

Mr. Francis
American Literature II

A Bold and Arduous Project

One of the major themes of American literature is the self-making of the ideal man. Benjamin Franklin provides an opportunity to explore this theme in the contexts of virtue, economy, scholarship, business, and innovation. As an archetypical American, he presents a model for the express purpose of encouraging others to imitate his behavior.

Design your own project for "arriving at moral perfection" (93), by planning a "scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day" (98) and a list of virtues.

Your challenge: Create your own "bold and arduous project," in an effort to define virtue for our contemporary age by exploring another social experiment of a so-called successful American.

This assignment will have five parts:

1. **Motto:** Find a verse or proverb to serve as your motto (cf. pp. 96, 98). Attribute it, as Franklin does his.
2. **Scheme:** Plan the twenty-four hours of your usual school day, with times and activities for class, commute, homework, work or chores, etc. Find a clever way to represent it visually.
3. **Questions:** Write a question to ask yourself each morning and a second one to ask yourself each evening.
4. **Virtues:** Choose three virtues that you would like to develop, then annex to each a short precept to fully express the extent of its meaning (94).
5. **Analysis:** Write an analysis in which you compare and contrast your project with Franklin's.

Length guidelines: your analysis should be 200-350 words. You may exceed two pages.

Format guidelines: All submissions must be double-spaced with a Courier New font and one-inch margins all around.

Assessment: Your response will be assessed pass/fail based on how adequately and appropriately it addresses the prompt.

Submission guidelines: Late submissions will not be accepted. Please upload to turnitin.com by 7:59 a.m. on the assigned due date.

Any assistance in completing this assignment (including your classmates, the instructor, on-line resources, any printed material, etc.) should be noted in your declaration. I will not tolerate academic dishonesty.