

Dear Sixth Grade Parents,

My name is Miss Natalie Bender and I am thrilled to welcome you and your children to my class for the 2023-24 academic year! I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree from Saint Anselm College, reside in Candia, NH, and am a parishioner of St. Stanislaus Catholic Church in Nashua. I have had the immense pleasure of working with your children as an aide to Mrs. Ryan and substitute teacher during the past year and am so excited to continue growing with them as they prepare for junior high school and beyond!

In sixth grade your children will be given frequent opportunities to develop their leadership skills through group projects and mentorship opportunities with younger students. Mrs. Ryan will be the sixth grade math teacher while I will teach the remaining core subjects of grammar, science, social studies, religion, writing, spelling, reading, and geography. Both fifth and sixth grade will be housed in the new modular building this year, so transitions between the two classrooms will be easy and safe. The students' homework will consist of math, grammar, and geography assignments as well as twenty minutes of reading for a total of about 50-60 minutes per night. We will do many in-class writing projects this year, both creative and professional, in preparation for secondary school and will enrich our understanding of the world around us through regular history projects and geography assignments. Most importantly, we will strive to be saintly role models for the younger grades at all times through the diligent practice of Christian charity and the integration of Mass, group prayer, and virtue-based activities into our daily lives at St. Francis School.

The summer work for my sixth grade class consists of reading *Ben and Me*, a light-hearted work of historical fiction based on the life and inventions of Benjamin Franklin, and completing a short reading comprehension packet. Since we will be studying American history in sixth grade, I intend for this humorous book to be both enjoyable for my students to read and helpful in introducing them to the political issues and important figures associated with the American Revolution. Your child received a copy of *Ben and Me* from Mrs. Ryan before summer vacation began and I have attached the reading comprehension packet to this letter. My expectation for my students is that they read the entire book before beginning to work on the packet. The exercises in the packet are open-book and open-notes; I do not mind the students' use of sources other than *Ben and Me* as long as they stay off the internet (they will need to use a dictionary in order to complete one of the exercises). **Your child's completed packet as well as his or her copy of *Ben and Me* are due on the first day of school.**

In addition to the required reading of *Ben and Me*, I highly encourage my students to read as much as possible over the summer, especially books they enjoy! Please find attached a fun reading log for your child's use. I will award prizes to those students who read at least five chapter books by the end of the summer. **Reading logs must be submitted by the end of the first week of school.** Since, as mentioned above, we will be studying American history in social studies, I suggest that your child read at least one of the books based in colonial or Civil War era America from the list below to help familiarize them with some of the topics we will encounter

this year. Mrs. Ryan has also requested that the rising sixth graders practice their math facts regularly over the summer and use the resources on [ixl.com](http://ixl.com) to keep their hard-earned skills fresh.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [bendern@stfrancisschoolnh.org](mailto:bendern@stfrancisschoolnh.org). I will send out another letter in August with important dates for the coming year and information about science fair, the sixth grade fall play, and other exciting events.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of educating your children this year! I greatly look forward to working alongside you all and wish you a blessed summer!

Sincerely,  
Miss Natalie Bender

6th Grade Teacher  
St. Francis of Assisi School  
Litchfield, NH

## Summer Book Suggestions: American History

### 1. "Indian Captive" by Lois Lenski

[https://www.amazon.com/Indian-Captive-Story-Mary-Jemison/dp/0064461629/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=ZJ61POFNA2WE&keywords=indian+captive+the+story+of+mary+jemison+lois+lenski&qid=1687545197&srefix=indian+captive%2Caps%2C134&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Indian-Captive-Story-Mary-Jemison/dp/0064461629/ref=sr_1_1?crid=ZJ61POFNA2WE&keywords=indian+captive+the+story+of+mary+jemison+lois+lenski&qid=1687545197&srefix=indian+captive%2Caps%2C134&sr=8-1)

### 2. "Johnny Tremain" by Esther Forbes

[https://www.amazon.com/Johnny-Tremain-Esther-Hoskins-Forbes/dp/0547614322/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=1GGQDYJ1H224H&keywords=johnny+tremain+by+esther+forbes&qid=1687545268&srefix=johnny+tremain%2Caps%2C157&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Johnny-Tremain-Esther-Hoskins-Forbes/dp/0547614322/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1GGQDYJ1H224H&keywords=johnny+tremain+by+esther+forbes&qid=1687545268&srefix=johnny+tremain%2Caps%2C157&sr=8-1)

### 3. "Carry on Mr. Bowditch" by Jean Lee Latham

[https://www.amazon.com/Carry-Mr-Bowditch-Jean-Latham/dp/0618250743/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=1NDT1XUW274RT&keywords=carry+on+mr.+bowditch&qid=1687545152&srefix=carry+on+Mr.+%2Caps%2C127&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Carry-Mr-Bowditch-Jean-Latham/dp/0618250743/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1NDT1XUW274RT&keywords=carry+on+mr.+bowditch&qid=1687545152&srefix=carry+on+Mr.+%2Caps%2C127&sr=8-1)

### 4. "Gettysburg" by MacKinlay Kantor

[https://www.amazon.com/Gettysburg-Landmark-Books-MacKinlay-Kantor/dp/0394891813/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=1S71AZ2R3ZN41&keywords=gettysburg+mackinlay+kantor&qid=1687545311&srefix=gettysburg+mac%2Caps%2C138&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Gettysburg-Landmark-Books-MacKinlay-Kantor/dp/0394891813/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1S71AZ2R3ZN41&keywords=gettysburg+mackinlay+kantor&qid=1687545311&srefix=gettysburg+mac%2Caps%2C138&sr=8-1)

### 5. "Chains" by Laurie Halse Anderson

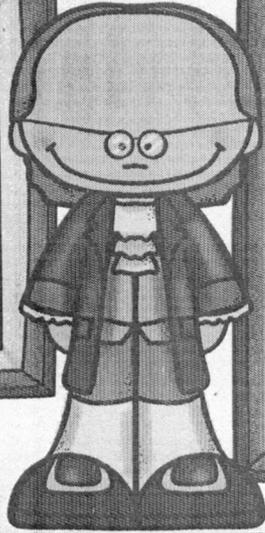
[https://www.amazon.com/Chains-America-Trilogy-Laurie-Anderson/dp/1416905863/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=3VISSIOWVAL04&keywords=chains+by+laurie+halse+anderson&qid=1687545356&srefix=chains+%2Caps%2C159&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Chains-America-Trilogy-Laurie-Anderson/dp/1416905863/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3VISSIOWVAL04&keywords=chains+by+laurie+halse+anderson&qid=1687545356&srefix=chains+%2Caps%2C159&sr=8-1)

# Story Map

# Ben Franklin

Setting

Characters



Plot  
(events)

Beginning

Middle

End

Problem

Solution

## Vocabulary Exercise

Choose ten words from the vocabulary list below and write them on a separate sheet of lined paper. Below each word write its definition from the dictionary and the sentence from "Ben and Me" in which the word is found. Staple the sheet (or sheets) of paper to the back of this packet.

### Vocabulary List:

1. Delirious (found in Chapter 1)
2. Anvil (Chapter 2)
3. Inclement (Chapter 3)
4. Ludicrous (Chapter 4)
5. Insomnia (Chapter 5)
6. Rectify (Chapter 6)
7. Spectacle (Chapter 7)
8. Render (Chapter 8)
9. Quaint (Chapter 9)
10. Aspirations (Chapter 10)
11. Thwart (Chapter 11)
12. Uncouth (Chapter 12)
13. Proletariat (Chapter 13)
14. Frivolous (Chapter 14)
15. Exquisite (Chapter 15)

## Venn Diagram

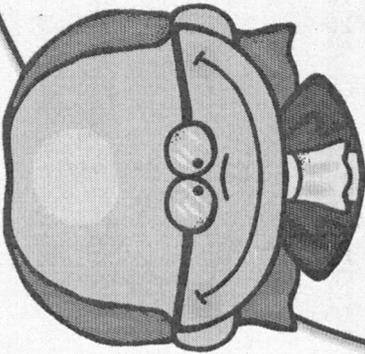
Write five adjectives which describe Ben on the left side of the diagram and five adjectives which describe Amos on the right side. Then write three adjectives which describe both Ben and Amos in the middle of the diagram. You may not use a particular adjective more than once (you must write thirteen different adjectives).

AMOS



BOTH

BEN



# Word Search



Find the words in the puzzle:

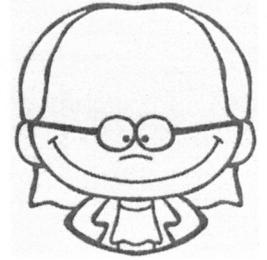
Lamented  
Vestry  
Severity  
Ember  
Lenient  
Tarnished  
Idle  
Almanac  
Succor  
Congest  
Maxim  
Jeered  
Indulge  
Yokels  
Secluded  
Deceit  
Idyllic  
Adjourn  
Quaint  
Rumblings  
Intrigue  
Frivolous

Y	O	K	E	L	S	D	E	H	S	I	N	R	A	T
A	L	M	A	N	A	C	E	I	U	A	D	J	M	Q
S	F	S	H	L	R	O	C	N	C	K	B	T	V	Z
U	P	G	Y	C	I	W	H	T	C	U	A	J	B	T
O	M	E	D	F	N	V	X	R	O	G	I	E	N	N
L	A	M	E	N	T	E	D	I	R	T	Z	E	X	I
O	P	M	C	D	O	S	L	G	K	U	I	R	Y	A
V	Q	E	E	N	R	T	A	U	C	N	T	E	T	U
I	I	G	I	D	F	R	S	E	E	Y	W	D	I	Q
R	D	L	T	I	D	Y	L	L	I	C	L	O	R	V
F	L	U	E	K	R	B	P	N	R	E	B	M	E	M
H	E	D	J	G	Q	N	R	U	O	J	D	A	V	U
S	I	N	W	D	E	D	U	L	C	E	S	X	E	Z
X	T	I	R	U	M	B	L	I	N	G	S	I	S	D
C	O	N	G	E	S	T	B	Y	V	C	F	M	E	A

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Ben and Me Novel  
Unit Assessment

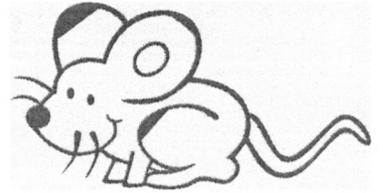
Choose the correct answer for each question.



1. What did Amos want from Ben in exchange for his help?
  - a. Formal education
  - b. Money
  - c. Food for his family
  - d. Fame
  
2. What was the one activity that Amos did not approve of Ben doing?
  - a. Reading
  - b. Swimming
  - c. Traveling
  - d. Sleeping
  
3. From whose point of view is the story being told?
  - a. Ben
  - b. Amos
  - c. Mr. Franklin
  - d. Red
  
4. Where does this novel take place?
  - a. Boston
  - b. New York City
  - c. Jamestown
  - d. Philadelphia
  
5. What was the name of the book that Ben published that had a lot of his maxims in it?
  - a. Poor Man's Diary
  - b. Poor Richard's Almanack
  - c. Poor Amos's Notebook
  - d. Poor Ben's Diary
  
6. What is a maxim?
  - a. A short pithy statement expressing a general truth; a proverb or wise saying
  - b. A disturbed state of mind
  - c. Resistance, delay, obstruction
  - d. A room or building attached to a church

7. How did Ben feel about his experiment with the apparatus at the exhibition hall?

- a. Complete failure
- b. Successful
- c. Discouraged
- d. Skeptical



8. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

- a. July 4, 1900
- b. July 4, 1875
- c. July 4, 1776
- d. July 4, 2017

9. What items was Ben sent to France for?

- a. Shoes
- b. Uniforms
- c. Guns and powder
- d. All of the Above

10. Who came to Amos's aid that helped them win the battle to get Sophia's children back and win the Revolution?

- a. Red
- b. John Paul Jones
- c. Yankee Doodle
- d. None of the Above

**Read the maxims and tell what each means.**

1. The doors of wisdom are never shut.
  
2. A lie stands on one leg, the truth on two.
  
3. Hunger never saw bad bread.

