

A Jack-of-All-Trades

Interviewer: No other American has done so many things so well. Tell us about some of your accomplishments.

Mr. Franklin: One thing I am most pleased with is that I am the only person who signed all four of these key documents in American history: the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, and the Constitution of the United States.

Interviewer: Mr. Franklin, can you please tell us a little about your early years?

Mr. Franklin: I was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on January 17, 1706, the sixteenth of seventeen children. After I spent two years in school, my father needed me in his candle shop. So I taught myself algebra, geometry, grammar, and the sciences. I also learned several languages, including French, German, and Spanish. I tried to practice what I wrote in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

Interviewer: Can you tell us about your most famous experiment?

Mr. Franklin: Yes, that would be the electrical experiment at Philadelphia in 1752. I flew my homemade kite in a thunderstorm to prove that lightning is electricity.

Interviewer: And did you prove it, Mr. Franklin?

Mr. Franklin: You bet I did! That lightning struck a pointed wire I had fastened on the kite. Next, it traveled down the kite string to a key fastened at the end, and then it caused a spark. After that, I invented the lightning rod. It helped keep buildings and homes from burning down if they were struck by lightning. The rod worked—it prevented my own home from being damaged. You know what I say, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Reading Comprehension

1. Which of these statements is an opinion?
 - A. No other American has done so many things so well.
 - B. After I spent two years in school, my father needed me in his candle shop.
 - C. I flew my homemade kite in a thunderstorm to prove that lightning is electricity.
2. Because he had to work in his father's candle shop,
 - A. he wrote a book of sayings.
 - B. Ben flew a kite in a thunderstorm.
 - C. Ben was only able to go to school for two years.
3. The author uses an interview format mainly to
 - A. inform people about American history.
 - B. entertain readers with Mr. Franklin's wit.
 - C. explain that Benjamin Franklin was able to do many things well.
4. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is one way to say
 - A. a lightning rod prevents fires.
 - B. preventing something bad is better than trying to fix it after it happens.
 - C. a cure weighs more than prevention.

How to Make Your Own Paper

Have you ever been stuck inside with nothing to do on a rainy day? To make things worse, your mom wants you to get the recycling ready to go to the recycling center. I have something for you that will "kill two birds with one stone." Did you know you can make your own paper and recycle too?

Step 1: Get some cardboard egg cartons, newspaper, or scrap paper. Then tear the cartons or paper into small pieces. You should have an adult help you with the rest of the steps.

Step 2: Put a little water in a large, heavy pan. Then add the paper pieces and some detergent. There is no exact recipe—papermaking is not rocket science.

Step 3: Cook for two to three hours on the stove on low. Be sure to stir often. Add a little water once in a while. This will keep the mixture from burning or sticking to the pan. When the paper is mushy and time is up, take the pan off the stove. Turn off the burner.

Step 4: When the mush is cool, blend small amounts in a blender using the puree button. Do this until it is smooth.

Step 5: Next, you might want to add a little water to the mix and a touch of food coloring, a little glitter, or some confetti. When your mixture is the way you want it, put an old window screen over the kitchen sink. Spread the mush evenly onto the screen and flatten the mixture with your hands to squeeze out the water and shape the paper.

Step 6: While this is draining, put layers of newspaper down on a flat, towel-covered surface. Next, carefully flip the screen over onto the newspaper. Then put more newspaper and towels on top.

Step 7: Finally, cover with heavy books and wait twenty-four hours. Remove the books and newspaper. Peel off the handmade paper, and place it on a flat surface for twenty-four more hours. Now it is ready to make into whatever you can imagine.

Reading Comprehension

1. In paragraph one, the phrase "kill two birds with one stone" is another way to say
 - A. your mom is killing any fun with chores.
 - B. you can throw rocks at birds outside in the rain.
 - C. get the recycling done and do something fun at the same time.
2. In step two, the clause "papermaking is not rocket science" probably means
 - A. rocket scientists don't make paper.
 - B. it is easy, and you don't have to be exact.
 - C. you don't need paper in space.
3. Number the following steps in the order they are done.
 - ___ Blend small amounts in the blender.
 - ___ Spread the mush evenly onto a screen.
 - ___ Tear the cartons or paper.
 - ___ Turn off the burner.
4. To keep the mixture from burning or sticking, you should
 - A. add water.
 - B. stir often.
 - C. cool the mixture.
5. The author's purpose in this article is
 - A. to explain how to make homemade paper.
 - B. to entertain you while it rains.
 - C. to persuade you to do the recycling.

Forgea: The Brave Sea Dog

Honolulu—This morning at 9 A.M. on Pier 24, the tugboat *American Quest* docked. On board was the frisky two-year-old white terrier Forgea. Friends were at the pier with a colorful "Aloha" sign and leis. News media from around the country, such as *People Magazine* and *Inside Edition*, gathered to cover the dog's arrival.

This would be the dog's first time on land since being stranded twenty-four days earlier on a crippled oil tanker. The tanker's crew was rescued south of here by a passing cruise ship on April 2. They left the dog behind because the cruise ship would not take her.

Donations to help rescue Forgea totaled more than \$40,000. Money came from thirty-one states, Washington, D.C., South Africa, Great Britain, Canada, and Brazil. Two fishing boats had made a previous effort to rescue the terrier but were unsuccessful.

The *American Quest* crew had humane traps and food to capture Forgea, but those were unnecessary. When two crew members went onboard to inspect the tanker, the dog came right up to them. One of the two was a dog owner who was good with animals.

Iams, the dog food company, donated a lifetime supply of food to the dog's owners. "We want her to be well fed and happy for the rest of her life," they said.

Forgea was to be flown to Kauai, where she would be quarantined for 120 days. The governor was petitioned to shorten the time, but the terrier got no pardon.

Forgea's original name was "Hok Get," which is Taiwanese for "good fortunes." Some are calling her "the miracle mutt," and she truly is.

Eugene Morris
Associated Press Writer

Reading Comprehension

1. Number the following events in the order they happened.
___ Forgea is stranded.
___ The oil tanker is crippled.
___ The tugboat *American Quest* rescues the terrier.
___ The tanker crew is rescued.
2. In paragraph three, another word for *stranded* might be _____.
A. rescued
B. crippled
C. left
3. Money for the rescue came from
A. thirty-one states, South Africa, and Brazil.
B. Washington State, South Africa, and Canada.
C. Egypt, Great Britain, and Canada.
4. From reading this newspaper article, you can conclude
A. not many people like dogs.
B. a lot of money was spent to rescue Forgea.
C. ships are not a safe place for dogs.

Batty about Bats

Batty was a Mexican free-tail bat who lived in Bracken Cave, Texas. He was never lonely because 20 million of his relatives also lived in the cave. Most of the time Batty loved being a bat. He loved to see baby bats born and see them nurse for the first time. Each mother had only one baby per year.

He loved being the only mammal that truly flies. Batty used his hands and wings to hover, soar, and fly slowly. While he flapped his wings, he could go up or down by moving the skin between his body and fifth finger. Going up or down is called *lift*. When he wanted to move forward, he changed the shape of the skin between his second and fourth fingers.

Batty loved flying at night because it was cooler, and he didn't get thirsty and dry up from the heat. Dehydration was always a problem for bats. The night also brought out more insects—yum! Batty knew the saying "blind as a bat," but he knew it wasn't true. There are no blind bats—many can see very well. He and his friends also used sonar, or *echolocation*, to "see" in the dark by hearing. They sent out a high-frequency sound that came back as echoes. That way they knew what, where, and how far away something was. They liked to travel in total darkness—it was fun to be nocturnal.



But there were some things that made Batty unhappy. Most humans don't know that bats are very clean and groom their fur or hair by licking regularly—like a cat. Bats are also very helpful in controlling insects. If you don't want mosquitoes, one brown bat can catch 600 in one hour. Batty and his friends in his cave could eat 250 tons of insects in that amount of time! He hoped more people would learn to be "batty about bats."

Reading Comprehension

- Paragraph two tells us that bats are _____.
 - birds
 - mammals
 - rodents
- What happened when Batty changed the shape of the skin between his second and fourth fingers?
 - He moved forward.
 - He could lift himself up or down.
 - He was able to soar.
- Which is the main idea of paragraph three?
 - Becoming dehydrated was always a problem for bats.
 - Batty and his friends used sonar, or echolocation.
 - Bats fly at night for several reasons.
- In the third paragraph, what is the best meaning of the word *dehydration*?
 - cooler
 - drying up
 - problem
- A good meaning for the saying "batty about bats" might be
 - to like bats and how helpful they are.
 - to hate bats because you are afraid.
 - to keep bats away with a baseball bat.