

Benedict Arnold was a member of the Revolutionary cause from the beginning of the war. After the first battles at Lexington and Concord, Arnold took Fort Ticonderoga in New York, the first important victory for the rebelling colonists.

After the creation of the Continental Army in 1775, Arnold would play an important role in the unsuccessful Battle of Quebec. From Arnold's perspective, the failure was due to a lack of resources supplied by Congress. This failure embittered him and he would become continuously embittered with the Continental Congress and the Continental Army. A colonel, Arnold was upset when he was often passed up for promotion to Brigadier General. From the beginning money and glory were important to Arnold, and he would never think that he had received enough of it.

Arnold's most important victory for the Continental Army was in the Saratoga Campaign during the summer of 1777. A brash and fearless commander, he defeated British General John Burgoyne. With the important victory, the French decided to join forces with the Americans in their fight for independence, a crucial union without which the Revolution most likely would not have been a success. Appreciating the strong role that Arnold had played in the Saratoga campaign, the Continental Congress awarded him with the rank of Major General which he had long sought. However he was not given the seniority he thought he deserved, and even this promotion was seen as a slight by Arnold.

He would spend the next years in Philadelphia serving as military Governor, where Arnold would live a life of splendor. Wondering about his expenses, he was court-martialed by the Continental Congress, another slight in the eyes of Arnold.

Although a brilliant leader in combat, it was his own fame and glory that Arnold always had in the forefront of his mind. Despite his victories he had failed to gain the position he thought due to him, and ultimately decided to turn to the British in order to achieve the recognition that he thought he deserved.

After continual requests from Arnold, early in 1780 he was given command of West Point, a fort on an important strategic position defending the Hudson River. Washington considered West Point to be of the utmost importance and it was a prestigious command for Arnold. By the time he was awarded the command, however, Arnold had already begun secret communication with British General Henry Clinton. The plan was this: Arnold would surrender West Point to the British forces. This would give control of the Hudson River to the British, effectively splitting the rebellious colonies in half. In return, Arnold would be given £20,000 sterling and be awarded the rank of Brigadier General in the British Army.

Unfortunately for Benedict Arnold, his contact was captured on one of his courier missions, and the plan would be revealed. George Washington was outraged at the plot. Arnold managed to escape to the British. Although he was unable to give them control of West Point, he was granted the rank of Brigadier and given £6,000 sterling.

The British would never trust Arnold, however. After briefly fighting for the British, he would later travel to Canada. After failing in Canada, he would end his life back in London, dying in 1801 bankrupt.

Benedict Arnold's name will forever be linked with treason in the United States. His attempt to give over control of West Point to the British was certainly the worst act of treason during the Revolution. Yet Benedict Arnold's earlier victories in the Saratoga Campaign were crucial in enlisting the aid of the French, without which the Revolution most likely would have been lost. One could argue that without Benedict Arnold, America would not have won the war.

Question 1

Read this last sentence from the text, and the directions which follow.

“One could argue that without Benedict Arnold, America would not have won the war.”

Which of the following sentences best supports the conclusion?

- A. With the important victory, the French decided to join forces with the Americans in their fight for independence, a crucial union without which the Revolution most likely would not have been a success.
- B. After the first battles at Lexington and Concord, Arnold took Fort Ticonderoga in New York, the first important victory for the rebelling colonists. Arnold's most important victory for the Continental Army was in the Saratoga Campaign during the summer of 1777.
- C. Appreciating the strong role that Arnold had played in the Saratoga campaign, the Continental Congress awarded him with the rank of Major General which he had long sought.
- D. After the creation of the Continental Army in 1775, Arnold would play an important role in the unsuccessful Battle of Quebec.

Question 2

Read the following section from paragraph 2. Then, answer the question that follows.

“From Arnold's perspective, the failure was due to a lack of resources supplied by Congress. This failure embittered him and he would become continuously embittered with the Continental Congress and the Continental Army.”

What is the meaning of embittered as it is used in the text?

- A. A person who is upset and responds emotionally.
- B. A person who is charged with making improvements in leadership decision making.
- C. A person who does things to improve
- D. A person who feels the need to respond with courage.

Question 3

Benedict Arnold felt Congress did not appreciate him. Using **at least two details** from the text, support this conclusion in the space provided.

(Write your answers on the reverse...)