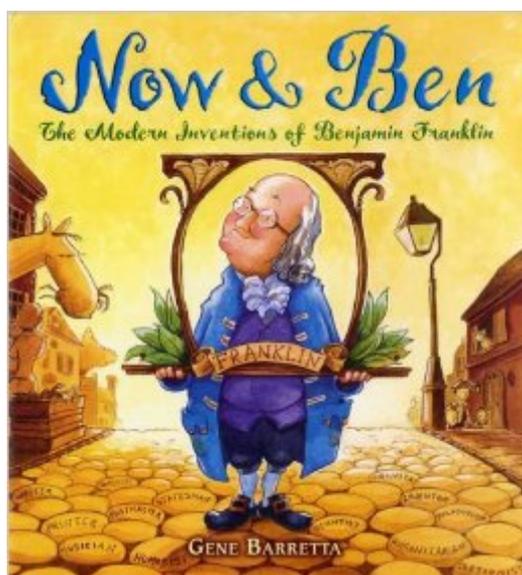


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# Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions Of Benjamin Franklin



## Synopsis

The inventions and inspiration of Benjamin Franklin and how they've stood the test of time. What would you do if you lived in a community without a library, hospital, post office, or fire department? If you were Benjamin Franklin, you'd set up these organizations yourself. Franklin also designed the lightning rod, suggested the idea of daylight savings time, and invented bifocals—all inspired by his common sense and intelligence. In this informative book, Gene Barretta brings Benjamin Franklin's genius to life, deepening our appreciation for one of the most influential figures in American history. *Now & Ben* is a 2007 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 910L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (43 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #22,922 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Exploration & Discovery](#) #11 in [Books > Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works > How Things Work](#) #14 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary](#)

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

Ben Franklin's probably the #1 subject of picture book biographies that cross my desk. He's picturesque -- both visually and as a bio subject. This is the first book I've chosen to review, however, because of its clever format and quirky execution. On one side is "Now" -- the modern amenities we take for granted, such as odometers, second hands, bifocals, lightening rods and even public libraries. The "Ben" side shows Franklin puttering, tinkering, and hunkering down over his inventions, which include all of the above, plus charting the Gulf Stream, organizing the Post Office, and all that fun with lightening and kites and stuff. Such a clever fellow, that Ben! And that's

not even getting into his statesmanship and political thinking, which the author treats lightly to focus on the man's inventive genius. The "Now" side of the page is perky and vibrant in bright blues, while Franklin's 18th century half is awash in faded siennas, the color of aging documents, except for Ben in his blue coat, creating a visual link between our era and his. I know from the brief time I lived in a Philly suburb how omnipresent are the many reminders of the man's influence, from Independence Hall to the Franklin Museum. The city's infused with awe for the man who was arguably our nuttiest Founding Father. But aren't the oddballs the ones you most want to know? Like Barretta, a Philly resident, you won't be able to resist getting better acquainted.

My children (ages 6 - 10) loved the story of Ben Franklin. They enjoyed learning of Ben's inventions and it was fun to talk about how they have evolved over time. The children especially loved the last scene depicting how things will evolve as they grow older. The illustrations and colors on every page were great for the imagination and provided so much insight to every part of the story. Great Job. A+

My son loves this book series! We own every book. I wish there were more! My son is a reluctant reader and prefers non-fiction books. However, it is hard to find good non-fiction books for his age group, especially about history. These are beautifully illustrated, informative and fun to read books. Highly recommend for 6-7 y.o. readers! Great gift, too!

As the book opens, the endpapers display a timeline noting Franklin's numerous inventions and progressive ideas. Barretta's opening illustration depicts Franklin's many roles as a writer, diplomat, printer, musician, postmaster humorist, scientist, inventor, traveler, philosopher, cartoonist, statesman inscribed on cobblestones while Ben stands on the cobblestones, framed in a style reminiscent of the one hundred dollar bill. The book describes Franklin's inventions and concepts and depicts how those ideas are still in use in the present. Experiments with lightning lead to the invention of the lightning rod. A store clerk uses the Grabber for grabbing a box of cereal that is out of reach, while on the opposing page Franklin uses his Long Arm to reach a book high on a shelf. His See Far/See Near became today's bifocals and his improvements to fireplace design helped move smoke out of houses. He designed the first clock with a second hand and as the reader looks at a school bus driver checking the mileage on the odometer and we see Ben's odometer on a cart which was used while he was postmaster general to measure postal routes. Barretta shares the information with humor. We see an alarm clock buzzing at 6 a.m. with the

moon still high in sky while bleary eyed kids struggle to struggle to wake up. Franklin advocated the idea of daylight savings as a means to save candles and gain more daylight for farmers. Benjamin Franklin is the Founding Father of choice to study in depth here in 5th grade. His extraordinary life lends itself to many areas of the curriculum. This is terrifically engaging nonfiction picture book that would be great fun to share with students.

This book has great illustrations. The students I teach spent time looking through all of the details. The stories are accurate and include a fun sense of humor. Students from grade 4-6 also enjoyed the book.

This book focuses on the modern-day devices we use which were actually invented by Benjamin Franklin more than 250 years ago. The odometer is one example, the lightning rod another. The book is arranged so that the "now" pages and the "Ben" pages are opposite each other. The "now" pages show the inventions as they are used today, the "Ben" pages show Franklin in his time, with peers or family. Cleverly done, and kids and early-grade teachers will enjoy discussing the contents for days at a time.

I have a doctorate in education with literacy my area of specialization and use Picture Books to introduce content to secondary students who struggle to read much less comprehend facts/information from their text books. Now & Ben serves as an excellent introduction to the inventions of Ben Franklin and Colonial America, It is a great supplement to the history text...

This is a really cute book and my students love it. It does make Ben Franklin seem like a complete rock star. I'm not saying he wasn't a rock star, but he didn't actually INVENT all those things. He was actually very good at implementing things he'd seen on his European trips. Did it make life better for everyone in the Colonies? Absolutely, but don't say he invented them.

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