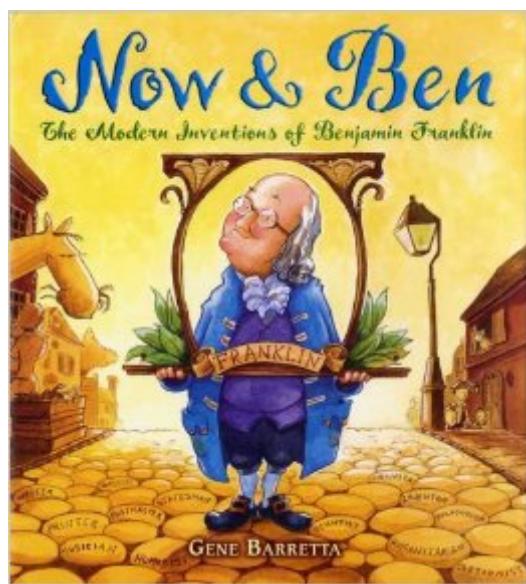


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# Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions Of Benjamin Franklin



## **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?)

Paperback: 40 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 50 customer reviews

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Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## **Customer Reviews**

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 subject's 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&Ben description of a modern concept or convenience facing an early Ben&Ben idea. Now&Ben every automobile has an odometer to measure the distance it travels. Ben&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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--This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

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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--This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This is a fantastic story about all the achievements of Benjamin Franklin. He lived the life of 5 men; he accomplished so muc.

daughter used this book for a Ben Franklin project in 1st grade. She loves it!

Excellent book! A must for every child!

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...

Love this book!

Beautiful and clever illustrations more than complement the text which is interesting and captivating for older children as well as young-at-heart adults. Side-by-side pictures and text depict how Ben's ideas and inventions affected his time period and how they still do in modern times. This book is worth the price if only for the artwork or the text. One of the best non-fiction pictures books I've read and I'm a retired children's school librarian. This biography should be in every school library for children to enjoy and teacher's to share in American history.

We had a school report on a famous American, and my little sweetie chose Ben Franklin. For the book report part of the project, we used the book "Ben Franklin's Big Shock," but for project ideas and illustrations, you simply can not beat this book. It's very fun and funny, and yet still instructive. This is a very worthwhile book, and it sets those little inventor wheels spinning inside their little heads. Lovely.

Great, great book about a very interesting man. For a homeschool unit study we are learning all about Ben Franklin and this has been my kids' (10 and 5) favorite book we have read. The illustrations are just wonderful- you see something new each time you flip through this book. My 10 year old loves the illustrations so much that she is tracing the image of Ben Franklin right now so that she can color him in and include the image in her report! The book begins with an illustration of Ben in the middle of a modern day city, the book ends with him standing in the middle of a futuristic city. This was a great way to show the kids how much things have changed since Ben's time- and how much more they might change in our lifetime. Great book- would love to see more from this very talented author/illustrator. Plan to order his Neo Leo soon!

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