

Who's Who? In *Giants of Electrical Science*

A lot of people either appear, or are mentioned in the play *Giants of Electrical Science*. Here is a “cast of characters” so you will know who is who. The names are in the order in which they appear or are mentioned.

People portrayed in the play will be in a **CAPITAL** letters with a **BOLD** font.

BOB BLATANT: (1965- , United States) This game show host is a fictional character. He has appeared in many Educational Touring Theatre creative drama programs.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: (1706-1790, United States) ***GIANTS FEATURED SCIENTIST*** Scientist, inventor, printer, businessman, writer, Postmaster, Founding Father, etc., etc. The list goes on and on. Franklin was a pioneer in the study of electricity. His most famous electrical discoveries include positive and negative charges, and that lightning was electricity. This discovery led to the invention of the lightning rod. Other Franklin inventions include swim fins, bifocal glasses, the glass armonica, and the Franklin stove.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN: (1730-1813, United State/England): The last British Governor of New Jersey. Unlike his famous father, William supported the English during the American Revolutionary War.

REGGIE BROWN: (1971-, United States) An electrical repairman. The name for this fictional character comes from two great defensive linesmen of the Green Bay Packers.

ALESSANDRO VOLTA: (1745-1827, Italy) ***GIANTS FEATURED SCIENTIST*** Volta's most important invention was the electric battery. Before his invention of the battery, scientists were only able to use static electricity in their experiments. Volta's other important inventions were the static electricity producing electrophorus, and a device for detecting very small amounts of electricity. Although Volta's region of Italy changed rulers several times (even Napoleon ruled there for awhile), he was always able to stay in their good graces, and continue his scientific studies.

Luigi Galvani: (1737–1798, Italy) A Professor of Anatomy at the University of Bologna. His most famous experiments explored the effects of electricity on muscles and nerves.

RACHEL CARSON-STEINEM: (1963- , United States) The name for this fictitious scientist comes from combing the real environmental scientist Rachel Carson with the women's rights advocate Gloria Steinem.

Laura Bassi: (1711-1778, Italy) A Professor of Experimental Physics at the Institute of Sciences in Bologna, Italy. Bassi researched the medical applications of electricity.

Chien-Shiung Wu: (1912-1997, China/United States) An experimental physicist who was an expert in electromagnetic energy and nuclear fission.

Helen Edwards: (1936- , United States) The designer of the Tevatron, a super conducting particle accelerator.

Gertrude Scharff Goldharber: (1911-1998, Germany) A nuclear scientist, with a special emphasis on fission.

Xide Xie: (1921-2000 , China) An experimental and theoretical scientist in the fields of solid state electronics and semiconductors.

Katherine Burr Blodgett: (1898-1979, United States) The first woman research scientist at the General Electric Company. Blodgett is he inventor of non-reflecting glass.

Granville Woods: (1856-1910, United States) A scientist with over 50 patents, including the dynamotor, an electric egg incubator, the multiplex railway telegraph, and improvements on the telephone and phonograph.

Lewis Latimer: (1848-1928, United States) This scientist patented improvements on light bulb filaments, and parallel circuits for street lights. He worked with Thomas Edison for 30 years.

Garret Morgan: (1877-1963, United States) The inventor of the first electric traffic signal. He is best known for his invention of the gas mask.

MICHAEL FARADAY: (1791-1867, England) *GIANTS FEATURED SCIENTIST* Faraday began his working life as an apprentice bookbinder. When his workday was finished, he educated himself by reading the scientific books at the bindery. Faraday has many important electrical discoveries to his credit, including inventing the electric motor and the dynamo. His theories on electromagnet fields were vital in the development of electromagnetism.

Hans Christian Orsted: (1777-1851, Denmark) This Danish physicist was an early pioneer in electromagnetism. He discovered that a wire carrying an electric current would deflect the needle of a compass.

Andre Ampere: (1775-1836, France) A mathematician, chemist, and physicist. Another early pioneer in the study of electromagnetism.

William Sturgeon: (1783-1850, England) The inventor of the electromagnet. Sturgeon was originally apprenticed as a shoe maker.

STEVE SPITZ: (1978- , United States) This fictional character is based on Mark Spitz, who won 7 gold medals for swimming in the 1972 Olympics.

THOMAS EDISON: (1847-1931, United States) *GIANTS FEATURED SCIENTIST* Edison liked to call himself an “inventor” instead of a scientist. He held over 1,000 patents, mostly for practical inventions and innovations. Edison’s ‘Big Three’ inventions are: the practical incandescent light bulb, the phonograph, and the motion picture camera. His laboratory, Menlo Park, was known as “The Invention Factory.”