**Unit 2: Democracy: Political System of the People (1763-1783)**

[Topic 5: Come to My Party, If You Know What’s Good for You](https://www.thinkport.org/tps/ushist/inquiry-kits.html?unit=02&topic=05)

Source 1, “Letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington, September 25, 1780”

A letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington asking for help for Arnold’s wife after he was arrested for treason.

[Original text, pages 1and 2 of 4]

I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contact between Great Britain and the colonies, the same principles of love to my country actuates my present conduct however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who very seldom judges right of any man’s actions.

I have no favor to ask myself, I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it. But from the known humanity of Your Excellence I am induced to ask for your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and saying that the mistaken vengeance of my country may open her to. It ought to fall only on me. She is as good and innocent as an angel and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia or to come to me as she may choose. From Your Excellency I know no fear on her account but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country.

**Emerging ESOL / Reader**

**Unit 2: Democracy: Political System of the People (1763-1783)**

[Topic 5: Come to My Party, If You Know What’s Good for You](https://www.thinkport.org/tps/ushist/inquiry-kits.html?unit=02&topic=05)

Source 1, “Letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington, September 25, 1780”

A letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington asking for help for Arnold’s wife after he was arrested for treason.  
  
I always did the right thing for my country because I love it. From the start of the war between Great Britain and the Colonies, I did right. The love I have for the Colonies made me do what everyone else thinks was bad. But they are wrong when they think about what other people do.

1. What is Benedict Arnold saying?
2. People are right about him.
3. Somebody else did it.
4. He did the right thing.

2. Use one of these words to finish the sentence. Tell your reason.

brave mad scared wrong

Benedict Arnold is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because he

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Do you think George Washington will listen to Benedict Arnold? Tell why or why not.

I think George Washington \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ listen to Benedict Arnold because

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Intermediate ESOL / Reader**

**Unit 2: Democracy: Political System of the People (1763-1783)**

[Topic 5: Come to My Party, If You Know What’s Good for You](https://www.thinkport.org/tps/ushist/inquiry-kits.html?unit=02&topic=05)

Source 1, “Letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington, September 25, 1780”

A letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington asking for help for Arnold’s wife after he was arrested for treason.

**Vocabulary**

* **judge -** to decide if something is right or wrong
* **favor -** when one person does something to help someone else
* **insult -** to say something bad or mean

I always acted with love for my country, ever since the war started between Great Britain and the Colonies. The same love of my country made me do what looks very bad to most people. They are almost always wrong when they think about and judge what other people are doing.

I do not want a favor for myself because I know my country does not understand and is never thankful for my work. But I know that you are a kind person, so I ask you to keep my wife safe. People will try to get even and say mean things to her, even if they are wrong about me. I am the only one that other people can insult. She is as good as an angel and cannot do a bad thing.

1. Write two words that Benedict Arnold uses that tell how he feels about other people.

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1. What does Benedict Arnold want?

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1. Benedict Arnold’s wife and her family liked the British. Do you think she is as good as the letter says she is? Tell why or why not.

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**Advanced ESOL / Reader**

**Unit 2: Democracy: Political System of the People (1763-1783)**

[Topic 5: Come to My Party, If You Know What’s Good for You](https://www.thinkport.org/tps/ushist/inquiry-kits.html?unit=02&topic=05)

Source 1, “Letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington, September 25, 1780”

A letter from Benedict Arnold to George Washington asking for help for Arnold’s wife after he was arrested for treason.

**Vocabulary**

* **principle -** a strong belief and personal rule
* **Your Excellence -** what the army called George Washington before he became President
* **humane -** kind and understanding to people who have problems
* **innocent -** someone who did not do anything against the law

I have always acted from a principle of love for my country, since the beginning of the unhappy contact now between Great Britain and the Colonies. The same love for my country forced me to action that the world will not believe was made with love. The world is usually wrong in how it judges what other people do.

I am not asking a favor for myself because I know that my country is always ungrateful, so I will not even try. But I know that Your Excellence is a humane person, so I may ask you to protect my wife from the insults that an angry, wrong country may throw at her. They may try to get even with her. That should be only for me. She is as good and innocent as an angel and is not able to do anything bad. Please let her choose to go home to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me. I am not afraid for her because of Your Excellency, but she may suffer if the country continues to make the mistake of hate and anger, and take it out on her.

1. Why does Arnold say he was forced to do what he did?

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1. If you were General Washington, would you give Arnold what he wants? Tell why or why not.

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1. Do you think Arnold is telling the truth in this letter? Explain your answer.

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| **BONUS** - Make a web graphic-organizer with Arnold in the middle. Include at least 4 other circles that have details about who, what, when, where, why and how. |