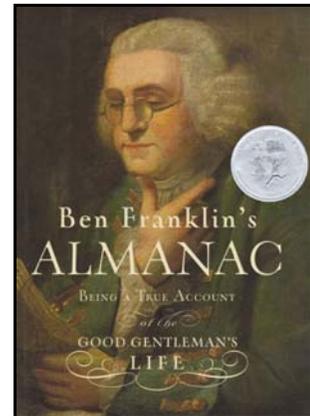


CLASSROOM GUIDE

Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life

written by Candace Fleming
published by Anne Schwartz/Atheneum Books, 2003



A note to the teacher: This book is appropriate for older elementary students, middle school students and high school students. Included are activities appropriate for each age group. Unless otherwise indicated, all Benjamin Franklin quotes come from this text and have a page number reference.

Themes:

- ◆ Benjamin Franklin: The Writer
- ◆ “What Good Shall I Do Today?” ... Giving Back
- ◆ Science and Inventions
- ◆ Benjamin Franklin: The Politician

About the book

Ben Franklin's Almanac is a rewarding look at the life, loves, and pursuits of one of America's greatest figures, Benjamin Franklin. Credited with many firsts, including charting the Gulf Stream, recognizing the value of the American West, and being a key player in securing French assistance during the American Revolution, this book opens the window to the life of an American hero in an accessible way. Unlike many history texts, *Ben Franklin's Almanac* tells the story thematically instead of chronologically. A reader can open to any page and easily grasp a part of his story. Historic photographs and images add spice to the text.

Author Candace Fleming spent three years digging up the golden nuggets that fill these pages. As a result, *Ben Franklin's Almanac* is full of original sources from the American Philosophical Society, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Franklin Collection at Yale University. The book also includes an extensive timeline, a bibliography and index, as well as additional resources about Ben Franklin and his life.

Awards for *Ben Franklin's Almanac* include recognition as an ALA Notable Book, an ALA Best Book for Young Adult, a James Madison Honor Book (for Excellence in American History), and a Junior Library Guild selection.

About the author

Candace Fleming writes award-winning books for children and young adults. She has written two other detailed and accessible looks at the lives of famous Americans, *Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life* (©2005) and *The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary* (©2008). Candace Fleming is also a prolific writer of picture books

such as *Muncha! Muncha! Muncha!*, *Gabriella's Song*, and *When Agnes Caws*, all ALA Notable Books as well as *The Hatmaker's Sign: A Story by Benjamin Franklin*.

Things to think about before you read the book

- ◆ What makes a life remarkable?
- ◆ What makes a person worth remembering?
- ◆ Who is someone from the past, either someone you knew personally or someone from history, whom you remember? Why were they important enough to remember?
- ◆ How would someone describe you? Think about more than your physical characteristics and activities. What kind of person are you inside?
- ◆ What inventions do you think have made the greatest difference in the way we live our lives today?
- ◆ Have you ever invented anything?
- ◆ What do you know about the Revolutionary War (the war between England and the American colonies)?
- ◆ Have you ever read a book? A magazine? A newspaper? Do you know that they were printed on a press? What do you know about printing presses? Have you ever see one?
- ◆ Have you ever heard of the following documents: The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution? What are they?
- ◆ Does anyone you know wear glasses? Bifocals? Do you know what bifocals do?
- ◆ How do people today heat their homes? How do you think people used to heat their homes?
- ◆ Who discovered electricity? Do you know how electricity was discovered?
- ◆ Are discoveries (and inventions) immediate or do they happen over time (with lots of trial and error...)?

Benjamin Franklin: The Writer

“Good writing should be smooth, clear and short, and the art of saying little in much must be avoided at all costs. In written discourse, every needless thing gives offense and must be eliminated... Had this always been done, many large and tiresome volumes would have shrunk into pamphlets, and many a pamphlet into a single period.” (pg. 23)

Benjamin Franklin had a lot to say, and in his lifetime published articles, essays, almanacs, pamphlets, etc. He was the only one of our founding fathers to sign all four of the major documents in early American history: The Declaration of Independence (1776), the Treaty of Alliance (1778), the Treaty of Paris (1783), and the Constitution of the United States (1787). From 1732-1758 he published *Poor Richard’s Almanac* which at the time was the second most widely read book in the colonies (the Bible was first). But good writing didn’t come without hard work. Benjamin Franklin trained himself to write well and he made an effort to improve his vocabulary. The following exercises are based on his own efforts.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: AN EXERCISE TO IMPROVE WRITING STYLE

1. Read an article in the newspaper.
2. Write down the key points. Key points are the most important facts or ideas in the article. You might think of this by deciding what you would repeat in a conversation with a group of friends.
3. Write your own article based only on the key points. Do not try to copy the article you just read.
4. Compare the two articles. How are they the same? How are they different? Did you leave out anything important? Which article do you think is better ... and why?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: POETRY TO PROSE

Franklin practiced writing in rhyme to force himself to find words that fit into the structure and still made sense. This was a wonderful way to improve his vocabulary.

1. Write a rhyme about something ordinary (i.e., how you started the day, a piece of fruit, or your favorite sport). Use the structure A-A, B-B (the last word of the first two lines rhymes as does the last word in the last two lines). For example:

My Day

*I woke up this morning to sunshine so bright
It glowed in the sky (it didn’t at night),
I threw off the covers, put my feet on the floor.
Went to the dresser and opened the drawer.*

*I took out my socks, a shirt and some jeans
Went down to breakfast and ate nectarines*

*Then ran to the bus, didn't want to be late
Found one empty seat, in a spot next to Nate.*

2. Write the rhyme in prose, creating a story that doesn't rhyme. For example:

My Day

When I woke up this morning it was bright and sunny. It must have been late because the sun was high in the sky. At night it was dark, and I didn't have to close my curtains, but that wasn't true when the sun was out! I threw off my covers and jumped out of bed. BRRRR! The floor was cold! I hopped and skipped over to my dresser and got some socks, jeans, and a shirt, getting dressed as quickly as I could. Now at least I was a little warmer. Downstairs in the kitchen I grabbed a couple of nectarines from the bowl on the table and ran out the door. I didn't want to be late for the bus because it didn't wait for anyone. There was only one seat left, next to my friend Nate.

3. **Optional Activity:** Use a piece of existing prose and make it into a rhyme or use a piece of existing poetry and write it as a piece of prose.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: IMPROVING VOCABULARY

Write one new word on the calendar every day and challenge the students to use it. Students can bring in new words, find words in their school textbooks, or copy words from the news.

If your school is focusing on improving vocabulary, you may wish to consider hosting a vocabulary parade, based on Debra Frasier's book, *Miss Alaineus: a Vocabulary Disaster* (Harcourt, 2000). This program allows visual learners to be creative and have fun with word definitions, a not-so-sly way of involving students of every age in learning new words. There are many helpful hints on Ms. Frasier's website: www.debrafrasier.com/pages/books/msa.html

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: CREATING A NEWSPAPER

"...the freshest advices foreign and domestick." (pg. 24)

Benjamin Franklin was an excellent newspaper man, and his paper (*The Pennsylvania Gazette*, first published in 1729) quickly became the largest newspaper in America, with distribution from New York to Virginia (pg. 24). Copies can be found at www.accessible.com.

1. Have the class start a newspaper to be distributed to all the other classes in the school. Call it "The Name of your Classroom Gazette." Focus on events in the school and the local community.
2. Ben Franklin's paper was different because he asked his readers to report any interesting news. Ask the other students in the school to report what is going on in their classrooms and write about it. Assign students teachers and staff to interview. Include at least one interview (profile) in each issue. Commit to publishing one issue every month for the entire school year. If you choose not to distribute it to the entire school, consider sending the paper home (in lieu of a note to the parents) once a month.

3. **Optional Activity:** Ask a local reporter to come in to the class and talk about their job. Go visit a printing press.

The American Newspaper Association Foundation and the International Reading Association have joined to present you with wonderful resources to get you started: www.naafoundation.org/CreatingAClassroomNewspaperNAA.pdf

On page 35 of *Ben Franklin's Almanac*, his goals to live a virtuous life are outlined. Here is an updated version that may better apply to modern society and youth.

1. Temperance (Moderation): Eat only what you need so you are no longer hungry.
2. Silence (Listen): You don't always have to be the one talking.
3. Order: Everything has a place and a purpose.
4. Resolution (Self discipline): Do what you say you are going to do without complaining.
5. Frugality (Saving money): Don't buy things you don't need.
6. Industry (Work hard): Don't sit around being lazy, doing nothing.
7. Sincerity (Be kind): Think about what you say and treat others the way you would like them to treat you.
8. Justice (Be fair): Don't treat others unfairly and if you are mad at someone, let them explain themselves first.
9. Moderation: Instead of buying six new pairs of socks, buy two. Consider "darning" four pairs of your old socks to see if they might last longer.
10. Tranquility (Peace): Chill out; don't let things you can't control stress you out.
11. Cleanliness: Clean your room, brush your hair, put your stuff in an appropriate place.
12. Chastity (Make smart choices): Make smart choices about dating, love, and relationships that take into consideration your health, your emotions, and your future.
13. Humility: Don't always think you are the best; give other people a chance.

TAKING IT FURTHER: WHAT TO DO WITH THIS LIST

Have the students keep a virtue notebook. Each week chose one or more of Franklin's "Virtue goals" to practice. Students should write down each virtue, then record incidents where they have tried to practice that virtue during the week. At the end of the project, discuss the process.

- ◆ Which of the "virtues" was the most difficult to practice?
- ◆ Did practicing them make any difference in your life or how you approached the people around you?

- ◆ Do you think you will continue to practice any of these “virtues”?
- ◆ After discussing the process, have the students select one virtue and write an essay (1-2 pages) about an experience they had during the course of the project and why they think it is (or isn’t) an important virtue to continue to practice.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: BEN’S SAYINGS AND PROVERBS

“These are scraps from the table of wisdom that will, if well digested, yield strong nourishment to the mind.”(pg. 27)

1. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each one a saying or proverb (see reproducible list).
2. Have each group discuss the saying or proverb and try to figure out what it means. Keep in mind that the students may interpret the saying or proverb differently than you do, and that is okay.
3. Have each group write one or two proverbs or sayings of their own with the same meaning.

For example:

“He that is conscious of a stink in his breeches, is jealous of every wrinkle in another’s nose.”

A couple of interpretations: *“If you know you have done something wrong you may notice that others think so too.” or “If you think you someone else can do something better than you can, it feels like they are judging you.”*

New proverbs or sayings: *“If you don’t brush your hair, others will remind you” or “If you know you can’t stack wood and your pile tips over, others will notice.”*

The following page is a reproducible for your use in the classroom.

SOME OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S SAYINGS AND PROVERBS

Note: Quotes taken from *Ben Franklin's Almanac* are followed by BFA and the page number. W&W refers to the book *Benjamin Franklin: Wit and Wisdom*.

- ◆ Content makes poor Men rich; Discontent makes rich Men poor. (W&W, pg. 8)
- ◆ Genius without Education is like Silver in the Mine. (W&W, pg. 8)
- ◆ Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee. (W&W, pg. 10)
- ◆ The poor Man must walk to get meat for his stomach, the rich man to get a stomach for his meat. (W&W, pg. 11)
- ◆ There is much difference between imitating a good man, and counterfeiting him. (W&W, pg. 13)
- ◆ Tart Words make no Friends: a spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a Gallon of Vinegar (W&W, pg. 19)
- ◆ The poor have little/Beggars none;/The rich too much/Enough not one. (W&W, pg. 26)
- ◆ Eating sour Pickles won't kill your Appetite. (W&W, pg. 44)
- ◆ Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise (BFA, cover flap)
- ◆ Who is wise? He that learns from everyone. /Who is powerful? He that governs his passion. / Who is rich? He that is content. / Who is that? Nobody (BFA, p27)
- ◆ He who lies down with dogs, gets up with fleas (BFA, p27)
- ◆ Love your neighbor, but don't pull down your hedge. (BFA, p27)
- ◆ Sally laughs at everything you say. Why? Because she has fine teeth. (BFA, p27)
- ◆ God helps those who help themselves (BFA, p27)
- ◆ About the signing of the Declaration of Independence "We must all hang together, or most assuredly, we shall all hang separately." (BFA, p75)
- ◆ About the British sending troops to the colonies "It seems like setting up a [black]smith's forge in a magazine of gunpowder. (BFA, p64)
- ◆ A few months after signing the Constitution "in this world nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes." (BFA p99)
- ◆ He who multiplies Riches multiplies Cares (W&W, p26)
- ◆ The Golden Age never was the present Age (W&W, p52)

What Good Shall I Do Today? Giving Back

“By helping your fellow citizen you not only improve mankind, but yourself as a man.” (pg. 34)

Ben believed in giving back. He started a volunteer fire department and hospital, created the first lending library, and was instrumental in the beginning of home postal delivery. He was one of the first to both recognize the need to unite the original thirteen colonies and the potential of settling the “wild” American west.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: DONATING TIME AND/OR MONEY

Your class or school can make a difference in today’s world, just as Benjamin Franklin did during his lifetime. There are many organizations that are set up for groups to come and help. Check with your local food shelf about food donations. Some organization accept donations of winter coats, school supplies, or gently used books. Below are a few specific organizations to get you started.

Kiva, an organization that provides opportunities to connect with and loan money to unique and small businesses in the developing world, helping the working poor make great strides towards economic independence. www.kiva.org

Heifer International, a humanitarian assistance organization that works to end world hunger and protect the earth. Through livestock, training, and “passing on the gift,” Heifer has helped seven million families in more than 125 countries improve their quality of life and move toward greater self-reliance. Each participant in turn passes on the gift of animal offspring, training, or skills to another family in need. www.heifer.org

Global Health Ministries, an organization that provides funding for health care projects, scholarships and gathers and ships health care equipment and supplies to countries where such materials are not available or are very expensive. Website includes lesson plans, instructions on making bandages and midwife kits for countries overseas and volunteer ideas. www.ghm.org

Feed My Starving Children, an organization offering hope to the hungry around the world. In 2005, more than 75,000 volunteers – the majority under the age of 18 – manually assembled 15 million meals for hungry children, helping to heal the world. Elementary, middle and high schools use FMSC to strengthen curriculum efforts focusing on citizenship, social service, asset building and other positive aspects of character development. www.fmsc.org

Habitat for Humanity, an organization dedicated to eliminating poverty housing worldwide. Since the founding in 1976, Habitat for Humanity has become a global leader in addressing substandard housing by helping more than 1,000,000 people of all races, faiths, and backgrounds have a simple, decent place to live. HFH has built or renovated more than 200,000 homes throughout the world. www.habitat.org

Toys for Tots, sponsored by the United States Marines. There are many other toy drives, look for local sponsors in your area. www.toysfortots.org

Science and Inventions

“As we enjoy great advantages from the invention of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours.” Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography, 1771 (pg. 46)

Ben Franklin was always thinking about how things could work better or differently. Here is a list of some of his inventions, discoveries, or scientific experiments:

- ◆ Wood burning stove using iron plates to direct the heat into the room (now called the “Franklin Stove”) (pg. 48)
- ◆ Observing ant behavior and discovering that they have a language all their own (pg. 48)
- ◆ Lightning rods (pg. 53)
- ◆ Mapping the gulf stream in Atlantic Ocean (pg. 54)
- ◆ Bifocals (pg. 56)
- ◆ Planting willow trees (pg. 57)
- ◆ Discovering sources of lead poisoning (pg. 57)
- ◆ Swimming flippers (pg. 57)
- ◆ Electro shock therapy (pg. 57)
- ◆ First indoor plumbing in America (pg. 19)
- ◆ Magic Squares (pg. 47)
- ◆ Leyden jar electrostatic machine (the precursor to the modern-day generator) (pg. 49)
- ◆ Electricity (key and kit experiment) (pg. 51)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: WRITING EXERCISE

1. Select one of Ben Franklin’s inventions, discoveries, or experiments from the list
2. Research the subject as thoroughly as you can.
 - ◆ How is it used in today’s world?
 - ◆ How has the invention, discovery, or experiment changed from Franklin’s time to your own time?
 - ◆ How has it changed the way we live our lives today?
 - ◆ Was Benjamin Franklin the only one to have made this discovery?
 - ◆ How was his discovery received or used in his time?

3. Write a 1-2 page essay about your research, structured so that you begin with Benjamin Franklin's invention, discover, or experiment and end with how it is used today.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: MUSIC

A master of a number of musical instruments including the violin, harp, and guitar, Benjamin Franklin also invented an instrument in 1761, the glass armonica (pg. 54). It used open glass jars filled with different amounts of water to make sounds.

1. **Option One:** Fill glass bottles or jars with different amounts of water. Test the sound by blowing over the top of the bottle. Arrange the bottles in order of sound from lowest to highest, making note of the amount of water used in each bottle or jar. Try playing a familiar tune like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or "Happy Birthday." Experiment to see how much water it takes to raise the pitch of each bottle by one whole note. Note your findings. Write directions so that someone else can replicate your experiment.

Teachers, take a look at this water bottle xylophone: www.philtulga.com/water.html

Make use of a musical staff to compose a song using your water bottles.

2. **Option Two:** Fill drinking glasses with different amounts of water. Test the sound by running a wet finger around the rim of the glass. Arrange the drinking glasses in order of sound from lowest to highest. Try playing a familiar tune like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or "Happy Birthday."

Benjamin Franklin: The Politician

"Equal liberty is the birthright of all men." (p101)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: WRITING AN EDITORIAL

"If you would not be forgotten, as soon as you are dead and rotten, either write things worth the reading, or do things worth the writing." Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanack, 1738 (pg. 22)

The French got involved in the American Revolution (the war for independence from England) partially because Ben Franklin asked them to (pg. 78-93). Thanks to his advocacy, the French helped the Americans win the war. In fact, in the end, there were twice as many French soldiers as American soldiers. This teaches us a valuable lesson: if you have a problem with something and don't say anything about it, it can't change.

1. Discuss as a class what an editorial is. (An editorial is an article, typically short, that expresses an opinion or point of view.)
2. Look at examples from your local newspaper.
3. Discuss the following questions:
 - ◆ What is something that you think needs to be changed in your school, your town, or your country?

- ◆ What can you do about it?
4. Have students write their own editorials about an issue raised in the discussion questions.
 5. If appropriate, send the editorials to a student or local newspaper, or compile them as a publication to be read by other students in the school. Remind students to write clearly about the issue(s) and to give sound arguments why and how policies should be changed.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: EDITORIAL CARTOONS

Benjamin Franklin also created political cartoons (pg. 77). One of his most famous is a picture of a snake cut into pieces (each labeled with the initials of a colony) and the words “Join, or die. There are a number of lesson plans already on the web to get you started, and the Association of Editorial Cartoonists is a good place to start. www.nieonline.com/aeec/cftc.cfm

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: REVIEWING THE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

Benjamin Franklin was the only one of our founding fathers to sign all four of the major documents in early American history: The Declaration of Independence (1776), the Treaty of Alliance (1778), the Treaty of Paris (1783), and the Constitution of the United States (1787). He also was the person to suggest the two parts of Congress, the House of Representatives and the Senate (pg. 98).

1. Review the branches of government. Ben’s Guide for Kids/U.S. Government bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/government/branches.html is a good website to get you started.
 - ◆ Legislative Branch – raise taxes, pass laws
 - ◆ Executive Branch – led by President, carry out laws, conduct foreign affairs
 - ◆ Judicial Branch – system of courts, decide whether or not government and states act legally
2. Discuss why we have both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Talk about who your local politicians are. If possible, have someone come in and talk to the class or take a field trip to your local government building.
3. Schoolhouse Rock has added a catchy tune to the Preamble of the Constitution, making it easy and fun to learn.
 - ◆ See it on YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_TXJRZ4CFc
 - ◆ Lyrics and more about Schoolhouse Rock www.schoolhouserock.tv/Preamble.html

Companion Books and Resources for the Classroom

“Life, like a dramatic piece, should not only be conducted with regularity, but should finish handsomely. Being now in the last act, I begin to cast about for something fit to end with... I am very desirous of concluding on a bright point.” Ben Franklin in a letter to George Whitfield, 1756 (pg. 94)

There is an extensive list of resources on pages 106–115 of *Ben Franklin’s Almanac*, including sites for more information about Benjamin Franklin.

READING AND WRITING

Benjamin Franklin: Wit and Wisdom, Peter Pauper Press, Inc.

A Teen's Guide to Getting Published: Publishing for Profit, Recognition and Academic Success by Jessica Dunn and Danielle Dunn, Prufrock Press, 2006

People Writing Down the Days: 365 Creative Journaling Ideas for Young People by Lorraine M. Dahlstrom, Free Spirit Publishing, 2000

www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001200.shtml (a great site on how to write newspaper articles with many links for teachers, information on standards, and exercises targeted at specific grade levels.)

www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/one-book.html (Library of Congress One Book reading promotion lists communities across the USA who are reading one book together)

EDITORIAL CARTOON WEB LESSON PLANS

www.cagle.com/teacher

slo.neric.org/cartoons/intro-slo.htm

712educators.about.com/cs/edcartoons/a/edcartoons.htm

bms.westport.k12.ct.us/lmc/PolCartoons.htm

Adam Canfield of the Slash, Michael Winerip, Candlewick Press, 2005

Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel, Richard H. Minear, introduction by Art Spiegelman, the New Press, 2001

NEWSPAPER SITES – CREATING A CLASS NEWSPAPER

www.ilovethatteachingidea.com/ideas/010424_creating_a_class_newspaper.htm

www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=249

www.williamstownps.vic.edu.au/students/english/newspaper.htm

INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES/HOW TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

media.nasaexplores.com/lessons/03-053/5-8_1.pdf

www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu_unit2_lesson2.html

www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=17

www.timeforkids.com/TFK/teachers/minilessons/wr/0,28171,1672007,00.html

SIMPLE SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

The Ben Franklin Book of Easy and Incredible Experiments: A Franklin Institute Science Museum Book, Franklin Institute Science Museum, Cheryl Kirk Noll, Wiley, 1995

The Everything Kids' Science Experiments Book: Boil Ice, Float Water, Measure Gravity-Challenge the World Around You! (Everything Kids Series) Tom Robinson, Adams Media, 2001

Pop Bottle Science, Lynn Brunelle, Workman Publishing Company; Book and Access edition, 2004

Science in Seconds for Kids: Over 100 Experiments You Can Do in Ten Minutes or Less, Jean Potter, Jossey-Bass, 1995

65 Simple Science Experiments with Everyday Materials, E. Richard Churchill, Louis V. Loeschig, Muriel Mandell, illustrated by Frances Zweifel, Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 1997

eosweb.larc.nasa.gov/EDDOCS/franklin.html

www.schoolhouserock.tv (fireworks, electricity)

www.surfnetkids.com/science_experiments.htm

SCIENCE FAIRS

www.all-science-fair-projects.com/

www.school.discoveryeducation.com/sciencefaircentral/

www.scifair.org/

DESTINATION IMAGINATION

www.idodi.org

Destination imagination is a creative problem solving organization for youth and adults designed to foster creative and critical thinking, develop teamwork and leadership skills, and nurture research and inquiry skills

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

George vs. George: The Revolutionary War as Seen by Both Sides, Rosalyn Schanzer, National Geographic Children's Books, 2004

Liberties Legacy: Our Celebration of the Northwest Ordinance and the United States Constitution, Ohio Historical Society (ISBN 0-87758-020-0), 1987-88

Revolutionary War Days: Discover the Past with Exciting Projects, Games, Activities, and Recipes (American Kids in History Series), David C. King, Cheryl Kirk Noll, Wiley, 2001

The American Revolution (American History Topics), Richard B. Morris, illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher, Lerner Publications, 1985

The American Revolution for Kids: A History with 21 Activities (For Kids series), Janis Herbert, Chicago Review Press, 2002

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

American Government (Cliffs Quick Review), Paul Soifer, Abraham Hoffman, D. Stephen Voss, Cliff Notes, 2001

The Complete Idiot's Guide to American Government, Second Edition, Mary M. Shaffrey, Melanie Fonder, Alpha, 2nd edition, 2005

The National Park Service has a handbook or brochure for every battle site put out by the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. Go to www.nps.gov/hfc/products/pubs/pubs-02b.htm for ordering information

members.aol.com/MrDonnHistory/American.html resource for teachers on many topics

www.un.org/cyberschoolbus resources, links and information to help children get connected to world issues. Site sponsored by the United Nations and includes downloads, interviews about world issues and on-line activities.

FUN WITH HISTORY

History Day is a national competition for students in grades 6-12. Students construct entries related to an historical topic as an individual or in a group. The mission of National History Day is to provide students with opportunities to learn historical content and develop research, thinking, and communication skills through the study of history. www.nationalhistoryday.org

Legends, Lies and Cherished Myths of American History, Richard Shenkman, William Morrow and Co, 1988

One-Night Stands with American History: Odd, Amusing, and Little-Known Incidents, Richard Shenkman & Kurt Reiger, Quill, 1980

What Does the President Do: Real Comments by Real Kids, compiled by Warren Hanson and Tim Nyberg, Kids Tell Us Press, 2004

WEBLINKS TO IMPORTANT HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The National Archives: www.archives.gov/historical-docs