LESSON PLAN - Michael Tompkins

**Science** – Grade Level – Middle School

**Title** – Ben Franklin: Advocate for Better Health

**Overview**

Most of the images we see of Ben Franklin are those of a rather rotund man looking somewhat unhealthy. However, those are images of Ben later in life when years of “good living” took their toll.

Actually, in his early years, Ben was quite an athlete; swimming being his favorite sport. If Ben was alive today, chances are that his lifestyle would be very different. He indicated as such in some excerpts from Poor Richard’s almanac:

- “I saw few die of hunger, of eating, 100,000.”
- “Three good meals a day is bad living.”
- “Eat few suppers and you’ll need few medicines.”
- “A full belly is the mother of all evil.”
Objectives

Students will:

- Understand how Ben’s love of eating contradicted his desire for a healthy lifestyle.
- Gain insight, through his quotes, into how Ben thought he should have lived his life.
- Develop a fitness plan and compare it to their eating habits.
- Chart their progress.

Time

This lesson requires daily monitoring of food and exercise for a specified amount of days.

Materials

- Fitness jumpsite: Calorie calculator available at www.primusweb.com/fitness partner/jumpsite/calculat.html
- Calorie counter available at www.the caloriecounter.com
- Daily log and chart paper

Standards

Standard 12 – Biology – Applications of biology in environmental quality and in personal and community health.

Standard 20 – How to design, conduct and report research in biology.
Lesson and Activity

1. Teacher engages students in a discussion of calorie intake, exercise and how they affect weight gain.

2. Student chooses an exercise from the fitness website to perform each day and determines how many calories are used in a given time. A record is kept for each exercise.

3. Students also keep a record of what they eat and using the calorie counter website, determine how many calories they consume at the end of each day.

Homework

In a notebook, student compare charts or tables showing how many calories they consume each day and how many calories they burn off through exercise.

Assessment

Using chart paper, students create a double line graph to demonstrate how they compared their two sets of numbers. The graph will show them if they are burning up enough calories in a day to counter the number of calories they consume.

They can also use this information to predict their calorie intake for longer periods of time.