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# *Ben and Me*

by Robert Lawson

## **FOREWORD**

1. In whose point of view is the Foreword written? From where and when? What makes this information amusing?  
(The Foreword is written from the viewpoint of the book's author, Robert Lawson, from Rabbit Hill, in 1939. This is amusing because Rabbit Hill is the title of another book written by Mr. Lawson.)
2. What has the writer of the Foreword found?  
(He has found a tiny manuscript which he claims was written by a mouse and authenticated by scientists.)
3. How do you know this book will be a mixture of fact and fiction?  
(There is no Brownsonian Institute and mice cannot write.)

## **CHAPTER 1: *I, Amos***

1. Who begins to tell the story in Chapter 1 and following?  
(Amos, a mouse; he is upset by all the wrong information written about Ben Franklin, and writes his account to set the record straight.)
2. In what city does the story take place?  
(It takes place in Philadelphia.)
3. Briefly describe Amos's home life and why he left.  
(Amos was the oldest mouse of a large family. They were very poor, and one hard winter Amos decided it was time for him to strike out on a life of his own in order to help out.)
4. List the items of information you recognize as historically correct.  
(Benjamin Franklin himself and the fact that he was a well-known scientist, inventor, printer, etc.; Old Christ Church is on Second Street, in Philadelphia, PA; each room was heated by a fireplace; light for writing was provided by a candle; Ben Franklin wore glasses; many homes had very little furniture.)

## **CHAPTER 2: *We Invent the Franklin Stove***

1. What does the phrase "Waste not, want not" mean?  
(If you are careful not to waste your money or resources and use them wisely, you are likely to have more in the end.)

2. What current knowledge did Amos share with Franklin that he used as inspiration for building his stove?  
(Amos knew that heat out in the open warms up the whole surrounding area, and sailors used sand and bricks to protect the floor of a ship from overheating and catching fire.)
3. How was Franklin's stove an improvement over his fireplace?  
(Franklin's stove warmed the entire room and did not lose heat through the chimney.)

### **CHAPTER 3: *The Bargain***

1. What bargain did Amos make with Franklin?  
(Amos provided Franklin with help and advice, and Franklin provided Amos's family with regular food and gave Amos a permanent home and livelihood for the rest of his life.)
2. How did Franklin improve his cap that enabled Amos to help him more readily?  
(He sewed a compartment for food storage and for sleeping, a peep-hole in front so Amos could see where they were going, and a hole in the lining by Franklin's ear so Amos could talk to him unseen.)
3. Just for fun: Do you think it's a fact that Ben Franklin wore a fur cap much of the time, no matter the weather? How could you verify this information?

### **CHAPTER 4: *Swimming***

1. Why did the town people think Ben Franklin had drowned?  
(Franklin was chasing a dog which stole his cap from the bank while he was swimming. Two men found his clothing and engraved watch, but saw no sign of Ben, so they assumed he had drowned.)

### **CHAPTER 5: *We Do Some Printing***

1. What is the name of the famous book that Franklin wrote? What is an almanac?  
(*Poor Richard's Almanack*; An almanac is a book published yearly that contains information about the sun, moon, and other various topics of interest.)