



Franklin

“Benjamin Franklin”

Reading Comprehension – Informational Passages

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer questions about the passage below.

Benjamin Franklin was born in 1706 in Boston, Massachusetts. He came from a big family. He had 16 brothers and sisters. When Benjamin was 15, his brother started the first Boston newspaper. It was called *The New England Courant*. He worked for the newspaper for a short time, but he was not happy. So, he went to Philadelphia and worked as a printer. In 1729, he bought a newspaper business. The newspaper was the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. He was very busy. In 1733, he started **publishing** *Poor Richard’s Almanac*. His pen name (the name he used as an author) was Richard Saunders. This book came out every year. Almanacs have information about weather and crops. They also have **wise** sayings. The wise saying “A penny saved is a penny earned” comes from *Poor Richard’s Almanac*.

Benjamin Franklin was also an inventor. In 1743 he invented a very good stove called the Franklin stove. He invented swim fins. He invented bifocal glasses. He also invented the first odometer. He **retired** from his newspaper **business** in 1749. He stopped working on it. Then he became busy with science.

Benjamin Franklin was also very interested in American politics. He helped Thomas Jefferson write the *Declaration of Independence*. In 1776, he and other people **signed** the *Declaration of Independence*. Franklin died on April 17, 1790. He was 84 years old.

Questions:

1) Which newspaper did Ben Franklin buy?

- A. *The New England Courant*
- B. *The New England Gazette*
- C. *Pennsylvania Courant*
- D. *Pennsylvania Gazette*

2) What was Ben Franklin’s pen name?

- A. Richard Franklin
- B. Richard Saunders
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Benjamin Saunders

3) He started publishing his almanac in...

- A. 1729.
- B. 1733.
- C. 1743.
- D. 1749.



4) What did Ben Franklin invent?

- A. Electricity
- B. Swim suits
- C. Bifocals
- D. Both B and C are correct.

5) What did Franklin write with Jefferson?

- A. *The Declaration of Independence*
- B. *The New England Courant*
- C. *Poor Richard’s Almanac*
- D. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*

Vocabulary:

1) **Publishing** means...

- A. printing for many people to read.
- B. selling in a large store.
- C. inventing things.
- D. giving advice.

2) **Wise** means...

- A. intelligent.
- B. sweet.
- C. kind.
- B. ridiculous.

3) What is another way to say **retired**?

- A. Earned
- B. Helped write
- C. Became busy
- D. Stopped working



4) What is a **business**?

- A. A service or trade which earns money
- B. A person who signs with others
- C. A workers’ group
- D. None of the above.

5) When Franklin **signed** the *Declaration*...

- A. he helped write it.
- B. he wrote his name on it.
- C. he wrote a wise saying in it.
- D. Both A and C are correct.