

The Boston News-Letter

1704 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

news — reports about events

print — make words or pictures on a surface

source — where information comes from

Look closely



Modern topic illustration created for Massachusetts History Explorers. It is not a historical artifact.

Read the story

The Boston News-Letter began in 1704. It became the first continuously published newspaper in English America. An earlier Boston newspaper had lasted one issue. Newspapers help us study what people chose to report.

Postmaster John Campbell began the newspaper. Official approval shaped publication. Shipping news, foreign reports, and advertisements reveal priorities and biases; printing a claim did not automatically make it true.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: Benjamin Franklin is born in Boston

1706

Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston. He learned about printing as a boy. Later he moved to Philadelphia. He became a writer, inventor, and public leader. His life connected many places.

Franklin worked in his brother James's print shop. His later work joined science, publishing, and diplomacy. A birthplace connects a person to Massachusetts without locating every achievement here.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: The Boston News-Letter began in 1704. It became the first continuously published newspaper in English America. An earlier Boston newspaper had lasted one issue. Newspapers help us study what people chose to report. Postmaster John Campbell began the newspaper. Official approval shaped publication. Shipping news, foreign reports, and advertisements reveal priorities and biases; printing a claim did not automatically make it true.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: Original site illustration.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.