

Ben and Me

by Robert Lawson

Classroom Favorites



Teacher's Guide by Elanna Grover

A Perma-Bound Production

Note to the Teacher: This guide is not intended to be followed exactly. Feel free to pick and choose among the suggested activities based on the needs and interests of your particular group. You are encouraged to make adaptations, or to supplement the guide with activities of your own creation. Page references are followed by a T, M, or B, indicating the top, middle, or bottom of the page. The vocabulary words that will be tested are marked with an asterisk.

Objectives

1. Students will have opportunities to recall details, make interpretations, read critically, and respond creatively to the novel.
2. Students will expand their vocabulary through the use of context clues, class discussion, and word games and activities.
3. Students will have opportunities for a variety of writing experiences.
4. Students will gain experience in locating information in the library.

Introductory Activities

1. Read aloud a good biography of Benjamin Franklin before starting *Ben and Me*. A favorite is Clara Ingram Judson's Benjamin Franklin. Another good biography that is shorter and less detailed is Jean Fritz's What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?
2. Read aloud the foreword to *Ben and Me* and use this information along with the information on the front cover to predict what this book will be like.

Ongoing Activities

1. Discuss the difference between fiction and non-fiction and, at the end of the first chapter, ask students to decide whether *Ben and Me* should be classified as fiction or non-fiction. Make a chart with the headings Fact and Fiction. Using the information from the biography of Franklin that you have read aloud, list the main events of each chapter under the appropriate heading.

2. On page 8 Ben Franklin is described as a scientist, inventor, printer, editor, author, soldier, statesman, and philosopher. Make a chart with these headings across the top. At the end of each chapter, list Ben's (and Amos's) activities under the appropriate columns.

Chapter 1 I, Amos

Synopsis: Amos, the mouse, leaves his starving family on a cold winter night to make his own way in the world, and arrives at the home of Benjamin Franklin which is almost as cold as the outdoors. However, he spies Ben, wearing a fur cap with a hole in it, and manages to slip into this warm, furry nest unnoticed.

Word Study: See how quickly you can find the following words. You may want to divide the class into teams to compete.

On p.3T, find a word that means mourned. (lamented)

On p.3M, find a word that means stories. (accounts)

On p.4M, find two words that mean certainly. (undoubtedly: undeniably)

On p.4B, find a word that means a room in a church. (vestry)

On p.5T, find a word that means financially well-off. (prosperous)

On p.5T, find a word that means hardness. (severity)

On p.6T, find a word that means mentally confused. (delirious)

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE List three personality traits of Amos and give examples from this chapter that show how Amos revealed these traits.
2. CRITICAL/CREATIVE Amos went past one room where there was snoring. Who do you think was in this room? Why do you think Amos chose the room where he heard sneezing rather than the one where there was snoring?

Activities:

1. Try writing with a quill pen. (A medium-sized feather cut at about a 45 degree angle works well.)

2. Act out the scene on page 7-8T where Ben was trying to write.

Chapter 2 We Invent the Franklin Stove

Synopsis: The next morning Amos makes Ben's acquaintance and gives him an idea for a more efficient fireplace by telling him how his father used to put a hot chestnut in the middle of the room so that all of the mice could gather around it. Ben sets to work and builds the first Franklin stove.

Word Study: ember (p.11T); warming pans (p.12B); flatirons (p.12B); anvil (p.13T); andirons (p.13M); kindling (p.15B); drew (p.15B); sharp (p.15B). Find pictures of a warming pan, flatiron, anvil, and andirons. Show these pictures to the class and discuss how each of these items was used in Ben Franklin's time.

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE Ben Franklin is known for his famous sayings. What do you think *Waste not, want not* means? (p.11T) What does this saying have to do with Ben's discussion with Amos about the fire?
2. LITERAL Inventors usually have some problems to solve once they get the general idea for their invention. What problems did Ben have to solve with the Franklin stove?
3. INTERPRETIVE How did Robert Lawson's pictures help you to understand how the Franklin stove works?

Activities:

1. Taste hot chestnuts.
2. Use the books Weird and Wacky Inventions and/or Guess Again both by Jim Murphy. See how well your students do at guessing the purpose of some of the inventions in these books. Then let students design their own inventions and make a small working model or a drawing explaining how their invention works.

Chapter 3 The Bargain

Synopsis: Amos finds Ben writing an account in which he takes all of the credit for the invention of the Franklin stove. Amos makes a bargain with Ben, agreeing to live with him and give him aid and advice for a biweekly delivery of food to his family at the church. Amos takes up residence in the fur cap and makes some improvements in it such as a compartment for food and a peephole.

Word Study: flourishes (p.17M); propose (p.18M); *maxims (p.18M); regular as clockwork (p.19B); basking (p.19B); fortunes had changed (p.19B); contrive (p.20M); compartment (p.20M); congested (p.20B); wits about him (p.20B); ventured (p.22T); inclement (p.22M); doffing (p.22B). Divide the class into partners and assign each pair one of the vocabulary words. Each pair should perform a brief one-half to one minute skit that shows the meaning of the vocabulary word they

have been assigned. The rest of the class should try to guess which word is being acted out.

Discussion Questions:

1. CRITICAL Do you think it was important for Amos and Ben to put their agreement in writing? What do you think would happen if they had just had a verbal agreement?
2. CREATIVE Design some new improvements for Amos's home in Ben's fur cap.

Activity: The Agreement between Ben and Amos (p.18B-19M) contains many legal phrases and is difficult to understand. With the help of a dictionary rewrite this agreement in simple everyday language.

Chapter 4 Swimming

Synopsis: One day while Ben is swimming (one of his favorite pastimes), and Amos is waiting on the bank in the fur cap, a dog comes along, grabs the hat and trots off, but not before Amos manages to slip out of the hat and up a tree. Ben frantically pursues the dog, thinking Amos is still in the hat. While he is gone, two country yokels come along, discover his clothes, and presume he must have drowned. They take the clothes back to town as proof of Ben's demise. When Ben returns, he is met by a great crowd of people from town.

Word Study: unsanitary (p.23M); barbarous (p.23M); secluded (p.23B); donned (p.24T); disported (p.24T); prey (p.24T); contract (p.24M); crotch (p.25T); no avail (p.25B); antics (p.25B); hotly (p.26T); pursued (p.26T); disregard (p.26T); ill-clad (p.26T); ludicrous (p.27T); apparition (p.27T); *prominent (p.27B); milling (p.28B); throng (p.28B); garbed (p.30T); dependency (p.30T); disheveled (p.30M). Find or draw a picture that shows the meaning of two of the words for this chapter. See if your classmates can guess which words your pictures represent.

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE How did Ben show his concern for Amos? How did he fail to show concern?
2. CREATIVE What could Ben have done to insure Amos's safety while he was swimming?

Activity: Act out the scene where Ben meets the crowd from Philadelphia (p.27M-p.30B) Find or make a mouse puppet to play the part of Amos.

Chapter 5 We Do Some Printing

Synopsis: Amos visits the printing shop with Ben and makes some alterations to a type form for Poor Richard's Almanack, substituting "Amos says" for "Poor Richard says" in some of the maxims and also making changes in the Tide Table. Ben is later visited by an angry mob of shipmasters whose ships have all gone aground. Ben, however, saves his skin by convincing

them that the Almanac is a forgery printed by one of his rivals, apparently someone named Amos.

Word Study: aught (p.32M); insomnia (p.32M); delete (p.33T); leisure (p.33T); proofs (p.33M); type-forms (p.33B); *odious (p.33B); alterations (p.34T); vanity (p.34T); aground (p.35T); divers (p.36M); scurrilous (p.36B); counterfeit (p.36B); contemptible (p.37T); hoax (p.37T); perpetrated (p.37T); discredit (p.37T). Choose five of the vocabulary words. Write a question which could be answered with each of these words. Have students share their questions so that the rest of the class can guess the answers. (example: What do we call the time that is left when our work is finished?—leisure)

Discussion Questions:

1. **CRITICAL** Amos doesn't like Ben's maxims. Do you think these maxims are worthwhile? Why or why not?
2. **CRITICAL** Amos was trying to help Ben when he made changes in the almanac. Do you think this excuses his actions?
3. **CREATIVE** Amos hid for two days after the Almanac incident. What do you think would have happened if he had not hidden?

Activities:

1. Obtain a copy of Ben Franklin's Almanack. Compare it to the almanacs of today. Why do you think there are so many differences? (1733 Poor Richard's Almanack A Facsimile was published by Philip, H.&A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation located at 2010 Delancey Place Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1977.)
2. Do Activity Sheet #1: Choose your favorite maxims from Activity Sheet #1 and use them along with real objects, pictures, abstract shapes, etc. to create a mobile of Ben Franklin's Famous Sayings. A coat hanger makes a good base for a mobile, but feel free to use your own imagination.

Chapter 6 Electricity

Synopsis: Ben becomes interested in electricity and spends hours with some apparatus which produces it. He arranges a demonstration for the prominent people of Philadelphia. Amos helps by "correcting" the way some of the wires are connected, resulting in a shock to the governor.

Word Study: lenient (p.39T); beset (p.39B); derived (p.40M); convulsive (p.40M); contraction (p.40M); bidding (p.41T); cumbered (p.43T); *apparatus (p.43M); mar (p.44M); rectify (p.44B); apprentice (p.45M); inadvertently (p.46M); enveloped (p.46M). Make up your own game or activity using the vocabulary words from this chapter.

Discussion Questions:

1. **INTERPRETIVE/CRITICAL** Ben and Amos have different feelings about electricity. Compare their feelings and tell why you think each feels the way he

does. If you had been there, would your feelings have been more like Ben's or more like Amos's? Why?

2. **INTERPRETIVE** Ben said that Amos had no vision (p.40B). What do you think he meant by this? Think of three examples of people who had vision. Tell why you think each one had this quality.
3. **INTERPRETIVE** Do you think that Amos learned anything from the incident with the almanac? Support your opinion with examples from the story.

Activities:

1. Do some research to find out more about electricity and how it works. Try to duplicate some of Ben's experiments. Check with an adult to be sure your experiments are safe before you try them.

Chapter 7 The Lightning Rod

Synopsis: Ben becomes convinced that lightning is electricity. He sets out to prove it by putting iron lightning rods on the roof of his house and connecting them by wires to his apparatus. However, when lightning actually strikes, he is so frightened that he hides under the covers.

Word Study: regarded (p.49T); unseemly (p.50T); brown study (p.50T); notion (p.50B); disclosed (p.51T); ridgepole (p.51M); observation (p.51M); conducting (p.51B); nature (p.51B); resigned (p.52T); retire (p.52T); succession (p.52B); phosphorous (p.53T); emerged (p.53M); descended (p.53M); befallen (p.53B); spectacle (p.53B); peered (p.54T); sheepishly (p.54T); *modesty (p.54B). Play charades using these vocabulary words. The person who answers must read the sentence from the book which contains the word.

Discussion Questions:

1. **INTERPRETIVE** Do you think Ben was a coward? Give examples from the book to support your opinion.
2. **CRITICAL** Make a list of facts we know about electricity. Which of these facts were known in Ben Franklin's time? Mark them with a star.

Activity: Do some research to find out why the glass jar protected Amos from the lightning.

Chapter 8 That Kite

Synopsis: Ben, still determined to prove that lightning is electricity, sends Amos up in a kite. Amos enjoys kite flying and Ben has built a small platform on the kite for him. Ben has also designed a little car which attaches to the kite string by a pulley and allows Amos to ride down to the ground. One day Amos wakes from a peaceful nap on his kite platform and realizes that a storm is coming up. When he looks for his car, he sees that Ben has removed it and intends to leave him up in the kite during the storm. This causes a serious rift in their relationship and Amos returns to the vestry to live. Ben comes to the vestry and persuades Amos to return by adding a clause to their agreement promising to stop all electrical

experiments. Ben is getting ready to sail for England to try to plead the American cause before the King and Parliament, and Amos agrees to accompany him. However, when Amos arrives at the ship, he sees that Ben has fastened lightning rods to the masts and refuses to sail.

Word Study: subdued (p.56T); preyed upon his mind (p.56B); rift (p.56B); treacherous (p.57T); lashed (p.57T); retreat (p.57T); contrived (p.67B); pulley (p.57B); idyllic (p.58T); diversions (p.58T); proposal (p.59T); negative (p.59T); mania (p.59T); indulged (p.59M); preliminary (p.59M); gusts (p.59M); incessant (p.59B); frail (p.61T); rendered (p.61B); pastimes (p.63T); case (p.63M); *grievances (p.63M); facility (p.63B); desertion (p.64M); newfangled (p.65T). Using graph paper, make up a crossword puzzle using these and other words from the first half of the book. Trade with a friend and try to work each other's puzzles.

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE/CRITICAL What do you think made Ben trick Amos into staying up in the kite during the storm? Do you think his reasons justified his actions? Why or why not?
2. LITERAL/INTERPRETIVE Think of some of the things that both Ben and Amos have done to ruin their friendship. Compare each of their reactions when they have been disappointed by the other.
3. CRITICAL You are a judge who has been asked to hear the case of Ben Franklin vs. Amos Mouse. Each claims that the other has broken his side of their legal agreement. Give the arguments each side would use and tell how you would judge the case and why.

Activity: Try to design a light weight car with a sail that can go up and down a kite string. Attach your car to a kite and take it out on a windy day to see if you can get it to actually work.

Chapter 9 War!

Synopsis: Life seems very quiet for Amos at the vestry, and he is glad to hear that Ben is coming home. They make up their quarrel, and Amos accompanies Ben to his many committee meetings. Amos meets Red, a mouse who has traveled to Philadelphia in Thomas Jefferson's saddlebag, at one of these committee meetings. Red writes a manifesto listing the grievances of mice against man, and Amos shows it to Ben, who recopies it (changing mouse to man wherever it occurs) and takes it to the committee, where it is adopted as the Declaration of Independence.

Word Study: outrages (p.66B); catastrophes (p.67M); patron (p.68T); forays (p.68T); radical (p.68T); tendencies (p.68T); firebrand (p.68T); eloquence (p.68M); manifesto (p.68B); orated (p.69B). It is easier to remember the meaning of new words if you relate them to a personal experience. Choose five of the vocabulary words and give a personal example which relates to each one. (Example: Breaking my things and snooping in my

room are just two of the many outrages my brother has committed against me.)

Discussion Questions:

1. CRITICAL Would you like to have Red for your best friend? Why or why not?
2. CRITICAL Suppose Amos had told the world that the Declaration of Independence had been written by Red. What consequences would there be?

Activity: Write a short skit showing the reunion between Ben and Amos and how they make up after their quarrel. Act out your skit for the rest of the class.

Chapter 10 La Belle France

Synopsis: George Washington asks Ben to go abroad to get financial aid for the colonies. At Amos's suggestion, it is agreed that Ben will sail for France. Amos is seasick during the voyage, but Ben spends his time at sea working out a new way to set the sails.

Word Study: Repeat the activity that was done with the vocabulary words in Chapter 1, only this time the students must write their own clues. Each student should find five words from this chapter and write clues for them. Make sure that all of the following words have been discussed in some manner: cast down (p.72T); armed (p.73M); sloop (p.73M); despise (p.74T); vision (p.75B).

Discussion Questions:

1. CRITICAL Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of asking a foreign country for aid. Do you think it was a wise decision for the colonies to send Ben to France?
2. LITERAL/CREATIVE What are some of Amos's reasons for choosing to go to France to get aid for the colonies? Make a list of the criteria that should have been considered in making the decision of where to go for aid.

Activity: Amos convinced Ben that they should go to France to get aid for the colonies. If you were Amos, what country would you want to visit? What arguments would you use to try to get Ben to agree with your choice? Make a poster "selling" the attractions of the country you have chosen.

Chapter 11 At Court

Synopsis: Ben becomes a celebrity in France, but Amos is becoming tired of all the socializing. Amos meets Sophia, a mouse whose husband has been exiled to America and whose children are held captive at the French court. Amos pledges to rescue her children and reunite her with her husband.

Word Study: unaccountable (p.77T); thwart (p.78T); diplomat (p.78T); quaint (p.78M); rapsallion (p.79T); converse (p.80B); revelation (p.80B); villainous (p.81T); intrigues (p.81T); persecution (p.81T); foul (p.81T);

conspiracy (p.81T); *exiled (p.81M); reunited (p.81M); refuge (p.81M); confidante (p.81B); Republican (p.82B); sympathies (p.82B); injustices (p.82B); pampered (p.82B); aristocrats (p.82B); dissolute (p.82B); bereft (p.83B). Use at least two of these words in conversation with your family this evening. Be ready tomorrow to report how you used the words and what response you got from your family.

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE Compare Ben's success as a diplomat in England and in France. How can you account for the difference?
2. CREATIVE What plan would you devise for Amos to rescue Sophia's children?

Activity: This story is told by Amos the mouse. Suppose the book had been written by a human friend of Ben's or by Ben himself. How would this have changed the story? Choose one incident from the book and rewrite it from another person's (or animal's) point of view.

Chapter 12 Plans

Synopsis: Ben and Amos receive word that the war has been won, but Ben is reluctant to go home. Thomas Jefferson is coming to France as the new American ambassador, and Amos is thrilled to find that Red has come with him. Together they plan an attack on the white mice of the French court for the purpose of rescuing Sophia's children.

Note: The vocabulary load in the next two chapters is much heavier than in the rest of the book, so, depending on the ability of your group, you may want to read these chapters aloud rather than asking your students to read them on their own.

Word Study: reflection (p.84M); transport (p.85T); surrender (p.85T); gallant (p.85T); indisposed (p.85M); gout (p.85M); trying (p.85M); inclination (p.85B); depart (p.85B); belle (p.86T); trousseau (p.86T); infested (p.86T); antics (p.86M); peasant (p.86M); *uncouth (p.86B); affray (p.86B); erratic temperaments (p.87T); reliance (p.87T); resumed (p.88T); foppish (p.88T); recounted (p.88M); patricians (p.88B); oppressors (p.88B); despots (p.88B); fops (p.89T); prone (p.89M); chafed (p.89B); tyranny (p.89B); mincing (p.89B); preen (p.90T); waistcoat (p.90M); popinjays (p.90B); cultivate (p.90B). Put words from this chapter into categories of your choosing. Be ready to justify why each word belongs in the category where you have placed it.

Discussion Questions:

1. INTERPRETIVE/CREATIVE Why do you think Amos didn't tell Ben about Sophia's problems? What do you think Ben would have done if he had known?
2. CRITICAL Compare your plan (see Discussion Question #2 in Chapter 11) for rescuing Sophia's children to Amos's and Red's plan. Which plan do you think has the best chance of succeeding? Why?

Activity: Read to the class this excerpt from Annette H. Weston's article "Robert Lawson: Author and Illustrator" in Elementary English (January 1970) telling how Lawson came to write Ben and Me:

Mr. Lawson told a sales conference at Little, Brown & Co. in 1941 that when it had been suggested that a book about some historical character and his pet might be a good idea, he "made a list of famous people and clawed it over and then I stewed over it for several weeks and then settled more or less on Ben Franklin. He'd always struck me as a pretty pompous, self-satisfied old scoundrel, but the pet seemed to be the stumbling block. So I thought that over for several weeks and then one day as I was looking at that portrait of Franklin in his fur cap and that dirty looking old fur-collared dressing gown and thinking about how he must have smelled, he didn't believe much in bathing, you know, except in summer, and my wife just happened to say, 'That fur cap certainly is an awful looking rat's nest.' Well, that was just what we needed. If it was a rat's nest, why not a mouse's? So Amos suddenly took form. The origin of the name is simple. Amos—a mouse."

Find out more about Robert Lawson at the library. What other books has he written or illustrated. Survey the class to see who has read any of his other books and what they thought about them.

Chapter 13 The Battle of Versailles

Synopsis: The attack is carried out on the night of a ball at the French court. Just as Ben approaches the throne to make his bow, scores of mice come scurrying from his clothing. Many of the peasant mice desert when they see the rich food, but the rats from John Paul Jones' ship arrive in time to turn the tide of battle. And so, Sophia's children are finally rescued, although Ben is in disgrace.

Word Study: disheveled (p.91M); turmoil (p.92T); vengeance (p.92T); restrain (p.92T); ardor (p.92T); cudgel (p.92M); Providence (p.92B); dynamic (p.92B); poise (p.92B); exceeded (p.93M); beheld (p.93M); surmounting (p.93M); bowsprit (p.93M); motley (p.95M); scythes (p.95M); crude (p.95M); watch-fob (p.95B); opulent (p.96M); cohort (p.96M); suppressed (p.96M); regiment (p.97M); courtiers (p.97B); rallied (p.100T); fray (p.100T); proletariat (p.100T); lavish (p.100T); fickle (p.100T); demolishing (p.100M); *intrepid (p.100M); tide was turning (p.100M); reinforce (p.100B); conflict (p.100B). Turn to page 100. Rewrite this page substituting other words for the difficult vocabulary words, so that a younger child could understand the description. (Example: "At the first sight of the *lavish* refreshments" would be changed to "At the first sight of the *many wonderful* refreshments.")

Discussion Questions:

1. CRITICAL Do you think it was right for so many hundreds of mice to risk their lives just to save seven children? Give reasons for your opinion.

2. **CREATIVE** Try to think of a non-violent way that the children could have been saved.
3. **LITERAL/INTERPRETIVE** What effect did the Battle of Versailles have on Ben? Do you think Amos took this into account when he made his plans? Do you think Amos would have or should have changed his plans if he had known how Ben would be affected?

Activity: Draw a map of the French Court showing the action of the battle between the white mice of the court and Amos's troops.

Chapter 14 Home

Synopsis: Ben and Amos sail for home taking Sophia and her children with them. When they arrive in Philadelphia, Ben is greeted as a returning hero, and Sophia is reunited with her husband. Amos realizes that he is ready to settle down to a quiet life and that he and Ben are getting old.

Word Study: *downcast (p.105T); snubbed (p.105T); delegations (p.105B); addresses (p.105B); prospect (p.106T); meandered (p.107T); frivolous (p.107M); staid (p.107M); succumbed (p.107B); sprightly (p.108T). Write the vocabulary words at the top of your paper. Then write a sentence for each word, only leave a blank instead of writing the word. Make an answer key on the back of the paper. Trade papers and see if one of your classmates can fill in the blanks correctly.

Discussion Questions:

1. **INTERPRETIVE** Describe the relationship between Amos and Sophia. How do you think each feels towards the other?
2. **CRITICAL** List all the reasons that Ben should leave France. Why do you think he is reluctant to leave?
3. **CREATIVE** Suppose that Sophia were unable to find her husband once she arrived in America. List all the possible consequences of this happening.

Activity: Sophia had to leave her old home in Madame Brillon's headress behind in France. Design a new home for Sophia and her children now that they are aboard ship. Make a drawing of this home and include as many modern conveniences as possible.

Chapter 15 Happy Birthday

Synopsis: Amos plans a celebration for Ben's eighty-first birthday. Amos's and Sophia's families all have presents for Ben and the grand finale is a new beaver hat which Amos presents to Ben. Amos explains that he's ready to retire as Ben's advisor and tells Ben he is old enough to get along on his own now.

Word Study: innumerable (p.110T); twittering (p.111T); gusto (p.111M); Minuet (p.112B). Reread the paragraph where each of these words occurs. Use the context to try to figure out the meaning of each word. Be ready to explain what clues you got from the rest of the paragraph. Which words, if any, could not be figured out from the context?

Discussion Questions:

1. **INTERPRETIVE** Ben was 81 when the book ended. Look back to the beginning of the story when Amos first met Ben. Use information from a biography of Franklin, along with information from Ben and Me, to figure out how many years Ben and Amos have been together.
2. **INTERPRETIVE** Amos says that he was bored with Ben's activities. (p.110T) Do you think that Ben suspected that this was why Amos got him the new hat? Support your opinion with examples from the book.
3. **CRITICAL** Suppose you could interview Benjamin Franklin about his life. List three questions that you would want to ask him.

Activities:

1. Plan a perfect birthday party for yourself. Who would you invite? What refreshments would you have? What gifts would you receive? What activities would you have to entertain your guests?
2. Read aloud the poem "Benjamin Franklin" from Time for Poetry or The Arbuthnot Anthology by May Hill Arbuthnot. This anthology also has poems about George Washington and Thomas Jefferson which you may want to share. Ask each student to find another poem that relates to the story in some way.

Culminating Activities

1. Do Activity Sheet #2 as a review of the vocabulary words from the book. All of the words that will be tested are used in this activity.
2. Robert Lawson has written two other books in the same format as Ben and Me. Mr. Revere and I is the story of Paul Revere as told by his horse, and Captain Kidd's Cat describes the life of the famous pirate as seen through the eyes of his cat. Choose another famous person and write an anecdote about their life as it would be told by an animal friend.
3. Look through the book at Robert Lawson's illustrations. What differences do they make to the book? How would you have felt about the book if it had not had any illustrations? Are there any additional scenes that you wish Robert Lawson had illustrated?
4. Choose one of the characters in another book or story you have read recently. Suppose Amos, the mouse, had been the secret advisor of this character. Now choose an incident that this character was involved in. Think about how Amos's presence would have changed that incident. Rewrite the incident including Amos as one of the characters, or plan and perform a short skit in which you act out the incident you have chosen.
5. Check with your local library or videotape store to see if you can borrow or rent a tape of Walt Disney's film of Ben and Me. After viewing the film, compare it to the book. Decide whether you like the book or the movie better and be ready to tell why.

Answer Key

Activity Sheet #2

A. maxims B. apparatus C. weary D. intrepid
E. loony F. prominent G. wheel H. honorable
I. uncouth J. handkerchief K. odious L. rest
M. hoof N. greivances O. lily P. downcast
Q. lull R. kneel S. baffle T. exiled
U. finger V. modesty W. noon X. keepsake
Y. Hal Z. horn AA. jab BB. heal
CC. nor DD. roan

Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other.

Look ahead or you will find yourself behind.

Light purse, heavy heart.

Men and melons are hard to know.

A sleeping fox catches no poultry. Benjamin Franklin

Ben and Me Test

Part I	Part II	Part III	Part IV
1. T	1. B	1. C	1. J
2. T	2. D	2. B	2. A
3. T	3. E	3. D	3. C
4. F	4. F	4. C	4. B
5. T	5. J	5. A	5. E
6. F	6. C	6. A	6. I
7. T	7. A	7. C	7. G
8. F	8. I	8. C	8. F
9. F	9. H	9. D	9. D
10. F	10. G	10. B	10. H

Part V—Should be scored according to the teacher's judgment

Ben and Me Test

PART I TRUE OR FALSE: Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true and an **F** if it is false. (2 points each)

- _____ 1. Ben and Amos had a legal agreement with each other.
- _____ 2. Amos made changes in Ben's almanac.
- _____ 3. Amos was almost killed by a dog while Ben was swimming.
- _____ 4. Amos agreed to go up in a kite during a storm.
- _____ 5. Ben went to England without Amos.
- _____ 6. Amos wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- _____ 7. In France, Ben was very popular.
- _____ 8. Amos failed in his attempt to rescue Sophia's children.
- _____ 9. Red was killed in the battle of the mice at the French court.
- _____ 10. After Amos ruined Ben's electrical exhibition, Ben refused to send food to Amos's family.

PART II MATCHING: Read each description in column 1. Find the item which matches the description in column II. Write the letter of the item in front of the correct description. (2 points each)

Column I

- _____ 1. a mouse who befriended Ben Franklin
- _____ 2. an imaginary writer of an almanac
- _____ 3. her children were in prison
- _____ 4. he asked Ben to go to France
- _____ 5. they were at war with the colonies
- _____ 6. he fought a battle in the French court
- _____ 7. he loved to swim
- _____ 8. Ben raised money for the war here
- _____ 9. where Ben had his printing shop
- _____ 10. his mouse wrote the Declaration of Independence

Column II

- A. Ben Franklin
- B. Amos
- C. Red
- D. Poor Richard
- E. Sophia
- F. George Washington
- G. Thomas Jefferson
- H. Philadelphia
- I. France
- J. England

PART III MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank. (2 points each)

- _____ 1. Amos gave Ben the idea for the Franklin stove by talking about (a) doughnuts (b) cats (c) hot chestnuts (d) icicles.
- _____ 2. Ben invented (a) the safety pin (b) the lightning rod (c) the light bulb (d) all of the above.
- _____ 3. Ben's experiments with electricity included (a) flying a kite during a storm (b) rubbing glass tubes to make electricity (c) shocking the governor (d) all of the above.
- _____ 4. The following was not part of Amos's kite flying equipment: (a) a small car to ride down the kite string (b) a platform built onto the kite (c) a parachute in case of emergencies (d) a sail for the car to go up the kite string.
- _____ 5. The thing that caused Amos to leave Ben was (a) Ben's experiments with electricity (b) Ben's maxims (c) Ben locked Amos in a breadbox for three days (d) Ben stopped sending food to Amos's family.
- _____ 6. On the trip to France (a) Amos was seasick (b) Ben fell overboard (c) Amos organized the ship's rats in a revolt (d) Ben married one of the passengers.
- _____ 7. Sophia lived in (a) her master's saddlebag (b) her mistress's headdress (c) her mistress's purse (d) a grandfather clock.
- _____ 8. When a mob of angry shipmasters arrived at Ben's house, he (a) hid in the closet (b) threatened to shoot the harbormaster if they didn't leave at once (c) explained that the almanac they had was a counterfeit (d) explained that Amos was to blame for their problems and handed him over to them.
- _____ 9. One of the problems during the Battle of Versailles was that (a) Amos was wounded (b) some of the mice were captured before they could get to the battlefield (c) one of the mice warned the enemy of the attack (d) some of the mice stopped fighting to eat the refreshments.
- _____ 10. On his eighty-first birthday, Amos gave Ben (a) an American flag (b) a new hat (c) a book of famous quotations (d) a painting of George Washington.

PART IV VOCABULARY: Find the correct definition, below, for each underlined word. Write the letter of the correct definition in each blank. (2 points each)

- _____ 1. Ben Franklin was famous for the maxims in his almanac.
- _____ 2. Ben was one of the most prominent citizens in Philadelphia.
- _____ 3. Amos thought that Ben's electrical experiments were odious.
- _____ 4. Ben connected many wires to his apparatus.
- _____ 5. The intrepid mice battled fiercely to free the children.
- _____ 6. The American colonists had many grievances against England.
- _____ 7. Sophia's husband had been exiled from France.
- _____ 8. The Russian mice were wild and uncouth.
- _____ 9. Ben was downcast at the thought of leaving France.
- _____ 10. Ben showed his modesty when he refused to take credit for the invention of the lightning rod.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| A. well-known | F. without manners; crude; clumsy |
| B. equipment | G. sent away and not allowed to return |
| C. terrible; hateful | H. humility; lack of conceit |
| D. sad; depressed | I. complaints of unjust treatment |
| E. brave; daring | J. a short rule of behavior or proverb |

PART V ESSAY QUESTIONS: Choose two of the questions to answer. Write one or two paragraphs for each question. (10 points each)

- 1. Choose one of Ben's maxims and decide whether or not he practiced what he preached and followed the advice in the maxim. Use examples from the book to support your opinion.
- 2. Who was a better friend—Ben or Amos? What qualities do you think a good friend should have? Did Ben and Amos have these qualities? Use examples from the book to defend your answer.
- 3. If you were rating Ben and Amos on their modesty using a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being very modest and 10 being very conceited), how would you rate each of them? Use examples from the book to show why each should receive the rating that he did.
- 4. Think back over the whole book and tell how you would have acted differently if you were Ben. What would you have done differently if you were Amos? Give reasons for your answers.

ACTIVITY SHEET # 1

Would you live with ease,
do what you ought and not
what you please.

At the working man's
house hunger looks in but
dares not enter.

Early to bed and early to
rise, makes a man healthy,
wealthy, and wise.

Better slip with foot than
by tongue.

He that doth what he
should not, shall feel what
he would not.

Light purse, heavy heart.

Experience keeps a dear
school, yet fools will learn
in no other.

Don't throw stones at your
neighbors if your own
windows are glass.

Look ahead or you will find
yourself behind.

A cat in gloves catches no
mice.

When you are good to
others, you are best to
yourself.

Men and melons are hard
to know.

No gains without pains.

A lie stands on one leg,
truth on two.

A sleeping fox catches no
poultry.

Well done is better than
well said.

Activity Sheet #2

Directions: Fill in the blanks following the definitions. Then transfer each letter to the box with the matching number and letter below to decode some of Ben Franklin's maxims.

A. short sayings $\frac{M}{1} \frac{A}{2} \frac{X}{3} \frac{I}{4} \frac{M}{5} \frac{S}{6}$

B. equipment $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8} \frac{\quad}{9}$

C. tired $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5}$

D. brave; daring $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8}$

E. crazy $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5}$

F. well known $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8} \frac{\quad}{9}$

G. steering device $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5}$

H. noble $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8} \frac{\quad}{9}$

I. rude; coarse $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7}$

J. used to wipe tears $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8} \frac{\quad}{9} \frac{\quad}{10} \frac{\quad}{11} \frac{\quad}{12}$

K. hateful $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6}$

L. nap $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

M. horse's foot $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

N. complaints $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8} \frac{\quad}{9} \frac{\quad}{10}$

O. Easter flower $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

P. unhappy $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8}$

Q. the ___ before the storm $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

R. get down on knees $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5}$

S. puzzle $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6}$

T. sent away $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6}$

U. part of hand $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6}$

V. humility $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7}$

W. lunchtime $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

X. souvenir $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4} \frac{\quad}{5} \frac{\quad}{6} \frac{\quad}{7} \frac{\quad}{8}$

Y. nickname for Harold $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3}$

Z. trumpet $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

AA. poke $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3}$

BB. cure $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

CC. neither $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3}$

DD. color of horse $\frac{\quad}{1} \frac{\quad}{2} \frac{\quad}{3} \frac{\quad}{4}$

$\overline{C2}$ \overline{X}
 $\overline{A3}$ $\overline{X4}$ $\overline{BB2}$ $\overline{L1}$ \overline{I}
 $\overline{A4}$ $\overline{F7}$ $\overline{D2}$ $\overline{N8}$ $\overline{J6}$ $\overline{J5}$ $\overline{D5}$ $\overline{G3}$ $\overline{F1}$ $\overline{B9}$ $\overline{B1}$
 $\overline{D8}$ $\overline{G4}$ $\overline{H6}$ $\overline{C4}$ $\overline{K6}$ $\overline{J8}$ $\overline{G2}$ $\overline{E3}$ $\overline{F3}$ $\overline{G5'}$ $\overline{S1}$ $\overline{B8}$ $\overline{B7}$
 $\overline{M4}$ $\overline{H2}$ $\overline{K1}$ $\overline{O1}$ \overline{S}
 $\overline{A6}$ $\overline{G1}$ $\overline{D1}$ $\overline{H8}$ $\overline{BB4}$ $\overline{E1}$ $\overline{H9}$ $\overline{DD3}$ $\overline{DD1}$ $\overline{DD4}$ $\overline{D7}$ $\overline{F8}$
 $\overline{H3}$ $\overline{K4}$ $\overline{H4}$ $\overline{P8}$ $\overline{H1}$ $\overline{N3}$ $\overline{D4}$

$\overline{Y3}$ $\overline{M2}$ $\overline{P2}$ $\overline{X1}$ $\overline{B4}$ $\overline{BB1}$ $\overline{J11}$ $\overline{S2}$ $\overline{K2}$ $\overline{V2}$ $\overline{U6}$ $\overline{E5}$ $\overline{W2}$ $\overline{K5}$
 $\overline{P3}$ $\overline{F5}$ $\overline{Q3}$ $\overline{R5}$ $\overline{S3}$ $\overline{K3}$ $\overline{E4}$ $\overline{J4}$ $\overline{C5}$ $\overline{M3}$ $\overline{I1}$ $\overline{B5}$ $\overline{P7}$ $\overline{L2}$ $\overline{S5}$ $\overline{J12}$
 $\overline{H7}$ $\overline{X8}$ $\overline{J1}$ $\overline{N4}$ $\overline{F6}$ $\overline{P1}$

$\overline{Q4}$ $\overline{O2}$ $\overline{U4}$ $\overline{J9}$ $\overline{D3}$ $\overline{B2}$ $\overline{Q2}$ $\overline{F2}$ $\overline{X5}$ $\overline{R4'}$ $\overline{M1}$ $\overline{R3}$ $\overline{C3}$ $\overline{N5}$ $\overline{O4}$
 $\overline{Z1}$ $\overline{N9}$ $\overline{B6}$ $\overline{H5}$ $\overline{I6}$

\overline{M}
 $\overline{A1}$ $\overline{S6}$ $\overline{J3}$ $\overline{AA2}$ $\overline{P4}$ $\overline{V3}$ $\overline{V1}$ $\overline{U5}$ $\overline{O3}$ $\overline{DD2}$ $\overline{R2}$ $\overline{N10}$ $\overline{BB3}$ $\overline{J7}$ $\overline{T5}$
 $\overline{Y1}$ $\overline{J2}$ $\overline{Z3}$ $\overline{T6}$ $\overline{L4}$ $\overline{Z2}$ $\overline{R1}$ $\overline{N7}$ $\overline{E2}$ $\overline{C1'}$

$\overline{P6}$ $\overline{L3}$ $\overline{Q1}$ $\overline{T1}$ $\overline{V4}$ $\overline{D6}$ $\overline{T3}$ $\overline{U3}$ $\overline{N1}$ $\overline{S4}$ $\overline{CC2}$ $\overline{T2}$
 $\overline{P5}$ $\overline{N6}$ $\overline{V6}$ $\overline{I3}$ $\overline{I7}$ $\overline{X2}$ $\overline{V5}$ $\overline{CC1}$ $\overline{W3}$ $\overline{B3}$ $\overline{I4}$ $\overline{I5}$ $\overline{T4}$ $\overline{F9}$ $\overline{N2}$ $\overline{V7}$

$\overline{AA3}$ $\overline{X3}$ $\overline{Z4}$ $\overline{AA1}$ $\overline{X6}$ $\overline{F4}$ $\overline{J10}$ $\overline{W1}$ $\overline{U1}$ $\overline{CC3}$ $\overline{Y2}$ $\overline{I2}$ $\overline{X7}$ $\overline{O3}$ $\overline{U2}$ $\overline{W4}$

TEACHING NOTES

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