



## Benjamin Franklin

*Franklin's Return to Philadelphia, 1785*  
by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris.  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress,  
LC-USZC4-9906.

Benjamin Franklin is famous in American history.

He had many ideas for the country.

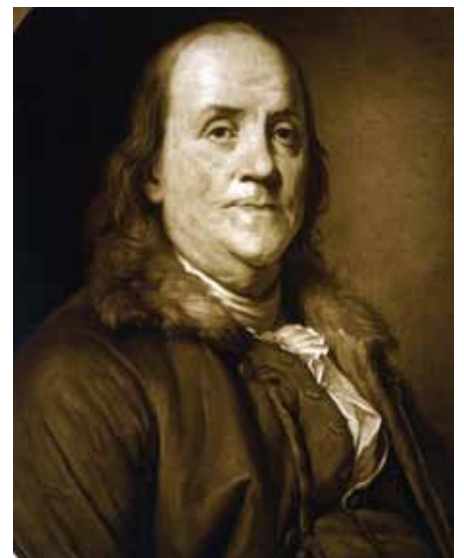
He started the first free public library.

He was the first Postmaster General.

He was a diplomat to France.

He was the oldest member of the Constitutional Convention.

He signed the U.S. Constitution.



*Benjamin Franklin by*  
*Joseph-Siffred Duplessis.*  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress,  
LC-USZC4-7214.



*Scene at the Signing of the Constitution by Howard Chandler Christy.  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USA7-34630.*

## The U.S. Constitution

The Constitution is an important document.

After the War of Independence, the country needed new rules.

The Founding Fathers met at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

They wrote the Constitution at the Convention.

The Constitution was written in 1787.

Nine states had to pass the Constitution.

Some Americans did not agree with the Constitution.

The Federalist Papers pushed the states to pass the Constitution.

In 1790, all 13 states passed the Constitution.

We follow the same Constitution today.

### New Words

document =

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Founding Fathers =

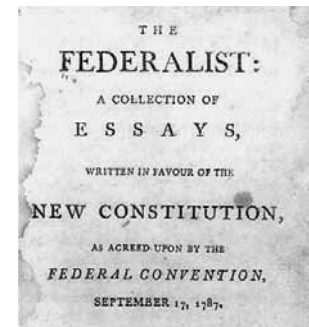
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convention =

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to pass =

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*Title Page of The Federalist, vol. 1, 1799.  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress,  
LC-USZ62-70508.*

### The Federalist Papers

Three men wrote the Federalist Papers:

- James Madison
- Alexander Hamilton
- John Jay

## We The People

The first three words of the Constitution are WE THE PEOPLE.

“We The People” means Americans have self-government.

U.S. citizens elect their representatives to the government.

The U.S. government makes the country’s laws.

Every person’s rights and freedoms are protected by law.

For example, freedom of speech is one important right for everyone in America.



### Rule of Law

- Everyone must follow the law.
- No person is above the law.
- This is called “rule of law.”

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## The U.S. Constitution—Correct the Sentence

**Read the sentence. Correct the sentence.**

Benjamin Franklin was the youngest member of the Constitutional Convention.

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The Constitution was written in 1776.

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The first three words of the Constitution are “Give Me Liberty”.

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# The Constitution Today

The Constitution protects our basic rights.

The Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

All other laws must follow the Constitution.

The Constitution also defines our government.

There are three branches of government:

- What does the Constitution do?
- Protects basic rights of Americans
  - Defines the government



**Executive**



**Legislative**



**Judicial**

Courtesy of the Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Executive = P\_\_\_\_\_ Legislative = C\_\_\_\_\_ Judicial = C\_\_\_\_\_

The branches have separate powers.

The branches have equal power.

This is called “separation of powers.”

The powers balance each other.

No branch has more power than the others.

## Categories—Benjamin Franklin and the U.S. Constitution

### Word Bank

protects rights   James Madison   judicial   defines government  
John Jay   written in 1787   Alexander Hamilton   1st Postmaster General  
U.S. diplomat   executive   1st free library   legislative

Look at the words in the word bank.  
Copy the words in the category.

Benjamin Franklin

U.S. Constitution

Branches of Government

Federalist Papers

# Constitution

Copy the word.

Constitution

C\_\_\_\_\_

Co\_\_\_\_\_

Con\_\_\_\_\_

Cons\_\_\_\_\_

Const\_\_\_\_\_

Consti\_\_\_\_\_

Constit\_\_\_\_\_

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Constitutio\_\_\_\_\_

Constitution\_\_\_\_\_



*The Constitution of the United States.  
Courtesy of the National Archives.*

Copy these sentences.

What is the supreme law of the land? The Constitution.

Wh\_\_\_ is the supreme l\_\_\_ of the l\_\_\_\_? The Con\_\_\_\_\_.

W\_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_ su\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_? The \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ ? \_\_\_\_\_.