

# **Prompt & Thesis Guide: Book Essay I**

## **Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography***

### **PROMPT**

To plan your book essay, begin by examining the Prompt even prior to reading the book.

**VERY Important:** *This essay is NOT to be written as a simple biography about Ben Franklin. You are to address the questions in the prompt.*

### **PROMPT for Book Essay I: *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin***

Benjamin Franklin is known not only as a Founding Father but also as a creative genius.

- How did Franklin's autobiography help you better understand him as a person?
- What does the book tell you about the formation of the United States?
- What does it tell you about life in early America?
- Most importantly, how does Franklin's life and legacy help you better understand the question of "who were the early Americans and why do they matter?"

In the text of your essay, you need to address each question/topic listed in the prompt. This is standard practice for all college courses using prompts! :-D

As you examine the prompt, you can see that the topics suggested by these questions are:

- 1) Franklin as a person,
- 2) formation of the US,
- 3) life in early America, and
- 4) Franklin's legacy.

Many students use these four questions as the structure for how they organize their essay, devoting a section to each topic. This can be helpful! You do not necessarily need to address the topics in the order they are listed in the prompt. As you read the book, focus on these questions and take notes directed toward the topics! 😊

### **OUTLINE**

Create an Outline to help you organize your examples and information before you write

- In terms of the writing process, planning is the key to success! It is recommended that students create an outline based on the sections of the prompt to plan their essay before starting to write. Then, in each section of the outline, students should list examples and page numbers from the book that illustrate each point. Once the outline is full of examples, start writing!

### **THESIS STATEMENT**

You must create a THESIS STATEMENT that indicates the arguments you will make in your paper.

Thesis Statement examples:

- The straightforward, honest account of the life of Benjamin Franklin shows twenty-first century readers the lasting impact of a life of hard work, diligence, innovation, and perseverance.
- *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* aids us in understanding who he was as a person, demonstrates the beginnings of the formation of the United States, paints vivid pictures of life in early America, and describes the early Americans and their part in history.

*(Do you see how all parts of the prompt are included in this Thesis Statement example?)*

**An additional tip about college papers:**

- During your college experience, I encourage you to utilize skilled proofreaders in your life (moms, dads, older siblings, etc) any time you have a writing assignment! Proofreaders can check your paper for basic formatting, grammar, and skill in addressing the prompt, providing some suggestions that could help you avoid losing points for simple errors. Sometimes an extra set of eyes can be extremely helpful!