



# The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin

*By James Cross Giblin, James Giblin*

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**The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin** By James Cross Giblin, James Giblin

Now available in paperback for the first time, James Cross Giblin and Michael Dooling tell the story of the man known as the "wisest American."

Benjamin Franklin was one of seventeen children, and the youngest of 10 sons. To help out with the family, he was put to work when he was 10 years old in his father's candle and soap-making shop. Ben hated making soap and candles. Since he was smart and a good speller and he loved to read, he later went to work in his brother's print shop as an apprentice. He read book after book, and soon began to write himself. By 18, he moved to Philadelphia where he eventually opened his own print shop. By age 28 he published "Poor Richard's Almanac," a best seller in Colonial America.

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## **The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin** By James Cross Giblin, James Giblin Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

Grade 3-6-In a concise, readable style, this biography presents a great deal of information about a key figure in American history. Like Jean Fritz's *What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?* (Putnam, 1976), the book does not romanticize or sentimentalize Franklin's genius or his contributions. Giblin includes the challenges Franklin faced in establishing himself in business, his falling out with his son when they took different sides in the Revolutionary War, and the illnesses he suffered throughout his later years, and balances them with the man's successes in publishing, his inventions, and his diplomatic service. Dooling's realistic full-color, full-page paintings and spot sketches capture not only Franklin, his family, and colleagues, but also reveal much about life in the Colonies and England during this period. Concluding informational pages include a chronology of Franklin's life, a discussion of his inventions, a page of sayings from *Poor Richard's Almanack*, descriptions of historical sites associated with Franklin, and notes on sources used by both the biographer and the illustrator. These additions enrich and expand on the text. A balanced biography that belongs in all collections.

*Barbara Chatton, College of Education, University of Wyoming, Laramie*

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From [Booklist](#)

Following the format of his picture-book biographies of George Washington (1992) and Thomas Jefferson (1994), Giblin, ably aided by artist Michael Dooling, presents the life of Benjamin Franklin--and an amazing life it was. Apprenticed to his brother as a printer, Franklin was soon running his own business and writing his own books, including the popular *Poor Richard's Almanack*. When Franklin became wealthy enough to retire, his life was just beginning. He indulged himself in his passion for science, worked for public improvements, such as libraries and hospitals, and, of course, became one of the nation's founding fathers as he tirelessly devoting himself to the affairs of a fledgling nation. Giblin's writing is lively, and he wisely uses the story of Franklin's estrangement from his only living son, a Royalist, to heighten dramatic tension. Dooling provides both expertly executed paintings and simple line drawings to bring Franklin's story close to today's readers. An especially useful touch is the wealth of back matter. Besides the expected time line and narrative bibliography, there is a page about Franklin's inventions, another with sayings from *Poor Richard's Almanack*, a list of historic sites associated with Franklin, and an informative illustrator's note. More than enough material for report writers but an intriguing offering for biography lovers as well. *Ilene Cooper*

From Kirkus Reviews

Giblin and Dooling continue their fine collaboration on biographies of the founding fathers (George Washington, 1992, etc.) with this penetrating account of the life of Franklin. Covered is the tale of the gifted diplomat who, at 81 and ill, was instrumental in the adoption of the Constitution. A couple of years later, his health worsening, Franklin agreed to preside over a group urging the end of slavery, a petition that failed. At his death in 1790, Franklin was 84; it will be plain to readers that he had served his country well, while working at the writing and printing of *Poor Richard's Almanack*, the founding of schools, libraries, and hospitals, and inventing the many useful objects for which he is known. This biography is remarkable for its readable, interesting, and yet strictly reportorial tone, which results nonetheless in bringing Franklin to vibrant life. Dooling's oil illustrations, as well as his sketches of the important figures who surrounded Franklin, extend the book's accessibility and compound its readability. (chronology, sources, bibliography, index) (Biography. 8-12) -- Copyright ©2000, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Anna Brooks:**

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