

## **Write | Discuss | Revise: Benjamin Franklin 7-8**

**Write | Discuss | Revise: Benjamin Franklin 7-8** is a content-based writing course for seventh and eighth grade students who are interested in American History.

The course meets weekly over Zoom for eight weeks. Each class is seventy-five minutes. There will be four to ten students in the class.

Each week students read and discuss writings by Benjamin Franklin. Selections include *The Way to Wealth*, *The Autobiography*, *Poor Richard's Almanack*, speeches in the Constitutional Convention, writings on slavery, and letters from London, Paris, and Philadelphia.

Each class also includes writing instruction. Students practice writing clear sentences, paragraphs, and multi-paragraph essays in the context of writing about Benjamin Franklin.

Students write a one to two-page paper each week. Classes meet on Mondays. Each student meets with the instructor over Zoom for a 10-minute individual writing conference during the week to discuss drafts and plan revisions. Final papers are due before class on Mondays.

Course Text: *A Benjamin Franklin Reader*, edited and annotated by Walter Isaacson, Simon & Schuster, 2005. (Franklin's writings are also in the public domain and available for free online.)

### **1) Week One: The Way to Wealth**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Chronology
  - ii) The Way to Wealth
- b) Writing Instruction: Sentences
  - i) Sentence Fragments
  - ii) The Four Basic Sentence Types
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: The Way to Wealth
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Autobiography 1706-1722

### **2) Week Two: Autobiography 1706-1722**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: The Way to Wealth
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Autobiography 1706-1722
- b) Writing Instruction: Sentences
  - i) Basic Conjunctions
  - ii) Subordinating Conjunctions
  - iii) Appositives
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: Autobiography 1706-1722
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Autobiography 1723-1732

### **3) Week Three: Autobiography 1723-1732**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: Autobiography 1706-1722
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Autobiography 1723-1732
- b) Writing Instruction: Sentence Expansion and Note-Taking
  - i) Sentence Expansion
  - ii) Note-Taking
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: Autobiography 1723-1732
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1733-1743

#### **4) Week Four: Poor Richard's Almanack 1733-1743**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: Autobiography 1724-1731
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1733-1743
- b) Writing Instruction: Planning
  - i) Identifying Topic, Audience, and Purpose
  - ii) Paragraph-Level Outlining
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Reading Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1744-1758
  - ii) Writing Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1733-1743

#### **5) Week Five: Poor Richard's Almanack 1744-1758**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1733-1743
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1744-1758
- b) Writing Instruction: Single-Paragraph Outlines
  - i) Standard Paragraph Structures
  - ii) Topic Sentences
  - iii) Concluding Sentences
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1744-1758
  - ii) Reading Assignment: London Writings 1758-1775

#### **6) Week Six: London Writings 1758-1775**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: Poor Richard's Almanack 1744-1758
  - ii) Reading Assignment: London Writings 1758-1775
- b) Writing Instruction: Revising a Draft
  - i) Revising Versus Editing
  - ii) Strategies for Revision
  - iii) Using Transitions
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: London Writings 1758-1775
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Paris Writings 1776-1785

#### **7) Week Seven: Paris Writings 1776-1785**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: London Writings 1758-1775

- ii) Reading Assignment: Paris Writings 1776-1785
- b) Writing Instruction: Summarization
  - i) Summary Sentences
  - ii) Summary Paragraphs
- c) Assignments and Planning
  - i) Writing Assignment: Paris Writings 1776-1785
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Philadelphia Writings 1785-1790

**8) Week Eight: Philadelphia Writings 1785-1790**

- a) Discussion
  - i) Writing Assignment: Paris Writings 1776-1785
  - ii) Reading Assignment: Philadelphia Writings 1785-1790
- b) Writing Instruction: Multiple-Paragraph Outlines
  - i) Thesis Statements
  - ii) Body Paragraphs
  - iii) Introductions
  - iv) Conclusions
- c) Concluding Discussion
  - i) Primary versus Secondary Sources
  - ii) Benjamin Franklin Biographies