Benjamin Franklin Timeline of Events

1706  Born January 17, the ninth of eleven children born to Josiah and Abiah Franklin

1714 - 1715  Attends Boston’s South Grammar School for two years

1716  Works in his father’s candle-making shop

1718  Begins an apprenticeship in his brother James’s printing shop in Boston

1722  Begins writing a series of letters under the pseudonym “Silence Dogood”

1723  Runs away to Philadelphia, arriving October 6. Finds work in the printing shop of Samuel Keimer and lodging in the home of John Read, the father of his future wife Deborah Read

1724  Sails for England on November 5, continuing his training as a printer

1726  Returns to Philadelphia and works as clerk, bookkeeper, and shopkeeper for Thomas Denham

1727  Forms the Junto, a club for “self-improvement, study, mutual aid, and conviviality”

1728  Co-founds printing shop with Hugh Meredith

1729  Purchases The Pennsylvania Gazette, which over the course of 19 years becomes renowned for its humor, originality, and strong influence on public opinion

1730  Joins in common-law marriage with Deborah Read

1731  Establishes The Library Company of Philadelphia, the first lending library in America

1732  Deborah Read Franklin gives birth to a son, Francis Folger Franklin

1736  Four-year-old son Francis Folger Franklin dies of smallpox

1737  Begins service as postmaster of Philadelphia, continuing until 1753

1738 - 1739  Designs the Pennsylvania Fire-place, now known as the Franklin stove

1743  Deborah Read Franklin gives birth to Sarah (Sally) Franklin, the Franklins’ only daughter

1748  Retires from the printing business at the age of forty-two
Benjamin Franklin Timeline of Events (continued)

1749  Founds the Academy and College of Philadelphia, later renamed the University of Pennsylvania

1750  Designs the lightning rod to divert lightning from buildings during thunderstorms

1751  *Experiments and Observations on Electricity*, a collection of Franklin’s letters about his electrical experiments, published in London

  Co-founds the Pennsylvania Hospital, the colonies’ first public hospital

  Founds the Philadelphia Contributionship, the colonies’ first property insurance company

1752  Performs legendary kite and key experiment, confirming his theory that electricity existed in thunderclouds in the form of lightning

1753  Awarded the Royal Society of London’s Copley Medal for work in electricity

  Appointed joint deputy postmaster general of North America

  Awarded honorary degrees from Harvard and Yale

1754  Drafts the Albany Plan of Union, urging the colonies to form a united defense against threats from the French and their Native American allies

  Publishes in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* the “Join, or Die” cartoon, America’s first symbol of the united colonies

1756  Awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree from William and Mary College

1757  Appointed colonial agent to London. Lives and works in London for the majority of the next eighteen years

1758  *A Way to Wealth*, a collection of Franklin’s *Poor Richard’s* writings is published

1759  Awarded an honorary Doctor of Law degree from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland

1762  Invents the glass armonica

  Awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Oxford University, England

1766  Elected to Royal Society of Sciences

1769  Elected president of the American Philosophical Society

1771  Begins writing his *Autobiography*

1774  Deborah Read Franklin dies

1775  Arrives back in Philadelphia

  Elected the Pennsylvania delegate to the Second Continental Congress

1776  Serves on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence

  Appointed commissioner to the court of France and arrives in Paris on December 21
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>Helps negotiate and signs the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between America and France, securing critical support from the French in the form of loans, military supplies, and troops</td>
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<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Helps negotiate and signs Treaty of Paris, officially ending the Revolutionary War</td>
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<td>1785</td>
<td>Moves back to Philadelphia after his years of service in France</td>
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<td>1787</td>
<td>Elected president of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. Serves as delegate to the Constitutional Convention</td>
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<td>1790</td>
<td>Dies on April 17, 1790, at the age of eighty-four</td>
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