

Q85 – Benjamin Franklin is famous for many things. Name one .

DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:

Benjamin Franklin ranks among the greatest Americans – and for good reason. He didn't finish grade school but he educated himself by reading widely. And he helped fellow Philadelphians educate themselves by founding the first free public library -- the largest public library in America for more than a century.

Franklin's curiosity steered him toward invention. The economical Franklin stove is still used today. Millions of people wear the glasses he invented: bifocals. And buildings worldwide are safeguarded by the lightning rod: a byproduct of his experiments with electricity.

During the American Revolution, Congress named Franklin the first postmaster general. Franklin helped write the birth certificate of the United States: the Declaration of Independence. And he returned to Independence Hall to help draft the Constitution – making him one of only six Founders to sign both documents.

In his seventies, Franklin embarked on a new career: diplomat. In Paris, Franklin campaigned to enlist France as an ally during the Revolution. He succeeded – and French money, soldiers, and ships helped win our independence. Later, Franklin helped negotiate the treaty with Britain that ended the war.

No wonder we see Franklin's name everywhere. In the names of schools. In the names of towns. Even in our wallets. On the \$100 dollar bill.