



Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin

By Gene Barretta

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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.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 2-5—A clever, concise introduction to the contributions of this colorful colonial figure. The first spread depicts Franklin standing proudly by his family home with his wife and children smiling from within. His various occupations—writer, printer, diplomat, musician, humorist, postmaster, scientist, inventor, humanitarian—are written on the cobblestones beneath him. Next is a spread of a busy city street today, which challenges readers to guess which modern conveniences are owed to the subjects creativity. Subsequent spreads take a closer look at each invention from political cartoons, bifocals, electricity, lightning rod, and Franklin stove to daylight saving time and more. Each spread features a Now... description of a modern concept or convenience facing an early Ben... idea. Now...every automobile has an odometer to measure the distance it travels. Ben...invented the odometer when he was postmaster general so he could measure his postal routes. The fanciful final spread depicts a futuristic scene with flying-saucer vehicles and robot servers, which encourages youngsters to imagine how todays inventions will evolve in time. Engaging and humorous watercolor cartoons depict just how Franklins inventions were conceived and developed. The yellow mottled endpapers are filled with sketches of the inventions featured within. Both Alikis *The Many Lives of Benjamin Franklin* (S & S, 1988) and Rosalyn Schanzers *How Ben Franklin Stole the Lightning* (HarperCollins, 2003) offer more background and biographical information, though this lively offering is sure to inspire readers to learn more about its fascinating subject.—Barbara Auerbach, *New York City Public Schools*

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From Booklist

An authorial debut for illustrator Barretta, *Now & Ben* aims at the youngest readers, limiting its purview to Franklin as a slightly tubby, jolly inventor and innovator. Each left-hand page describes and illustrates one of Franklin's contributions as we know it ("Now . . . our newspapers are filled with illustrations"); the opposite page goes back in time to reveal the Franklin connection ("Ben . . . was the first to print a political cartoon in America"). Most young children won't grasp the play on the phrase *now and then* but will zero in instead on the well-chosen examples, which include bifocals and lightning rods as well as lesser-known notions (a rocking chair that churned butter!), all appealingly rendered in Barretta's relaxed, cartoonlike watercolors. This will be a punchy read-aloud to lighten up American history units, though teachers wanting more details will need to look elsewhere as the book's biographical context is scattershot and no end matter is provided.

Jennifer Mattson

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Review

“The extraordinary sense of Franklin as a severely temporally displaced person gives [this book] its power to delight . . . charming illustrations.”—*The New York Times Book Review*

“A clever, concise introduction to the contributions of this colorful colonial figure . . . sure to inspire readers to learn more about its fascinating subject.”—*School Library Journal*

“Barretta leads readers from what they do know to what they probably don't . . . Read this one aloud.”—*The Horn Book Magazine*

“With its breezy format and succinct text, the book delivers facts in an assuredly kid-friendly style.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A punchy read-aloud to lighten up American history units.”—*Booklist*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Billie Duran:

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also become a life style. This reading addiction give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want send more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want sense happy read one having theme for entertaining such as comic or novel. Typically the Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin is kind of publication which is giving the reader unstable experience.

Dawn Dustin:

This book untitled Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, honestly, that is because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy that book in the book shop or you can order it by way of online. The publisher of the book sells the e-book too. It makes you more readily to read this book, since you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this guide from your list.

Helen Velez:

Precisely why? Because this Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will distress you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such wonderful way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book include such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I had been you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

Harold Morris:

Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to place every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin nevertheless doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one among it. This great

information could draw you into brand-new stage of crucial pondering.

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