

Warm-Up Activity:

What is the American Dream?

My Definition:

An Example:

Directions: Circle the correct answer.

1. Why was Benjamin Franklin in France?
 - a. He was on vacation.
 - b. He was chosen to be the first person to represent America to the outside world.
 - c. He was interested in learning about French culture.
2. In America, what determines the outcome of one's life?
 - a. Individual citizens determine the outcome of their own lives.
 - b. Political and social status determines the outcome of citizens' lives.
 - c. Economic status determines the outcome of citizens' lives.
 - d. Both b and c.
3. In France, what determined the outcome of one's life?
 - a. Individual citizens determined the outcome of their own lives.
 - b. Political and social status determined the outcome of their lives.
 - c. Economic status determined the outcome of their lives.
 - d. Both b and c.
4. What kind of government did France and many other countries have during Franklin's time?
 - a. Democracy - citizens could vote
 - b. Monarchy - citizens were ruled by monarchs and nobles
 - c. Theocracy - religious leaders held political power



5. Benjamin Franklin explains that in the USA, they were trying something called “self-rule,” which means...
 - a. there was no government; citizens made their own laws.
 - b. citizens were ruled by each other.
 - c. every citizen was free to build their lives how they wanted.

Short Response:

6. How was Benjamin Franklin’s life changed by the American Dream?

7. What did Benjamin Franklin do in France that was essential to America’s independence?

8. In the video, Layla says, “Even though we don’t have a nobility or monarchy, some people are born into better situations than others.” According to Benjamin Franklin, does this affect the American Dream?

9. According to Benjamin Franklin, how do we know that the American Dream still exists today? List three reasons from the video.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Directions: Evaluate whether the following statements accurately describe the American Dream. Write “True” or “False” next to each statement.

The American Dream...

10. _____ means someone moves to America.

11. _____ means simply the desire to improve your life through your own invention.

12. _____ does not apply to American citizens.

13. _____ means having security and comfort.

14. _____ means promised success.

15. _____ means promised freedom.

16. _____ means one must be brave and take risks.

17. **Making Connections:** In the video, Benjamin Franklin comments that the American Dream is still alive and well today.

a. What types of behavior lead to success today? List at least two mentioned in the video.

b. Reread your responses in the Warm-Up Activity. Considering what you have learned from Benjamin Franklin, what is your definition of the American Dream? Did it change from before watching the video? Explain.

c. What is your American Dream? What do you hope to achieve in your life?

Benjamin Franklin | Answer Key

Warm-Up Activity

Check students' brainstorm for completion.

Directions: Circle the correct answer.

1. Why was Benjamin Franklin in France?
 - a. He was on vacation.
 - b. He was chosen to be the first person to represent the United States of America to the outside world.
 - c. He was interested in learning about French culture.
2. In America, what determines the outcome of one's life?
 - a. Individual citizens determine the outcome of their own lives.
 - b. Political and social status determines the outcome of citizens' lives.
 - c. Economic status determines the outcome of citizens' lives.
 - d. Both b and c.
3. In France, what determined the outcome of one's life?
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4. What kind of government did France and many other countries have during Franklin's time?
 - a. Democracy - citizens could vote
 - b. Monarchy - citizens were ruled by monarchs and nobles
 - c. Theocracy - religious leaders held political power
5. Benjamin Franklin explains that in the USA, they were trying something called "self-rule," which means...
 - a. there was no government; citizens made their own laws.
 - b. citizens were ruled by each other.
 - c. every citizen was free to build their lives how they wanted.

Short Response:

6. How was Benjamin Franklin's life changed by the American Dream?

Benjamin Franklin was born into a middle-class family. His father set him up with an apprenticeship, and he was on track to have a nice life as a printer, but that wasn't enough for him. He dreamed of bigger things, and his American Dream got him to Philadelphia at the age of 17. He chose to leave the security and comfort of home. Thanks to hard work and some good ideas, Franklin lived an incredible life as a printer, a businessman, a writer, a scientist, an inventor, a freedom fighter, and a statesman.
7. What did Benjamin Franklin do in France that was essential to America's independence?

If Benjamin Franklin had not secured assistance from France, there was not a chance that the U.S. would have defeated the British and won our independence. They provided money, supplies, troops, and naval support.

8. In the video, Layla says, “Even though we don’t have a nobility or monarchy, some people are born into better situations than others.” According to Benjamin Franklin, does this affect the American Dream?

Sample answer: Benjamin Franklin explains that because every human is unique, the natural outcome of equal opportunity is unequal results. Even when treated equally, people don’t always end up in the same place. Some will have less, and some will have more. What’s special about America is that what matters is not where you come from but where you’re headed—not who you have been or what you have now, but what you can become.

9. According to Benjamin Franklin, how do we know that the American Dream still exists in our time today? List three reasons from the video.

Students should include at least 3 of the following:

- Immigration: people move to America from other countries.
- American citizens can start and own their own businesses.
- Higher education and certifications are NOT required for success.
- There is no nobility or titles – Americans are not born with fancy titles.

Directions: Evaluate whether the following statements accurately describe the American Dream. Write “True” or “False” next to each statement.

The American Dream...

10. False means someone moves to America.
11. True means simply the desire to improve your life through your own invention.
12. False does not apply to American citizens.
13. False means having security and comfort.
14. False means promised success.
15. True means promised freedom.
16. True means one must be brave and take risks.
17. **Making Connections:** In the video, Benjamin Franklin comments that the American Dream is still alive and well today.

- a. What types of behavior lead to success today? List at least two behaviors mentioned in the video.

Students should include at least 2 of the following:

- Hard work
- Being nice to others
- Smart decisions
- Having good ideas

- b. Reread your response in the Warm-Up Activity. Considering what you have learned from Benjamin Franklin, what is your definition of the American Dream? Has it changed from before watching the video? Explain.

Sample answer: The American Dream is the freedom to pursue happiness and create the life you want. If you dream of a better life and dare to make it happen, that is the American Dream. My definition did or did not change from before watching the video because...

- c. What is your American Dream? What do you hope to achieve in your life?

Answers will vary.