Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids
http://bensguide.gpo.gov/

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GPO

1. **MISSION**
   Ben's Guide is the education component of *GPO Access*. The mission of *Ben's Guide* is to provide a Web presence in which students (K-12) and other interested users learn how our Government works, how to use the primary source materials of *GPO Access*, how to access information about the activities of the Federal Government, and how the U.S. Government Printing Office fits into the Federal construct.

2. **DIVISION OF CONTENT**
   Divided into four grade ranges: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12. Also includes a section for Parents and Educators.

3. **CHALKBOARDS**
   Once a user chooses a range to explore, they are taken to the main topics page. The topics on the chalkboard are main areas a user may choose from to learn more about Government. Basically the topics on the chalkboard remain the same, only the content is tailored to the grade range; however, K-2 is a unique grade level.

4. **Grades K-2**
   Since civics is not traditionally introduced until the third or fourth grade, we gear the K-2 section of *Ben's Guide* as a student's first introduction to the U.S. Government. Since we are dealing with an age group that is just learning how to read, the topics are explained simply and with a balance of text and graphics.

   NOTE: Show Ben's ABCs -- letters A and W.

5. **AGE PROGRESSION**
   Example of grade progression: **"How Laws Are Made"** -- Grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12
   a. **Grade 3-5:** Note larger font for younger audience.
   b. **Grade 6-8:** Point to official documents within *GPO Access* resources.
   c. **Grades 9-12:** Instructions on how to search *GPO Access* resources to retrieve documents.

   NOTE: Grades 6-8 and 9-12 use the example of the International Dolphin Conservation Act.

   NOTE: The *GPO Access* resources incorporated into "How Laws Are Made" for Grades 6-8 and 9-12 are the Congressional Bills, Congressional Record, Congressional Reports, House Calendar, Public Laws, and Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

6. **STATE INFORMATION**
   Ben's Guide concentrates on teaching users about the Federal Government; however,

Ben provides links to each state's official Web site and kids site, if available. This section provides information on each state's capital city, motto, or date of statehood. It also allows students to see a picture of their Member of Congress in the Congressional Pictorial Directory, find a local Federal depository library, search the Congressional Directory, and write their Member of Congress.

NOTE: Choose Maryland and point out several areas.

7. **GAMES AND ACTIVITIES**
   To reinforce the information taught on Ben's Guide, games and activities are provided. Since not everyone has the latest and greatest technology, printable and online games are provided. Online games are provided using Flash since it is a free plug-in and the games are playable on all types of computers.

8. **PARENTS AND EDUCATORS**
   Provides information for parents and educators on how to use Ben's Guide as a learning tool; highlights publications GPO sells that are geared toward parents, educators, and kids; how to link to Ben's Guide; how to locate information in Federal depository libraries; a list of curriculum resources for educators as well as Web sites designed by the Federal Government specifically for parents and educators.

9. **OTHER FEDERAL WEB SITES FOR KIDS**
   Just as *GPO Access* includes a section of "Finding Aids" to allow users to find information produced by other government agencies that are not resident on GPO servers, *Ben's Guide* acts as a pointer to other U.S. Government Web sites that have been designed for kids. This application is available for each of the grade ranges as well as the "Parents and Teachers" section. This section is duplicated in three ways – by agency, alphabetically by site's title, and by subject, which is the default.

   NOTE: Highlight the reciprocal link to FirstGov for Kids.

10. **HELP TOOLS**
    Help tools are provided, such as site search, site map, and AskBen. GPO relies heavily on user feedback to improve *Ben's Guide* and encourage users to e-mail Ben with suggestions or comments regarding the site. AskBen is not a research service.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the goals of Ben's Guide?
   a. The mission of *Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids* is to provide a Web presence in which students (K-12) and other interested users learn how our Government works, how to use the primary source materials of *GPO Access*, how to access information about the activities of the Federal Government, and how the U.S. Government Printing Office fits into the Federal construct.
2. How is the content on Ben's Guide divided?
   a. Divided into four grade ranges: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, and Parents and Educators.
3. What is the starting point for each grade range?
   a. Ben standing next to a chalkboard of broad Government topics.
4. In Ben's ABCs, what does the letter A represent for the Federal Government?
   a. Armed Forces
5. Name the *GPO Access* resources that are introduced in the "How Laws Are Made" sections.
   a. Congressional Bills, Congressional Record, Congressional Reports, House Calendar, Public Laws, and Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

6. What can you learn from the "Quick Facts About Your State" section?
    a. Can have many answers. See http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/state/maryland.html.
7. What plug-in allows users to play the online games on Ben's Guide?
    a. Flash
8. What types of materials are available under the Parents and Educators kite?
    a. How to use Ben's Guide as a learning tool; highlights publications GPO sells that are geared toward parents, educators, and kids; how to link to Ben's Guide; how to locate information in Federal depository libraries; a list of curriculum resources for educators as well as Web sites designed by the Federal Government specifically for parents and educators.
9. What are the three ways that other Federal Web sites for Kids are organized into on Ben's Guide?
    a. Alphabetical by title, by agency, and by topic.
10. How do you contact Ben with questions, comments, and suggestions?
    a. You can e-mail Ben at askBen@gpo.gov.