Leggi e ascolta.

A very talented man

Benjamin Franklin is probably the most talented man in American history. He was a musician, a writer, a scientist and a politician. He was born in Boston on 17th January, 1706, one of 16 brothers and sisters. His parents were poor, so he only went to school for a year then he was sent to work for his brother James.

Writer

James was a printer, and he and his brother started the first newspaper in Boston when Benjamin was fifteen. Benjamin wanted to write for the newspaper, but he was only an apprentice, not a journalist. So he wrote letters at night and signed them with an imaginary woman’s name: Silence Dogwood. The letters made the newspaper very popular, but James still treated his brother very badly.
**Scientist**

*In the end, Benjamin left James and went to Philadelphia.*

In Philadelphia, he got married and became very successful. He was in his early twenties when he started a printing business and a bookshop. Later, he bought a newspaper. By 1749, Franklin was a successful businessman and wanted to do different things. He didn’t have to work because he was very rich, so he studied different subjects, from physics to the weather, and he also did experiments.

**Musician**

*Franklin invented a lot of things, like bifocal glasses and a new heater for houses.* He had time to play chess and to swim, and he invented swimming fins, too! In the 1750s, he did some famous experiments with lightning, and he discovered that lightning was made by electricity. He also wrote music and played the guitar, the violin and the harp. In 1761, he built a new musical instrument, the glass armonica. Later, Mozart wrote a piece of music for Franklin’s instrument.
Philanthropist

At the same time, Benjamin Franklin worked very hard for the city of Philadelphia. He put lights in the streets to make them safer. He also helped to make the city cleaner. Franklin started the city’s first library (1731), the first fire service (1736), and the first hospital (1751). He also helped to establish the University of Pennsylvania (1749).

Politician

Franklin was very interested in politics. People often call him the ‘first American’ because in 1754, he had the idea that the American colonies could unite. Later, Franklin went to Britain as a diplomat. There he worked hard for the American colonies. Back in Philadelphia in 1776, Benjamin Franklin with Thomas Jefferson and three other politicians wrote the American Declaration of Independence. Then he went to Paris where he got French help and money for America in the War of Independence.

Benjamin Franklin died in Pennsylvania in 1790, when he was 84 years old.