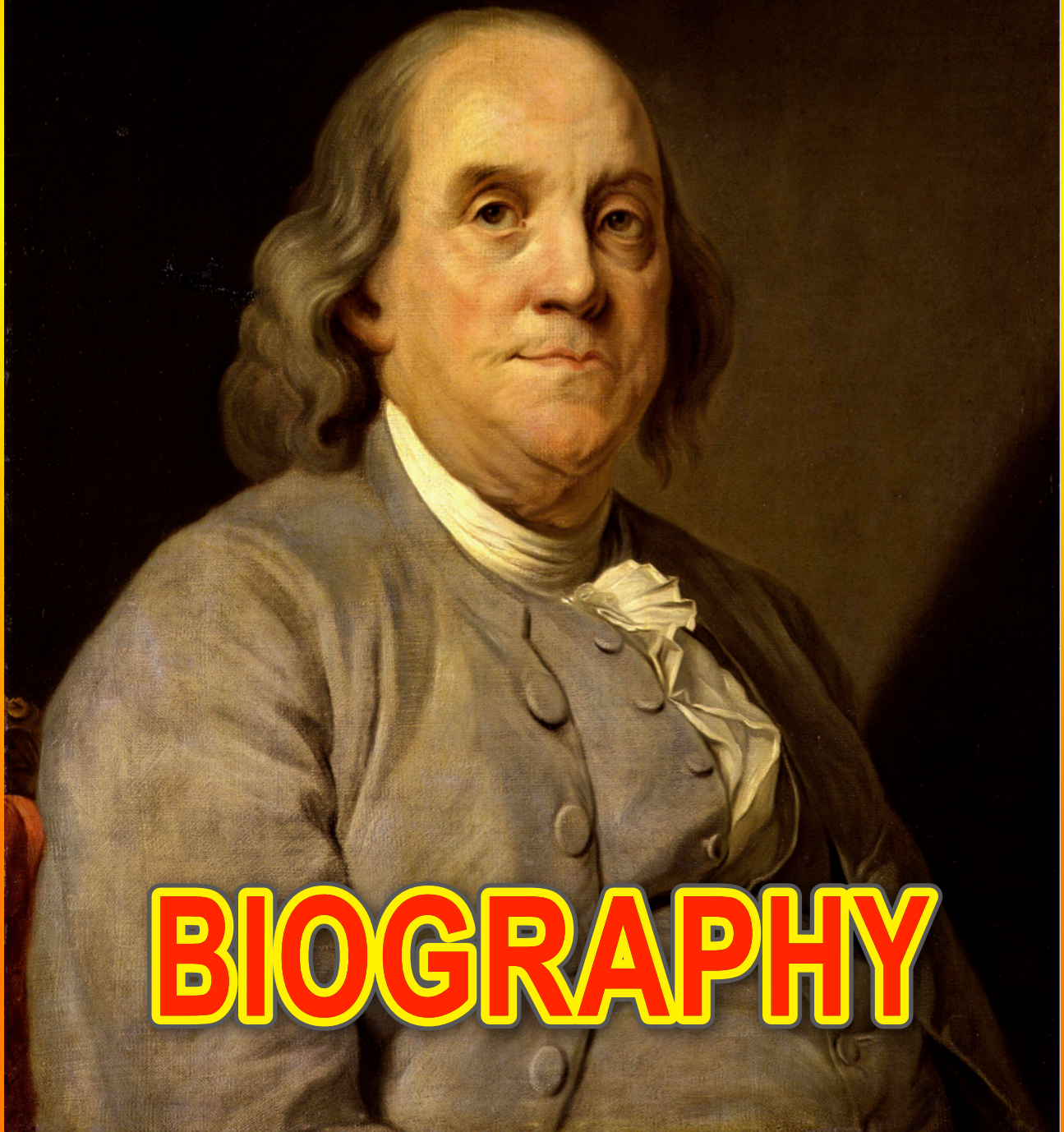


BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



BIOGRAPHY

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

In 1746, the famous scientist called Benjamin Franklin was living in Boston, Massachusetts. One day, he read about something quite new. It was all about making electricity. Franklin got very excited about this. So he quickly turned his home into a laboratory.

In the autumn of 1749, Franklin wrote that lightning and electricity seemed to be the same thing. Soon, he decided to try and prove this was true.

In 1750, Franklin began to think about how to protect buildings from being hit by lightning. Soon, he had an idea for a lightning rod. He wrote down that a metal pole should put on top of tall buildings, with a wire going from the pole to the ground. The lightning would strike the pole and run down the wire to the ground, instead of into the building.

In June of 1752, Franklin was in Philadelphia. He decided to use a kite to get close to storm clouds and a metal key to attract an electrical charge. He attached the key to the kite. Then he tied the kite string to a silk ribbon, to protect his hand from the electricity. The kite was struck by lightning. The electricity travelled down the string to the key. When Franklin touched the key, he got a shock and he knew that lightning was made up of electricity. He was lucky not to be killed!

In the autumn of 1752, Franklin wrote about how people could protect their homes from lightning and he put a lightning rod on his own house.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'electricity'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'electricity' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'electricity'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'electricity'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'electricity' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: excited	thrilled

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

In 1749, Franklin wrote that lightning and electricity seemed to be the same thing.

By June 1752, Franklin was in Philadelphia.

In 1750, Franklin began to think about how to protect people and buildings from being hit by lightning.

In the autumn of 1752, Franklin wrote about how people could protect their homes from lightning and he put a lightning rod on his own house.

In Philadelphia, Franklin experimented with lightning and a kite.

In 1746, Benjamin Franklin was living in Boston, Massachusetts.

Get to the facts

1 Where did Franklin live in 1746?

2 What did Franklin write about in 1749?

3 What is a lightning rod made of?

4 Which city was Franklin in when he tried his experiment with a kite?

5 What struck the kite?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

A kite in a storm

The year is 1752. You are in Philadelphia with Benjamin Franklin and are helping him with his experiments. It is a stormy night, just right for lightning... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'electricity'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'electricity' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'electricity'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'electricity'.
- e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'electricity' means.

Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – excited Synonym – thrilled

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

In 1749, Franklin wrote that lightning and electricity seemed to be the same thing.

By June 1752, Franklin was in Philadelphia.

In 1750, Franklin began to think about how to protect people and buildings from being hit by lightning.

In the autumn of 1752, Franklin wrote about how people could protect their homes from lightning and he put a lightning rod on his own house.

In Philadelphia, Franklin experimented with lightning and a kite.

In 1746, Benjamin Franklin was living in Boston, Massachusetts.

Get to the facts:

- 1 Where did Franklin live in 1746?
- 2 What did Franklin write about in 1749?
- 3 What is a lightning rod made of?
- 4 Which city was Franklin in when he tried his experiment with a kite?
- 5 What struck the kite?

Make a story...

The kite in a storm

The year is 1752. You are in Philadelphia with Benjamin Franklin and are helping him with his experiments. It is a stormy night, just right for lightning...
(now complete the story)

Benjamin Franklin

In 1746, a famous scientist called Benjamin Franklin was living in Boston, Massachusetts. One day, he read about something quite new. It was all about making electricity. Franklin got very excited about this. So he quickly turned his home into a laboratory.

In the autumn of 1749, Franklin wrote that lightning and electricity seemed to be the same thing. Soon, he decided to try and prove this was true.

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