

## Our portrait gallery/ TI3/ CE niveau B2

Name	
Date of birth	
Place of birth	
Nationality	
Occupation	
Family and childhood	
Education	
Travel	
Marriage	
Famous for	
Date of death	

# Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

## Synopsis

Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston in 1706. His scientific pursuits included investigations into electricity, mathematics and mapmaking (*cartographie*). He helped draft (*élaborer*) the Declaration of Independence and the U.S Constitution, and negotiated the 1783 Treaty of Paris, which marked the end of the Revolutionary War.

## Early Life

Benjamin Franklin was born on January 17, 1706, in Boston. His father, Josiah Franklin, a soap and candle maker, had 17 children, seven with first wife, Anne Child, and 10 with second wife Abiah Folger. Benjamin was his 15th child and the last son.

Franklin furthered his education, lodging at the home of John Read, where he met and courted Read's daughter Deborah. In 1723 Franklin left for London and he was forced to find work at print shops there. Once employed, though, he was able to take full advantage of the city's pleasures, attending theater, mingling with the populace in coffee houses and continuing his lifelong passion for reading.

Franklin returned to Philadelphia in 1726 to find that Deborah Read had married. He was able to take Deborah Read as his common-law wife in 1730, after her husband disappeared after stealing a slave.

## Prominent Citizen

The 1740s saw Franklin expanding into entrepreneurship with invention of the Franklin stove (*fourneau*), and also into scientific pursuits. His abiding interest in electricity was ignited at this time, too. He conducted the famous kite-and-key experiment in 1752 after some of his theories on electricity were published in England the previous year.

## Public Service

In 1775, Franklin was elected to the Second Continental Congress and in 1776, he was one of five men to draft the Declaration of Independence.

## Successes and Failures

Franklin mapped the Gulf Stream, invented swim fins, the lightning rod and musical instruments and established colleges. His self-education earned him honorary degrees from Harvard, Yale, Oxford University in England.

## Death and Legacy

Benjamin Franklin died on April 17, 1790, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

<http://www.biography.com/people/benjamin-franklin-9301234#awesm=~oB3cwxLHe9sbFJ>