



A Rising People: Ben Franklin
and the Americans
June-July 2009
A Landmarks in American History and
Culture Workshop

For grades 3-6

Objectives:

Students will understand the figurative meaning behind Franklin's aphorisms in *The Way to Wealth*.

Students will compare and contrast Franklin's wisdom with current sayings.

Materials:

- Proverb cards, one per group (see following page)
- Large sheet of paper (11 x 17) per group
- Crayons and/or markers or colored pencils
- Example poster of one proverb
- One extra large t-shirt

Procedure:

1. Before the lesson, ask two students to help you. Have them put on the extra-large t-shirt so that both of their heads are coming out of the top. When the rest of the class sees them and asks what's happening, tell them that you were told that "two heads were better than one" so you were trying to make your class smarter. Begin a discussion on why that doesn't make sense, and what the proverb actually means. Introduce the vocabulary word "proverb" and explain that it means a saying which is giving advice, but isn't meant to be taken literally.
2. Explain that Benjamin Franklin was famous for his proverbs. Introduce one of them, "Little Strokes Fell Great Oaks" and ask the class what they think it means. Form a class description of the proverb, and then show them the poster you created. The poster should have a picture showing the literal meaning of the proverb, and on the second half the figurative meaning.





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3. Place the students in groups of four. Distribute one proverb card to each group. Have the students discuss the meaning of the proverb. When they have checked in with you and their meaning is reasonably accurate, give them a poster paper to begin drawing the literal and figurative meanings of the proverb. If a group is really struggling, provide some hints.
4. Have each group present their poster to the class.





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<p>Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise</p>	<p>Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship</p>
<p>There are no gains, without pains</p>	<p>He that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing</p>
<p>For want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost, and for want of a horse the rider was lost</p>	<p>God helps them that help themselves</p>





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