

The American Revolution on the Northern Frontier:

Fort Ticonderoga and the Road to Saratoga

Lesson Plan by Barbara Park

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DBQ as a practice essay for the AP US History Exam

Directions: The following question requires you, in sixty minutes, to construct a well-structured and supported essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-H and your personal knowledge of the Revolutionary War period. Cite evidence from the documents using MLA format.

Prompt: Although Benedict Arnold is remembered by most as simply a traitor to our country, his involvement in the Revolution 1775-77 suggests a more complex narrative. What is Arnold's rightful place in our collective memory of the war for independence?

Document A:

Benedict Arnold's Declaration of Principles

Crown Point, 15th June, 1775

Persuaded, that the Salvation of the Rights and Liberties of America, depends, Under GOD, on the firm Union of its Inhabitants, in a Vigorous Prosecution of the Measures necessary for its Safety And Convinced of the Necessity of preventing the Anarchy and Confusion which attend a Dissolution of the Powers of Government, WE, the Freeman, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the Province of New York, being greatly alarmed at the avowed Design of the Ministry to raise a Revenue in America; and, Shocked by the bloody Scene now Acting in the Massachusetts Bay, DO, in the most Solemn Manner Resolve never to become Slaves; and do Associate under all the Ties of Religion, Honour, and Love to our Country, to Adopt and endeavour to Carry into Execution whatever Measures may be Recommended by the Continental Congress; or Resolved Upon by our Provincial Convintion for the purpose of preserving our Constitution and opposing the Execution of the Several Arbitrary and oppressive Acts of the British Parliament; Untill a Reconciliation Between Great Britain and America, on Constitutional Principles Which we most Ardently Desire Can be obtained And that we will in all Things

follow the Advice of our General Committee Respecting the purposes aforesaid, The Preservation of Peace and Good Order, and the Safety of Individuals, and private party.

Document B:

Benedict Arnold to the Committee of Safety in Massachusetts¹

Ticonderoga, May 11, 1775

Gentlemen:

I wrote you yesterday that arriving in the vicinity of this place, I found one hundred and fifty men collected at the instance of some gentlemen from *Connecticut* (designed on the same errand on which I came) headed by Colonel *Ethan Allen*, and that I had joined them, not thinking proper to wait the arrival of the Troops I had engaged on the road, but to attempt the Fort by surprise; that we had taken the Fort at four o'clock yesterday morning without opposition, and made prisoners, one Captain, one Lieutenant, and forty odd privates and subalterns, and that we found the Fort in a most ruinous condition and not worth repairing. . . . On and before our taking possession here, I had agreed with Colonel *Allen* to issue further orders jointly, until I could raise a sufficient number of men to relieve his people, on which plan we proceeded . . . since which, Colonel *Allen*, finding he had the ascendancy over his people, positively insisted I should have no command, as I had forbid the soldiers plundering and destroying private property. The power is now taken out of my hands and I am no longer consulted, nor have I a voice in any matters. There is here at present near one hundred men, who are in the greatest confusion and anarchy, destroying and plundering private property, committing every enormity, and paying no attention to publick service. . . . Colonel *Allen* is a proper man to head his own wild people, but entirely unacquainted with military service; and as I am the only person who has been legally authorized to take possession of this place, I am determined to insist on my right, and I think it my duty to remain here against all opposition, until I have further orders.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Document C: Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance to America, May 30, 1778

I *Benedict Arnold Major General* do acknowledge the UNITED STATES of AMERICA to be Free, Independent and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great-Britain; and I renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do *swear* that I will, to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors, and his or their abettors, assistants and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office of *Major General* which I now hold, with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding.

Sworn before me this B Arnold
30th May 1778 at the
Artillery Park Valley Forge H. King B. Clinton

5

Document D: 19th century political cartoon



A PROPER FAMILY RE-UNION

Document E: engraving, Benedict Arnold at Saratoga



Document F: Capt. Ebenezer Wakefield: Comment on the Battle at Freeman's Farm, Saratoga

“Riding in front of the line, his eyes flashing, pointing with his sword to the advancing foe, with a voice that rung clear as a trumpet,...nothing could exceed the bravery of Arnold on this day...There seemed to shoot out from him a magnetic flame that electrified his men and made heroes of all within his influence.”

Document G: www.history.com

September 19: In the early morning hours of this day in 1777, British General John Burgoyne launches a three-column attack against General Horatio Gates and his American forces in the First Battle of Saratoga, also known as the Battle of Freeman's Farm.

Coming under heavy cannon fire from the approaching British troops, General Gates initially ordered the Northern Army to be patient and wait until the British neared before launching a counter-attack. General Gates' second in command, American Brigadier General Benedict Arnold, strongly disagreed with Gates' orders and did not

hesitate to share his opinion with his superior. After arguing for several hours, General Arnold was finally able to convince Gates to order American troops onto the battlefield to meet the center column of the approaching British, and to dispatch a regiment of riflemen to intercept the British right flank.

Although the Americans were able to inflict severe casualties on the British, the delay in ordering a counter-attack forced the Americans to fall back. During the five-hour battle, the Americans lost approximately 280 troops killed, while the British suffered a more severe loss of more than 550 killed.

Due to their heated argument and disagreement over military decisions at the First Battle of Saratoga, General Gates removed General Arnold as his second in command. Arnold continued to feel slighted by the army he served, and in 1780, he betrayed the Patriot cause by offering to hand over the Patriot-held fort at West Point, New York, to the British. With West Point in their control, the British would have controlled the critical Hudson River Valley and separated New England from the rest of the colonies. Arnold's wife, Margaret, was a Loyalist and would not have objected to his plans. However, his plot was foiled, and Arnold, the hero of the early battles of Ticonderoga and Saratoga, became the most famous traitor in American history. He continued to fight on the side of the British and, after the war, returned to Britain, where he died destitute in London in 1801.

Document H: Letter, July 15, 1780 -- Benedict Arnold to John André

Inclosed in a cover addressed to M^r. Anderson.

Two days since I received a letter without date or Signature, informing me that S. Henry — was obliged to me for the intelligence communicated, and that he placed a full confidence in the Sincerity of my intentions, &c. &c. — On the 13th Instant I addressed a letter to you expressing my Sentiments and expectations, viz. that the following Preliminaries be settled previous to coöperating — first, that S. Henry secure to me my property, valued at ten thousand pounds Sterling, to be paid to me or my Heirs in case of Loss; and, as soon as that ~~Support~~ shall happen, — hundred pounds per annum to be secured to me for life, in lieu of the pay and emoluments I give up, for my Services as they shall deserve — If I point out a plan of coöperation by which S. H. shall possess himself of West Point, the Garrison, &c. &c. twenty thousand pounds Sterling I think will be a cheap purchase for an object of so much importance. At the same time I request a thousand pounds to be paid my Agent — I expect a full and explicit answer — The 20th I set off for West Point. A personal interview with an officer that you can confide in is absolutely necessary to plan matters. In the mean time I shall communicate to our mutual Friend S — y all the intelligence in my power, until I have the pleasure of your answer.

July 15th Moore

To the line of my letter of the 13th
I did not add seven.

P.S. the postscript only relates to the manner of composing the
Appendix in the letter referred to.

From the Collections of the Clements Library

Inclosed in a cover addressed to M[r.] Anderson / Two days since I received a letter without date or Signature, / informing me that S[ir]. Henry ----- was obliged to me for intelligence / communicated, and that he placed a full confidence in the Sincerity / of my intentions, etc. etc.

On the 13th Instant I addressed a letter / to you expressing my Sentiments and expectations, viz, that / the following Preliminaries be settled previous to cooperating. - / First, that S[ir]. Henry secure to me my property, valued at ten thou- / sand pounds Sterling, to be paid to me or my Heirs in case of / Loss; and, as soon as that happens [strike out] shall happen, ---- hundred / pounds per annum to be secured to me for life, in lieu of the / pay and emoluments I give up, for my Services as they shall / deserve - If I point out a plan of cooperation by which S[ir]. H[enry]. / shall possess himself of West Point, the Garrison, etc. etc. etc. twenty / thousand pounds Sterling I think will be a cheap purchase for / an object of so much importance. At the same time I request / thousand pounds to be paid my Agent - I expect a full / and explicit answer - The 20th I set off for West Point. A / personal interview with an officer that you can confide in / is absolutely necessary to plan matters. In the mean time / I shall communicate to our mutual Friend S[tansbur]y all the / intelligence in my power, until I have the pleasure of your answer. / Moore / July 15th [1780] / To the line of my letter of the 13th / I did not add seven.

Assessment Rubric:

The 8-9 Essay

- Contains a well-developed thesis that clearly addresses the question
- Effective analysis of the documents and outside knowledge is evident
- Effective use of documents
- Supports thesis with substantial and relevant outside information

(outside knowledge goes beyond the documents)

- Is clearly organized and well-written
- May contain minor errors

The 5-7 Essay

- Contains a thesis which addresses the question
- Some analysis of the documents and outside knowledge is present
- Uses some documents effectively
- Supports thesis with some outside information
- Shows evidence of acceptable organization and writing; language

errors do not interfere with the comprehension of the essay

- May contain errors that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay

The 2-4 Essay

- Contains a limited, confused and/or poorly developed thesis
- Deals with the question in a general manner; simplistic explanation or answers only one part of the question
- “Laundry list of documents”; quotes or briefly cites some documents
- Contains little outside information or information that is generally inaccurate or irrelevant
- Has problems in organization
- May contain errors

The 0-1 Essay

- Contains no thesis or a thesis which does not address the question
- Exhibits inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question
- Contains little or no understanding of the documents or ignores them completely
- Is so poorly organized or written that it inhibits understanding
- Contains numerous errors, both major and minor
- Is completely off topic or left blank