

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Daylight Saving Time

Once a year, many people around the world set their clocks forward one hour. We say they “spring ahead” from Standard Time to Daylight Saving Time (DST) or Summer Time, as some countries call it. The purpose of DST is to get the most use of daylight hours. Countries closer to the North and South Poles have more daylight during the summer. As a result, DST begins in late winter or early spring and lasts through late autumn. Not all countries observe DST. For example, countries near the equator have a similar number of daylight hours year-round so DST is not needed. Other countries, such as China, Japan, and India, choose not to observe it.

Benjamin Franklin, a United States statesman and inventor, introduced the idea of maximizing daylight hours in 1784 in an amusing letter to the editors of a Paris newspaper. Mr. Franklin wrote that he awoke one summer morning at 6:00 AM by accident to find his room full of sunlight. He was shocked to discover how early the sun rose in the summer. He reasoned that if he woke up earlier on summer mornings, he could use sunlight to work during the extra daylight hours. This would save him the cost of the candles that he would use working the same number of hours at night.

Others were more serious about the idea. In the early 1900s, Englishman William Willett tried to convince Parliament to support his idea of moving clocks forward during the summer so that people could enjoy daylight to the fullest. Countries such as the United States, Great Britain, and Germany adopted DST during World War I to save on fuel and electricity costs. President Franklin Roosevelt ordered that DST be observed year-round in the United States during World War II to conserve energy. President Richard Nixon also lengthened DST from six to eight months during an energy crisis in the mid-1970s.

From 1945 to the mid-1960s, the use of Daylight Saving Time in the United States, was not consistent. No national law required states to observe DST. If state and local governments did observe it, they decided when DST would start and end. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Uniform Time Act. Although this law did not require states to observe DST, it did provide official start and end dates—the last Sunday of April through the last Sunday of October—for those states that did. These dates were in place until 1986. From 1986 to 2007, DST began on the first Sunday in April and ended on the last Sunday of October. In 2007, President George W. Bush signed a new energy bill into law that extended DST by four weeks. As a result, DST now begins on the second Sunday of March and ends on the first Sunday of November. DST begins at 2:00AM in the United States. All but two states—Hawaii and Arizona—observe Daylight Saving Time.

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**Directions:** Use the text to answer the following questions.

1. What is the purpose of Daylight Saving Time?
2. Why is Daylight Saving Time observed during the summer?
3. Why is Daylight Saving Time not observed by some countries?
4. What idea did Benjamin Franklin propose in his 1784 letter to the editors?
5. Why was Daylight Saving Time used during wartime?
6. Order these events according to when they took place. Use 1 for the oldest event and 7 for the most recent. Then, put the events on the timeline below. Include a start and end date as well as even intervals of time on the timeline. Use the numbers 1-7 to represent the events rather than writing the event description.

\_\_\_\_\_ Uniform Time Act signed into law by President Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_ U.S., Great Britain, and Germany adopt Daylight Saving Time during World War I.

\_\_\_\_\_ William Willet attempts to persuade Parliament to adopt the idea of moving clocks ahead during summer months.

\_\_\_\_\_ Benjamin Franklin writes a letter to the editors of a Paris newspaper proposing that we maximize daylight hours in the summer.

\_\_\_\_\_ President Roosevelt orders Daylight Saving Time be adopted year-round during World War II.

\_\_\_\_\_ President George W. Bush signs an energy bill that provides the current start and end days for Daylight Saving Time.

\_\_\_\_\_ President Richard Nixon extends Daylight Saving Time from 6 months to 8 months during an energy crisis.

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