

Who is this famous person?

- The French author Balzac claimed this person “should be credited with inventing the United States”.
- He was the seventh son of a soapmaker.
- Had two years of formal schooling.
- He spoke English, French, Italian, Spanish and Latin fluently.
- He was first to chart the Gulf Stream.
- He was married for forty years to a wife that was almost illiterate and rarely seen, but to whom he noted “we thrive together”
- During his life he had a major dispute with his son. The stand taken by the son ultimately caused him to be labeled a traitor and a spy.
- This person had a strong belief in the future. Once in a foreign country a skeptic witnessed the ascension of a balloon. The skeptic quipped “Of what earthly use is a balloon?” to which this person responded “Of what earthly use is a new born baby?”
- Who is this famous person?

Source: Storer, Doug. Amazing but true stories behind the stamp. NY: Pocket books, 1976/

Answer: Ben Franklin