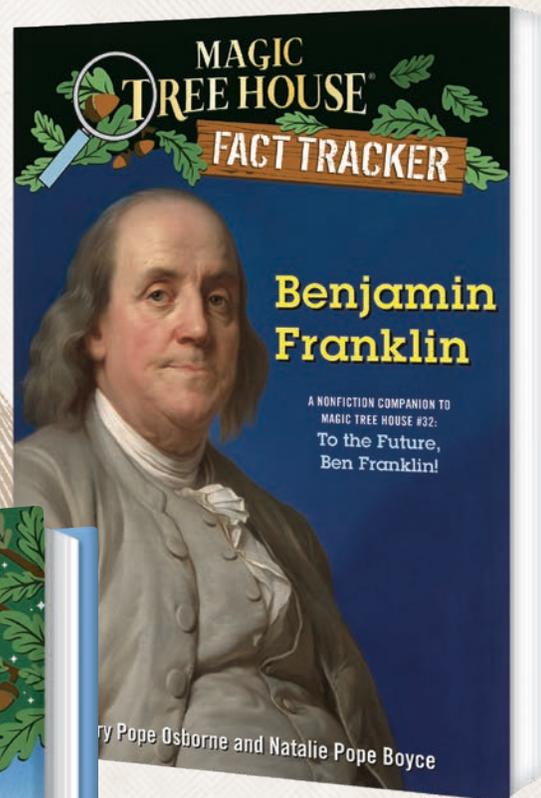
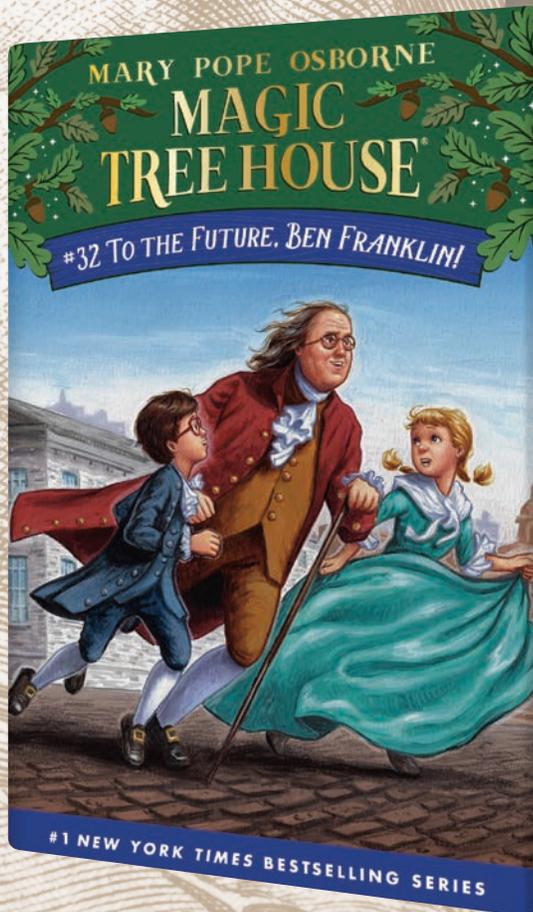


# EDUCATORS' GUIDE

# MAGIC TREE HOUSE®



## TO THE FUTURE, BEN FRANKLIN!

HC: 978-0-525-64832-1

EL: 978-0-525-64834-5

Grades: 1-4

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PB: 978-1-9848-9317-8

EL: 978-1-98989-9319-2

Grades: 2-5



## ABOUT *To the Future, Ben Franklin!*

Jack and Annie know all about Ben Franklin. He was a Founding Father, a journalist, and a famous inventor! When the magic tree house whisks them back to meet the man himself, they're not sure what their mission is. But Ben Franklin has a mission of his own. Intrigued by Jack and Annie, he's curious to learn more about where they came from. And very curious about their tree house . . .

## ABOUT *Benjamin Franklin:*

### A Nonfiction Companion to *To the Future, Ben Franklin!*

When Jack and Annie came back from their adventure in Magic Tree House #32: *To the Future, Ben Franklin!*, they had lots of questions. What was Ben Franklin's first job? How did a kite teach him about electricity? What are some of Ben's most famous inventions? Why did he have so many nicknames? Find out the answers to these questions and more as Jack and Annie track the facts about Benjamin Franklin. Filled with up-to-date information, photographs, illustrations, and fun tidbits from Jack and Annie, Fact Trackers are the perfect way for kids to find out more about the topics they discover in their favorite Magic Tree House adventures.



# GET INNOVATIVE WITH MAGIC TREE HOUSE

People, ideas, and events from the past have shaped the world we live in today. Your students are curious about the world around them and love to explore and discover why things are the way they are! Understanding how the actions of individuals and groups have made a difference in the lives of others can put students on the path to identifying problems, pursuing ideas, and creating solutions of their own.

*To the Future, Ben Franklin!* and the nonfiction companion *Benjamin Franklin* have inspired these **Magic Tree House** activities that encourage a thematic look at historical figures who were inventors and leaders, helping their communities through innovation and collaboration. In this guide, you'll find many ways to use **Magic Tree House** titles to launch learning adventures and bring history to life in your second- to fifth-grade classrooms, including modifications and extensions to help you differentiate instruction for your students.



# TAKE TIME

Timelines are a great way to help students think about change and continuity. Whether looking at someone's life, historical events, or the evolution of inventions or ideas, timelines show the passage of time and connect events to their larger contexts. Making a timeline is also a great way for students to further explore historical events and figures featured in the **Magic Tree House** series!

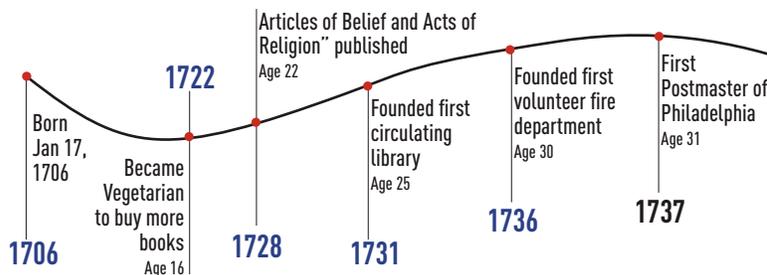
Encourage students to think about important events in their own lives, and make a timeline that begins with their birth and includes at least one important event for each year of their lives. This is great practice for students unfamiliar with making a timeline and allows them to compare their timelines with those of historical figures.

Remind students that Jack and Annie have witnessed incredible events and met amazing people who have made history. Focus on favorite Magic Tree House titles that feature inventors, innovators, and leaders and have Fact Tracker companion titles. Let students choose a Magic Tree House title, and then research one of the historical figures to make the subject of another timeline.

Provide additional multimedia resources and these questions to help guide students through research about their timeline subjects.

- What are the events of this person's life? When did they happen?
- What are some important historic events that happened during this person's life? When did they happen? Was the person involved?
- How did events impact this person? How did they react to them?

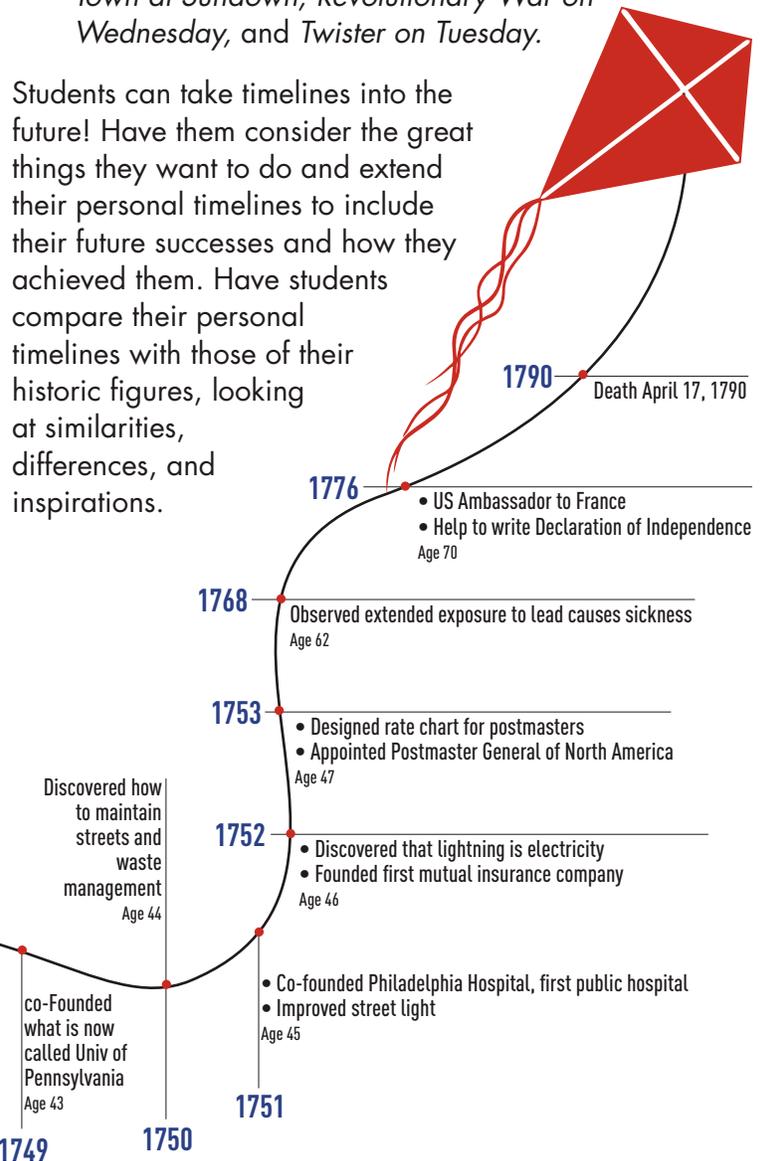
Have students put all the details they discover in chronological order and make decisions about what they want to include on their timelines. From this draft, students can create horizontal or vertical timelines on taped-together sheets of paper or poster board, and choose and print images or draw illustrations for their timelines. Students should practice presenting and then share their timelines!



## Modifications and extensions:

- For students who need extra support, provide a timeline template.
- Students can create timelines about inventions, innovations, or events rather than historical figures. For example, students reading *To the Future, Ben Franklin!* and *Fact Tracker Benjamin Franklin* may create a timeline of his inventions or the evolution of one of Franklin's inventions, detailing the reasons behind the changes.
- For a class project, as students read, they can categorize Magic Tree House titles by historical period or other themes, and create and add to larger timelines. For example, a timeline of American history in the 1800s might feature entries inspired by *Abe Lincoln at Last!*, *Civil War on Sunday*, *Ghost Town at Sundown*, *Revolutionary War on Wednesday*, and *Twister on Tuesday*.

Students can take timelines into the future! Have them consider the great things they want to do and extend their personal timelines to include their future successes and how they achieved them. Have students compare their personal timelines with those of their historic figures, looking at similarities, differences, and inspirations.



# UNPACKING HISTORY

*During their missions, Jack and Annie often encounter—and are sometimes asked to retrieve—objects from the past. Historical artifacts can reveal much about the time they are from and the people associated with them. Have students create objects to introduce a historical figure they read about in the **Magic Tree House** series to their classmates.*

Start by introducing your students to personal artifacts and primary source documents. Pack a box with documents and personal items important to your life story. Present the box to your class and ask them to predict what the items represent as you unpack each one in chronological order. Try to include a variety of items—letters, photographs, official documents, trophies, jewelry, toys, recipes—and consider including items students may not be familiar with—record albums, cassette tapes, CDs, and outdated electronics. Have students write down what they think each item is. After all the items are unpacked, ask for guesses about who the items represent. After you identify your artifacts, tell them more about your connections to the objects and give them time to ask questions.

Share with students that they are going to pack boxes with artifacts representing historical figures from their favorite Magic Tree House book. Encourage focus on Magic Tree House titles that have Magic Tree House Fact Tracker companion titles to ease initial research. Let students

choose their Magic Tree House titles, then begin their reading and research on the topic of their History Mystery Box.

Encourage students to keep the subject of their History Mystery Box a secret. Make sure that everyone has a box with a lid (a large shoebox works well), and let students decorate the outside of their boxes if they wish. Have students fill their boxes and give them time to plan and practice their presentations, which should include at least one interesting detail about each artifact. During presentations, students should ask their classmates for guesses on who the items represent after all items are unpacked. After the subject is revealed, give each presenter time to answer questions about individual artifacts or the subject's connection to them.

## Modifications and extensions:

- For younger students, you may want to use this activity to introduce historical figures.
- Have students work in pairs to research and collect artifacts, and present their History Mystery Box together.
- Have students use items from unpacked boxes to create tabletop timelines by placing objects in chronological order, along with cards that explain their historical contexts, on a table or counter in the classroom.

Provide an example of a History Mystery Box (outlined below) and suggestions for types of artifacts and documents they should include in their boxes.

HISTORY MYSTERY BOX		
Who's in the box:	Mystery objects:	
Jackie Robinson	Photo of a bus from the 1940s	
	Map of Brooklyn from the 1940s	
	A baseball	
	The number 42	
	Photo of Robinson-Reese statue in Coney Island	
Who's in the box:	Kinds of objects to include:	Mystery objects:
	Copies or re-creations of letters or journal entries	
	Photos of the subject or events they participated in	
	Photos of objects that belonged to or were made by the subject	
	Photos of objects that wouldn't fit in the box	
	Re-creations or reproductions that represent actual objects the subject invented, created, owned, or used	
	Maps	
	Copies of official documents	

# LIVING HISTORY CHARACTERS

*Developing a living history character provides students with powerful insight into how people lived in other times and how the past connects with our lives today. Bring this into the classroom with first-person presentations of historical figures.*

Start by introducing students to a living history character. Pique their curiosity by greeting them one morning dressed as a historical figure featured in one of the Magic Tree House titles! As that figure, share your story with students, talking about your accomplishments and what life is like for you during your time. Encourage questions, but don't break character!

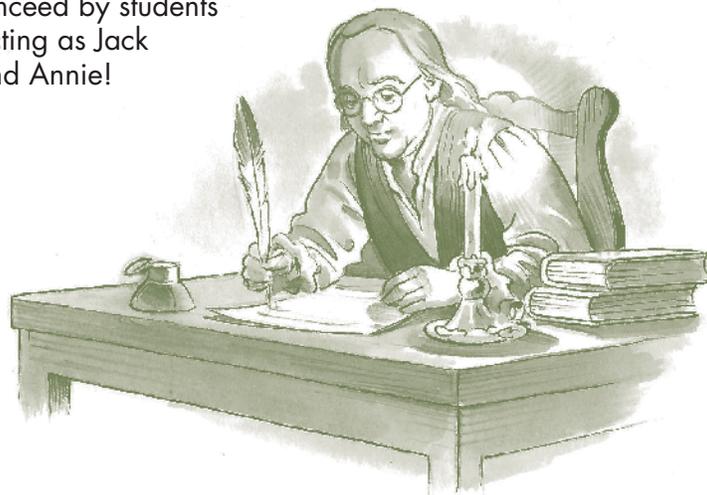
Once you've stepped out of character, talk about how you developed your first-person interpretation, and explain that students are going to give a presentation as a historical figure. Discuss some of the historical figures that students have already met through their reading of Magic Tree House titles. Who do they want to learn more about and bring to life? Give them the opportunity to do some initial research before deciding on the historical figure they want to portray.

Provide students with the questions and suggestions below to guide their research. Magic Tree House Fact Tracker titles and their Doing More Research sections are good places to start. Have students keep a journal of what they discover so all their notes are in one place when they are ready to write the script for their first-person presentation.

- Historical figure's name
- When were you born? Where were you born?
- Who are your parents? When were they born?
- What jobs do your parents have?
- Who are your brothers and sisters? When were they born? Are they older or younger than you?
- Is there an interesting story about you and your family from when you were little?
- Who taught you things? If you went to school, where did you go?
- As a grown-up, where do you live? What is your house like?
- Are you married? Who are you married to?
- Is there an interesting story about how you met the person you married?
- Do you have children? How many? What are their names?
- Are you and your family healthy?

- What kinds of clothes do you wear? What do they look like?
- Who are your friends?
- What is your job?
- Is there an interesting story about what you do in your job or how you help others?
- Have you traveled? Where have you been?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What do you worry about?
- What have you created or accomplished?

As students begin writing scripts for their three- to five-minute presentations, encourage them to include vivid stories to help their classmates step back in time with them. For example, George Washington might talk about what it was like to be elected president at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. Once scripts are complete, have students work on what they plan to wear. Host a dress rehearsal with students performing for their classmates before having a special evening of living history for parents and the community, emceed by students acting as Jack and Annie!



## Modifications and extensions:

- Provide younger students with fewer research questions.
- Students can present by reading from their script.
- For students who need help staying focused during their presentation, suggest presenting an artifact important to the figure. For example, a student Benjamin Franklin might present a lightning rod and talk about how it was invented and works.
- Let historical figures take a field trip to the future! Have students work in pairs to plan and perform conversations between a student in character as a historical figure and a student from today.

# GET INNOVATIVE

*Innovative thinking helps us adapt to the world around us. Jack and Annie have to adapt to different worlds all the time! Help students flex their creative muscles and let them think, learn, and experiment as they explore these challenges.*

## Story Circle

Have seven to ten students sit in a circle. Provide each student with a picture of a person, object, or place. Give them some time to look at their pictures and think about what their pictures show. Students can also turn and talk to their neighbor about the picture they have. Tell students to use their pictures to begin telling a story. One student should go first, and then invite the student sitting next to them to continue the story, incorporating their picture. The story continues around the circle, growing with each new picture! Then share with the entire class.

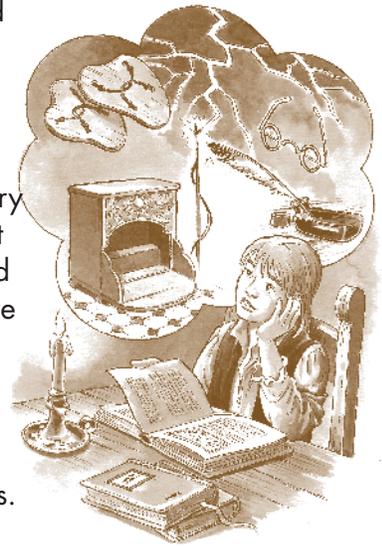
## Solve This Scenario

As a class, brainstorm ideas for an adventure that Jack and Annie could have in your town or state. What history happened in your area? Once you have decided on a scenario, ask students to come up with a solution that gets Jack and Annie back to the tree house safely. Since Jack and Annie often benefit from magic, students could brainstorm and generate a wish list of the must-have

items or skills that would help most. Have students vote to choose the final solution and discuss the outcome.

## Think Outside the Box

Sometimes inventing something means using an existing object for a different purpose. Provide a box of common items—egg cartons, empty spools, paper cups, cardboard tubes, sealable plastic bags—and encourage students to come up with all the different ways a particular item could be used. Have them write their list and then demonstrate, draw, or describe one way to use an item that is different from its original purpose. Then get them thinking about the history of the items in the box. What might have been used to hold eggs before egg cartons were invented? Have students research to find out more about the origins of things they use every day, such as computers, cars, and crayons.



# HISTORY TRADING CARDS

*Jack and Annie have met quite a collection of historical figures. In creating their own trading cards, students can demonstrate their knowledge in a familiar format that is fun while creating a collection of favorite figures they've met through **Magic Tree House** titles!*

Start by letting students choose figures to feature on the trading cards. Some students may want to make lots of cards, but let them know they will need to do research for each person they make a card for.

Provide them with resources and these questions to guide their research and help them build knowledge.

- What is the person's full name?
- When was this person born? When did this person die?
- What was this person's job?
- Why is this person important?

- What are three interesting facts about this person?
- Where did you find your information about this person?

After they have finished their research, provide students with the **History Trading Cards** reproducible so they can create their cards. Finished cards can be displayed, or you can encourage students to invent games that use their cards. Or have them try this game: Lay all the cards picture side up on a table. The first player turns over two cards and reads the backs. If the player can name something the two historical figures have in common (more than "both humans"), they have made a match and keep the cards. The player who makes the most historical connections wins! You can also make the game about Jack and Annie's adventures by creating cards and having students match their historical figures to specific **Magic Tree House** titles.

# HISTORY TRADING CARDS

Share history with others! Make trading cards about your favorite inventors, leaders, and community helpers in the Magic Tree House books.

On the front of each card, draw a picture of the person or find one online to print and attach. On the back of each card, include the name of the person, their birth date, and an interesting fact about the person.

When you've finished writing and drawing, cut out your card. Fold it along the dashed line so your writing and picture are on the outside. Use a little glue to keep the card folded.

