NEH Lesson Plan

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“The Legacy of Benjamin Franklin”

Utah Core Standards
H.S. Standard 1 Students will expand their knowledge of pre-Reconstruction America. Objective 1: Examine the American colonial experience b. Examine the rise of American culture in the New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies. Objective 2: Investigate the development of the United States government, its institutions, and its politics. a. Identify the philosophies which influenced the development of the Constitution........b. Analyze the Constitution’s creation and impact on the new United States.

Enduring Understanding: Benjamin Franklin played a profound role in the creation of America and American ingenuity. His contributions still impact Americans and people worldwide. Students will know everybody can improve society in some way.

Colorado Core Standards
Kindergarten History Standard 1: Students develop and understanding of how people view, construct and interpret history. Concepts and Skills Students Master: Ask questions, share information and discuss ideas about the past.

Kindergarten Geography Standard 2: Examine places and regions and connections among them.
Concepts and Skills Students Master: People belong to different groups and live in different places around the world that can be found on a map or a globe.

**Objectives:**
1. Students will read and analyze historical documents.
2. Students will understand Franklin, his times, his accomplishments and how he is still relevant today.
3. Students will share their knowledge with elementary student by teaching them about Franklin.
4. Through kindergarten and high school student collaboration, a “common book” about Ben Franklin will be created.
5. Students will understand the chronology of Benjamin Franklin’s life in connection to the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution.

**Essentials Questions:**
1. What are Franklin most important contributions to society?
2. What does it take to make a difference in society?
3. How has your life been improved by Franklin’s contributions?
4. How can you make a difference in your community/world?
5. What will your legacy be?

**Anticipatory Set:**

Show a video clip. Any of the following would work depending on age group: clip about DaVinci, old commercial on you tube about a woman bringing home the bacon...frying it up in a pan, women of WWII, or any clip from a superhero movie (Spiderman, Batman, etc. that shows them doing it all)

**Discussion**
Ask student to express what they saw going in movie clip. What was the message? What does that mean to you? Do you know anyone who can “do it all”? Is it realistic? Perhaps/perhaps not. What about over the course of a lifetime? Can you think of an American/DaVinci type (renaissance man)?

**Teacher Presentation**
Show pictures of Franklin and start explaining the many contributions he made to society and the world. Talk about him in his day and how he got his start. Give the students a good background of the time period and his place in it. Get to a point of showing the following list of accomplishments for which Franklin was solely or partly responsible (Christy will be reading “Now and Ben” to her kindergarteners for this part). Kindergarten students will also watch “Benjamin Franklin: Still An American Icon (Windows Movie Maker presentation prepared for elementary).

1. First political cartoons in America
2. Created bifocals
3. Discovered true nature of electricity
4. Creation of the lightening rod
5. Invented the Long Arm device
6. Invented wooden flippers
7. Measured, charted, and publicized the Gulf Stream
8. Promoted eating citrus fruit to prevent scurvy
9. Invented the glass armonica
10. Designed the Franklin Stove
11. Invented the writing chair
12. Invented the library chair
13. Invented one rocking chair
14. Invented one chair that churned butter
15. Suggested using daylight savings time
16. Designed the first clock with a second hand
17. Invented the odometer
18. Helped organize the Library Company of Philadelphia
19. Helped organize the Pennsylvania Hospital
20. Helped organize the Post Office
21. Helped organize the Union Fire Company
22. Helped organize public sanitation
23. Helped promote independence
24. Helped create the Declaration of Independence
25. Helped create an alliance with France during Revolutionary War
26. Helped create the Constitution
27. Helped create Peace Treaty with England
28. Wrote Poor Richards Almanac
29. Created male intellectual club Junto
30. Took issue with Penn family tax exempt status

**High school Student Research**
Each high school student will be assigned one of Ben Franklins accomplishments listed above to research. Students must find a primary source document supporting the particular contribution. Students may use, but are not limited to the following website:

- www.TeachingFranklin.org
- www.librarycompany.org
- www.amphilsoc.org/
- www.benfranklin300.org
- www.English.udel.edu/lemay/franklin/

Once students find the document they will need to print a copy and complete a primary source document analysis worksheet, found at
www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheets.pdf. The students will then write a letter, of two to three sentences to tell a Kindergartener what Franklin discovered (Christy will provide a first name only class list,
delivered by Moffat to Tiffany’s high school class). For example: “Franklin discovered electricity using a kite in a lightening storm. We use electricity today to turn things on in our house like our stove or TV.” (Christy will also be teaching her students about Ben Franklins contributions so they will have a background). High school students will turn in document analysis and kindergarten letters to Tiffany for assessment. The letters for kindergarteners will quickly be mailed with Moffat (and of course, a picture of Moffat with Tiffany’s students) back to the Kindergarteners in Colorado Springs.

**Kindergarten Activity**
The most age appropriate letters/pictures will be shared with Kindergarteners. All letters will not need to be used because of discrepancy between huge high school class sizes and smaller kindergarten class size. (This is nice because it gives us some wiggle room). Kindergarteners will respond by drawing a picture of what they learned from the letter (and Christy’s scaffolding). Kindergarteners will have their pictures taken with Moffat, letters, and art and mailed back to Tiffany’s students. Kindergarteners will then complete a Ben Franklin primary source match with modern photographs of Moffat and their connecting primary source photograph.

**High School Culmination**
High school student will receive the kindergarteners art interpretation. In small groups (3) students will share their document analysis with other students (the knowledge they gained from research), the letter they wrote the kindergartner, and finally the picture response from the child. After about fifteen minutes of sharing in small groups, the best, analysis/letter/picture from each group will be presented to the whole class.

All documents, letters, pictures will be compiled in our “Ben Franklin Common Book.” Both kindergarteners and high school
students have just experienced “doing history” together. (Copies of common book can be made for anyone who would like one.)

**Conclusion**
At the end of the presentations, High School students will participate in a discussion about what they learned from this research/teach/share activity and answer the essential questions, with teacher direction as part of final class discussion. (Keeping in mind Franklin did these things over a lifetime). Get students to start thinking about how they can make a difference right now. Have them image a list being made at the end of their life what would they want it to say...how about at the end of high school. Examples may be, created a new club, worked on set of school play, went our of my way to treat people with kindness, etc. Ultimate culmination being an “everybody writes” essay assignment on one or two of the essential questions of their choice.

**Special Need Accommodations**
Less advanced students/readers: Topics (Franklin contributions) will be pre-designated, giving them the more readily available documents and documents easier to understand. Advanced students: Will be assigned topics that require stronger research and reading skills.