



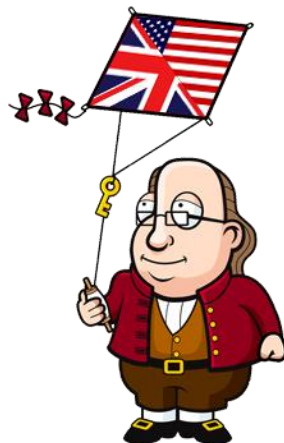
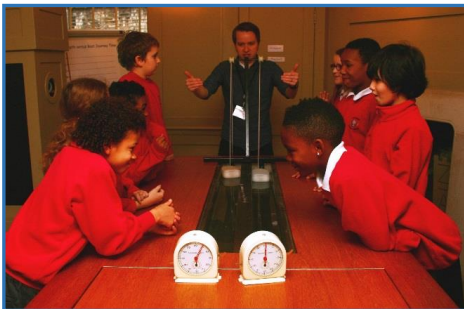
**BENJAMIN  
FRANKLIN  
HOUSE**

*36 Craven Street, London*

# Learning at Benjamin Franklin House: Summary for Teachers

*"The doors of wisdom are never shut"*

*- Benjamin Franklin*



Quality Badge awarded by



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Learning Outside the Classroom

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## Our Mission

At Benjamin Franklin House, the mission of our Education Programme is to:

- Raise awareness of and appreciation for the contributions Benjamin Franklin made in the fields of science, innovation, civic engagement and politics, while highlighting how we continue to benefit from many of his contributions today; and
- Foster a positive attitude to science, history and museums by providing pupils with the opportunity to take part in enjoyable, active, curricular learning experiences in our historic setting.

To that end, we aim to provide activities that support a range of learning needs and styles including kinaesthetic activities, independent and group work, role play, debate, note taking, and drawing.

## Where is Benjamin Franklin House?



**Benjamin Franklin House** is an 18<sup>th</sup> century terraced house located at 36 Craven Street, London, WC2N 5NF. Craven Street runs from the Strand to Northumberland Avenue and the Victoria Embankment, and is therefore just a few minutes' walk from both Charing Cross and Embankment stations. A large number of bus routes serve the Strand and Trafalgar Square.



Teachers are encouraged to come to the House prior to their class' visit, to review plans for the day with the Education Manager. A risk assessment can be provided, and teachers are welcome to conduct their own assessment in person.

A PowerPoint presentation containing practical information and photographs to help prepare pupils for their visit can also be provided on request.

As the House is quite small, we do not have a lunch room, however there are a number of parks and gardens close-by where packed lunches may be eaten, including Embankment Gardens and Whitehall Gardens.

## Why Visit Benjamin Franklin House?

Benjamin Franklin House offers a varied range of active, enjoyable learning experiences based around the life of Benjamin Franklin and family life in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, provided in an historic house which retains many of its original features.

Franklin was a pivotal figure in many fields and a genuine polymath – he was a printer, inventor, scientist, amateur philosopher, civic leader, diplomat, and Founding Father of the United States. As a ‘self-made man’ whose parents could only afford to send him to school for two years, we feel Franklin makes a fascinating and truly inspiring figure for children to learn about and learn from.

Just as important as his character are his achievements, which hold great relevance to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, making that connection between his world and that of your pupils. Franklin was actively involved in the study of **electricity**, and as an inventor he investigated different **properties of materials** and assessed their suitability for the task at hand. He had the best interests of his fellow citizens at heart, and instigated many **civic improvements** including: a proposal for the first modern library; Philadelphia’s first fire company; a university open to students of all socio-economic backgrounds; and other public services. He was present at a time when an anatomy school was being run out of the House, and this provides the basis for learning about **the human body** and the history of medicine.

Exploring the 18<sup>th</sup> century building in the company of Franklin’s friend ‘Polly Hewson’, children are encouraged to employ and develop their **historical language** and to observe and compare the House and family life with their own experiences. Today we even use a number of phrases which can be traced back to Franklin, such as “*An apple a day keeps the doctor away*”, “*snug as a bug in a rug*”, and “*early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise*”.

Taken together, Franklin and 36 Craven St provide a wonderful starting point and context for meaningful curricular learning across a range of subjects including **History, Science, English, Citizenship** and **Design & Technology**. The specific National Curriculum learning outcomes whose teaching is supported by each of our activities are listed on p5-6.

We are delighted to hold both a [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) and a [Sandford Award](#) from the Heritage Education Trust, which recognise the excellence of our programme. Sandford Award judge Caroline Marcus stated in her report that:

*“The programme clearly offered children the opportunity to participate in activities appealing to different learning styles, discuss open questions to test Franklin related inventions and ideas; learn about life in Georgian London and the advent of modern medicine and consider ways in which the past influences the present and shapes the future. The observed programme fulfilled the House’s aims to “enhance young people’s historical knowledge and satisfy scientific curiosity.”*

**Please note:** Background reading about Franklin and his time in London can be found in the full Education Pack, which will be provided separately.

## Learning Activities at Benjamin Franklin House

*“He always began with observation and experiment, and any explanation was solidly based on fact” –  
Charles Tanford, “Ben Franklin Stilled the Waves” 1989*

A visit to Benjamin Franklin House encompasses the following activities:

### 1. **Historical Experience**

In the company of Franklin’s ‘adopted daughter’ Polly Hewson, pupils explore the 18<sup>th</sup> century building, where Franklin’s London residence comes to life! This special journey removes the traditional distance between museum and child, bringing a sense of the innovation that characterised Franklin’s life in London.

Children gain a sense of the times in which he lived: insight into 18<sup>th</sup> century food, health, botany, and daily living in the basement kitchen, social and personal relationships on the ground floor, scientific work and political drama on the first. The visit gives children insight into the final moments when Britain and America were still one and what led to their separation.



#### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

**History:** Pupils should be taught to devise historically valid questions; develop the appropriate use of historical terms; a study of an aspect or theme in British history...beyond 1066; Local history study

**English:** Pupils should be taught to respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances

### 2. **Student Science Centre**

#### a) **Demonstration Room**

Pupils reproduce one of Franklin’s London-based scientific investigations and see how this led to amazing inventions and advancements through an interactive, multi-media experience. Before the visit, teachers choose one of following three alternative demonstrations:

- I. **The True Nature of Lightning** – a dramatic indoor lightning storm is created and strikes a model building. What kind of material did Franklin use to protect us, and why did it work?



#### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

**Science:** Working scientifically; Electricity; Properties & changes of materials

**English:** Spoken language

**History:** Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

- II. **Inventing the Glass Armonica** – Ben Franklin was one of the first Americans to invent a musical instrument, the Glass Armonica. How can you make sound from glass? And how does the process of invention work?





### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

Science: Working scientifically; Properties & changes of materials; Sound

English: Spoken language

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

- III. **Investigating Canals** - Franklin once observed something he couldn't explain - why boats in some canals seemed to travel faster than others. Was he right, and if so, why?



### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

Science: Working scientifically; Forces

English: Spoken language

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

#### b) **Discovery Room**

Pupils handle, observe and compare a number of replica and modern equivalents to objects which would have been used at 36 Craven Street in Franklin's time. They use these objects to help them answer questions about each object's use and purpose and play educational games on touch-screen computers.



### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

Science: Animals, including humans

Computing: Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

#### c) **Medical History Room**

Inspired by the anatomy school of Polly Hewson's husband William, pupils explore human anatomy using wearable bones and organs and our interactive exhibit "The Circulation Game".



### **Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2**

Science: Animals, including humans

English: Spoken language; Information retrieval

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

## **Pre- and post-visit**

Free, specially tailored resources to support pre-visit learning about Franklin and post-visit assessment can be provided separately on request, and include **Ben Franklin, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Superhero** – an informative, animated PowerPoint presentation styled as a comic book, with suggestions for accompanying activities.



## Outreach

To encourage children to discover more about Benjamin Franklin and the 18<sup>th</sup> century, while fostering a positive attitude to lifelong learning, we offer each school that visits the House a complimentary, follow-up outreach visit for a session delivered in-school which is intended to extend pupils' learning. We can offer the choice of the following three workshops:

### 1. Become an Inventor

Pupils take inspiration from the objects in *Benjamin Franklin's Travelling Suitcase*, a valise full of objects related to Franklin's innovations, and devise and design an invention of their own that would help others.



#### Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2



**Design & Technology:** Pupils should be taught to design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and the other users based on design criteria; generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, information and communication technology

### 2. Look At Me!

Ben Franklin was very popular and had his portrait painted many times, an art form that became increasingly popular during the 1700s. Pupils study portraits of important 18<sup>th</sup> century historical figures, including Franklin, looking for clues as to their identity and occupation. They then create a colourful collage self-portrait containing clues as to *their own* interests, and people and objects of personal importance.



#### Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2



**Art & Design:** Pupils should be taught to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials; learn about great artists, architects and designers in history

### 3. Franklin's Fables

Ben Franklin was a brilliant writer, who created famous aphorisms and wrote an autobiography which is widely studied today. Franklin's Fables uses illustrations created by the House's Illustrator in Residence, Kremena Dimitrova, and real life objects to inspire storytelling. Children write stories about Benjamin Franklin and his time at 36 Craven Street.



#### Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2



**English:** Pupils should be taught to plan their writing by discussing and recording ideas; draft and write by, in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot; read their own writing aloud to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear.

## How to Book your Visit

Our specially tailored programme of activities for schools is **only available on Tuesdays**. A visit to Benjamin Franklin House takes around 90 minutes, and we offer two choices of session times every Tuesday: 10.30am to 12pm, or 1pm to 2.30pm. The maximum number of pupils per session is 30.

To discuss a visit for your class(es), please call Benjamin Franklin House Education Manager on: +44 (0)207 839 2013. You can also contact us via email: [education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org](mailto:education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org).

To make a provisional booking, please complete our [online booking form](#).

### Cancellation policy

School visits to Benjamin Franklin House are **completely free of charge**, however if you must cancel your booking please let us know at least **14 days** before your visit to allow us to offer the session to other schools. If you must cancel your visit less than 14 days in advance, we will ask you to make a donation to Benjamin Franklin House (registered charity no. 276066), to help recover lost costs such as the fee for our actress and other staff time, as we cannot fill open sessions at such short notice. We thank you for your understanding.

### Thank you

Thank you for reading this Teachers' Summary and for your interest in visiting Benjamin Franklin House. We hope to welcome you to 36 Craven Street soon!

### Eleanor Hamblen

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