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Title: Contrasting Family and Children in Ben Franklin’s America with Family and Children Today
Objective: Students will examine how the concepts of family and children have changed since Ben Franklin’s time. Students will understand how the lives of children and their role within the family structure in Ben Franklin’s America differ from their own time.
Anticipatory Set: Brainstorm: What is a family? What is a child? Students participate in defining what these concepts mean in today’s American society.
Time Period: Two 42-minute periods
Activity:
1. Begin with Anticipatory Set.
2. Students will individually answer the personal family/child worksheet.
3. Students will discuss responses to the worksheet questions and develop characteristics of family life and the life of the child today.
4. Students will read for homework excerpts of Chapter 4: “The Invention of Childhood.”
5. Students will gather in small groups the following day to identify characteristics of childhood in Ben Franklin’s America as chronicled in Wolf’s As Various As Their Land.
6. Students will discuss their findings and develop a general list of family and childhood in Franklin’s America.
7. Closure.

Closure: Students will compare and contrast childhood today with childhood in Franklin’s America.
Homework: See activity and assessment.
Assessment: How is family and childhood today different from that in Ben Franklin’s America? Identify 3 differences and examine them in a 5 paragraph essay. Provide specific examples from Wolf’s As Various As Their Land.
Concepts of Children and Family

Directions: Answer the questions in full sentences directly on this paper.

1. How would you define family? What is family to you?
2. What is the function of family in our society?
3. How would you define a child? In general, but also consider age.
4. What is childhood? What are some characteristics of childhood today?
5. When does a child stop being a child?
6. What is the relationship between a child and the family?
7. Who takes care of children? Why?
8. What are the responsibilities of children in our society?