US / NH History (HI:5)
The study of New Hampshire and United States History is important in helping citizens understand and appreciate the legacy of our republic, and to develop the empathy and analytical skills needed to participate intelligently and responsibly in our ongoing democratic experiment. Historical study exposes students to the enduring themes and issues of our past and emboldens them to courageously and compassionately meet the contemporary challenges they will face as individuals in a state, a country and an interdependent world. Ultimately, the study of history will help students plan and implement responsible actions that support and enhance our collective values. An effective study of history must focus on broad themes, important concepts, major issues and significant movements, rather than a lengthy and fragmented list of people, places, events and other facts. The five standards below invite students to share in the excitement and relevance of the past and to envision a better future.


Activity:
Students will learn, understand, and appreciate the legacy that Benjamin Franklin left the colonial people and future generations of the United States. Using both primary and secondary sources in their research, they will create presentations highlighting the life and contributions Franklin bequeathed to this country and how those contributions still impact our lives today. Students will be divided into five groups in order to investigate the many faceted dimensions of Benjamin Franklin and his life. These groups will be: Benjamin Franklin the statesman, scientist; philanthropist; philosopher; and entrepreneur. Each group will be responsible for collaborating on a written composition and presentation of their research. Students will have a choice regarding the method of presentation, but each presentation must include a written paper which addresses one of the three NH state standards listed above, relative to their assigned topic area on Benjamin Franklin. The papers must include a bibliography and proper documentation. Their presentation choices could include, but are not limited to the following: multimedia; poster; artifact; timeline; dramatic expression; colonial newspaper; and diorama. Upon completion of this unit, the students will have a comprehensive understanding of this founding father and his heritage.
When students are in their respective groups, they should begin by brainstorming essential questions relative to their research topic. The teacher should facilitate this step and offer them hints to initiate their brainstorming questions.

For example, the statesman group may want to know: What did Ben do to promote unity in the colonies? What political titles did he have? Did he have a law background? What did he do to support the American Revolution? What did he do to increase the military protection of his own colony in the French-Indian War? How did he influence colonists to think about freedom?

The scientist group: What led or inspired Benjamin Franklin to study electricity? Was electricity the only scientific principle in which he was interested? Did he have other inventions, and if so, what were they? What led him to invent at all? Did he have a science background?

The philanthropist: Why did Ben feel a responsibility to help others? Was he a religious man? What did he do to make others' lives easier or better? How did he improve life in the colonies? the world? Can you connect any of his gifts to society today? How?

The philosopher: what was Ben’s view of life? Who was Silence Dogood and what was the significance of those letters? How did Poor Richard’s Almanac reflect his personal philosophy? What are some of the famous Franklin maxims and what do they mean? The entrepreneur: how old was Ben when he struck out on his own to make a life for himself? What was his primary career? How did he make the most of that career to become wealthy man? Old how was he when he retired from this career? What other things did he do to indicate that he was a creative and successful businessman? What endeavor brought him the most money in his life?

The following websites and resources will be posted for the students to locate primary and secondary sources:

Websites:
- [http://www.franklinpapers.org](http://www.franklinpapers.org)
- [http://www.franklinmaxims.org](http://www.franklinmaxims.org)
- [http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org) (past exhibits: Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World)
- [http://www.teachinghistory.org](http://www.teachinghistory.org) (Benjamin Franklin link)
- [http://www.benfranklin300.org](http://www.benfranklin300.org)
- [http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/franklin-home.html](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/franklin-home.html)
- [www.pbs.org/benfranklin/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin/index.html)
- [www2.lhric.org/pocantico/franklin/franklin.htm](http://www2.lhric.org/pocantico/franklin/franklin.htm)
Benjamin Franklin: Founding Father and Paragon of History
Lesson Plan for 6th Grade
by Jane Officer

- http://www.nps.gov/inde/Franklin_Court/Pages/kids.html
- http://www.antiquespectacles.com
- www.americanwriters.org/classroom/videolesson/franklin_vlp.asp

Books:


