

Key ideas in "The Spirit of Nationalism" video <http://www.learner.org/resources/series164.html#>

1. What is nationalism? What does it have to do with Benjamin Franklin?
2. American ideals of freedom and equality. American character: what is an American?
3. America needed to create its own identity. How could we be something other than a cultural colony.
4. After the Revolution, the country was morally and intellectually adrift. It would never be part of Europe again.
5. God-centered thought had slowly moved to man-centered thought—this led to the idea that people could govern themselves. The Enlightenment partly persuaded people that they could control their own destiny.
6. The shift to Enlightenment thinking and the growth of the newspaper industry made people receptive to the power of the moral essay.
7. Franklin's writings helped symbolize the spirit of Enlightenment in America, the concept of the ideal American. His autobiography creates a foundational myth of America.
8. Franklin's story shows that if one were trained and confident, willing to labor, one could have the American Dream.
9. Freeing up your mind, looking at the world around you, you could figure out practically anything.
10. Franklin presented himself as a self-made man. Born in Boston in 1706, he apprenticed to his brother as a printer. He was a leather apron man. He rejected the Puritan belief in original sin. Man began as a blank slate who could control his own destiny. He depicted himself as a role model for the self-made man. He argued that one should improve one's self in order to improve the community.
11. In America, the Revolution made all values seem open to question. How will Franklin become a citizen? What does it mean to be a citizen of a free republic? How will his place become a place apart?
12. Franklin was a Deist. He gave little thought to anything that couldn't be proved.
13. Rather than using Scriptures to understand life, Franklin used his own life to examine life.
14. In some ways, Frederick Douglass seems to imitate Franklin in talking about the importance of self-education.
15. After the Enlightenment, the Romantic Movement comes. One of the Romantic writers, Herman Melville (*Moby Dick*) said of Franklin that he was "everything but a poet." Melville is not interested in Franklin's continual focus on only what is practical.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the Transcendentalist writers during the Romantic Period, viewed the landscape as a place where people can be spiritually elevated

Trust yourself, Emerson wrote.