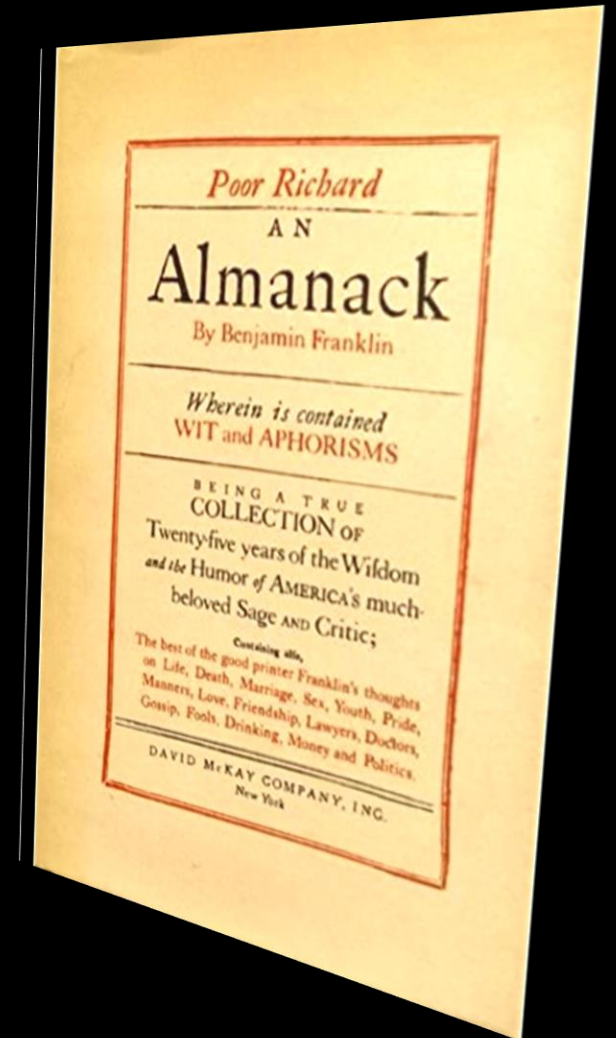
Benjamin Franklin wrote "*The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*" over a period of twenty years. Franklin's autobiography covers his life only until 1758, when he was fifty-two years old (he would live to be eighty-four), at which time he embarked on a career as a diplomat. In this excerpt, the author describes the time during his youth when he was becoming established as a writer and printer.



from POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK

Poor Richard was a pseudonym, or pen name, that Franklin used in writing "*Poor Richard's Almanack*", an annual reference work that he published from 1732 to 1757 and that was his greatest literary success.

Franklin envisioned Poor Richard as a simple but wise man who lived a pious life in the country. Despite this character's seeming simplicity, Franklin ascribed to him a multitude of witty aphorisms, which are short sayings or pointed statements. The excerpt from the almanac presents some of Franklin's most well-known sayings.



Both show Franklin's skill at writing two very different literary forms. The selections in this **Author Focus** reveal the varied interests and experiences of Mr. Franklin. As you read, record the facts you learn about his life and then infer what they reveal about his character. Consider how Franklin's life and work reflect the Neoclassical spirit.



LITERARY ELEMENTS

Autobiography

Refers to the story of a person's life written by that person.

An Almanac

Is an annual publication listing a set of current information about multiple subjects. It includes information like weather forecasts, farmers' planting dates, tide tables, and other tabular data arranged according to the calendar.

A white cursive signature of Benjamin Franklin on a black background. The signature is highly stylized, with large loops and flourishes, particularly in the 'B' and 'F'.

LITERARY MOVEMENT

Neoclassicism

Was the revival of Greek and Roman ideals of art and literature that occurred around the middle of the 1700s (18th Century) and continued during the 1800s (19th Century), which is when the Enlightenment was in full swing. Those ideals included respect for authority and tradition, reason and order, and moderation and simplicity.



ASSESSMENT

After reading pages 42-50 in your book, complete the activities:

1. REFER TO TEXT &
2. REASON WITH TEXT
3. & ANALYZE LITERATURE
 - **Autobiography and Neoclassicism** - Review the facts you recorded in reading the selections by and about Franklin. Based on this information, how would you describe him? What general qualities can you infer about his character? In particular, what qualities made him successful in so many areas? What Neoclassical ideals run throughout Franklin's life and work? In particular, how do the sayings from Poor Richard's Almanack reflect these ideals? How did Franklin use wit (dry humor) to make these lessons more appealing to readers?



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