



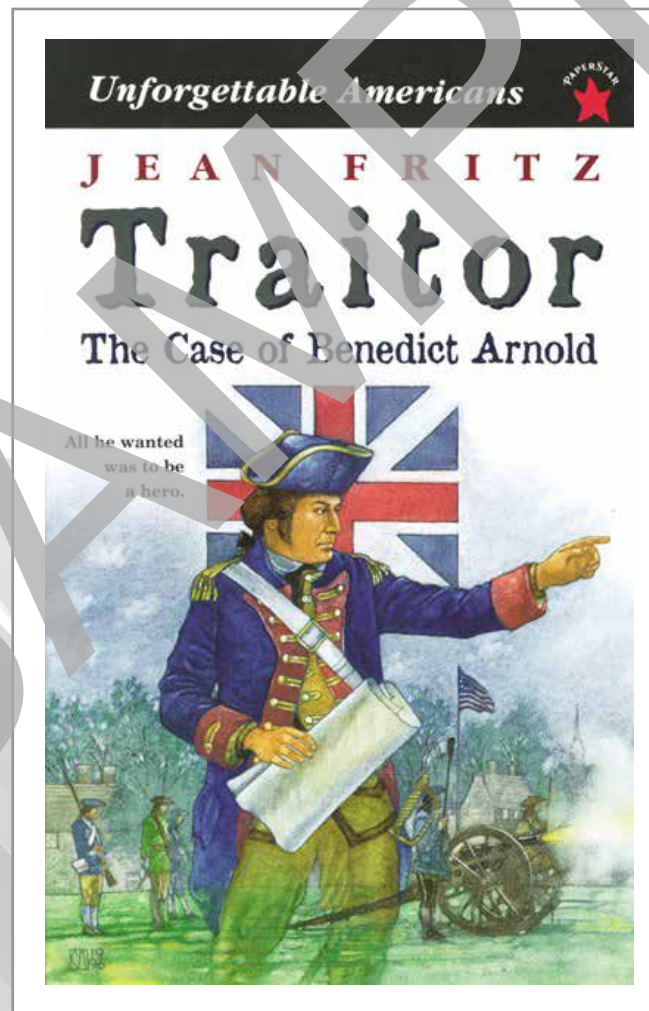
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Traitor: The Case of Benedict Arnold

Jean Fritz



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Summary

It seemed that Benedict Arnold would never be done proving himself. A self-admitted coward as a youth, he determined sometime during the year of 1755 that he would learn to be brave so that he would not be a loser. His natural athletic abilities aided him in achieving his goal, and he thrived on being noticed. Becoming a man excited by the idea of trying to achieve the impossible, Arnold was eager to take risks without much thought for the consequences or the input of others. In truth, he had difficulty understanding any but his own point of view, and would always believe just what he wanted to believe. So, when he decided to support the British, he did so “from a principle of love to my country.” However, his country believed differently.

About the Author

Jean Guttery Fritz was born November 16, 1915, in Hankow, China, the daughter of Arthur Minton and Myrtle Guttery. Her father was a minister and YMCA missionary. She married Michael Fritz in 1941. They have two children, David and Andrea. Jean Fritz attended Wheaton College, A.B., 1937; additional study was done at Columbia University.

Fritz is the author of historical biographies and novels for young people, and is noted for her ability to take historical figures and events and bring them to life. In her award winning and critically acclaimed biographies, Fritz seems to combine her keen curiosity with American heroes and her appreciation for this fine country to create books that are both fascinating to read and educational. “I look for personalities whose lives make good stories. I like complicated people, persons who possessed contradictions or who have interesting quirks.”

“I think young people of almost any age or ability read biographies for the same reason that adults do—or would if they could find what they want. We all seek insight into the human condition, and it is helpful to find familiar threads running through the lives of others, however famous. We need to know more people in all circumstances and times so we can pursue our private, never-to-be-fulfilled quest to find out what life is all about. In actual experience we are able to see so few lives in the round and to follow them closely from beginning to end. I, for one, need to possess a certain number of relatively whole lives in the long span of history.” Fritz’s papers are housed in a permanent collection of the Children’s Literature Collection at the University of Oregon, Eugene, and included in the Kerland Collection at the University of Minnesota, and in a collection at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Fritz has attributed her love of writing to the fact that her childhood was most unusual and she needed an outlet to record her thoughts and feelings. She spent the first 13 years of her life in China because her parents were doing missionary work. An only child, Fritz often felt lonely and out of place in China. Writing became her “private place, where no one could come.” Fritz sums up her feeling on writing about America’s past in her biographies and novels in this manner: “My interest in writing about American history stemmed originally, I think, from a subconscious desire to find roots. I lived in China until I was thirteen, hearing constant talks about ‘home,’ I felt like a girl without a country. I have put down roots quite firmly by now, but in the process I have discovered the joys of research and am probably hooked. I eavesdrop on the past to satisfy my own curiosity, but if I can surprise children into believing history, I will be happy, especially if they find, as I do, that truth is stranger (and often funnier) than fiction.”

Note:

The Puffin Books edition of *Traitor: The Case of Benedict Arnold* published by the Penguin Group was used to write this study guide. Other editions may yield differing page references.

Please be selective, and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with the unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that discretionary choices made are the most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

Initiating Activity

Make some red, white, and blue banners to hang in the room with the names of some of the battles in which Benedict Arnold participated. He had some typical encouraging words for his men in battle. Put those on banners to hang in the room.

BATTLES

- Fort Ticonderoga
- Battle of Quebec
- Valcour Island, Lake Champlain
- First Battle of Saratoga (Freeman's Farm)
- Second Battle of Saratoga (Freeman's Farm)

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- "Come on, Boys!"
- "Rush on, brave boys!"
- "Come on, brave boys, come on!"
- "If the day is long enough, we'll have them in hell by night!"

Bulletin Board Idea

Cover the bulletin board with plain background paper. Use the novel as the basis for the use of the code described on page 118. Place a coded message on the bulletin board that will go with your goal for this unit. The following is a sample:

(7)(1)(2) (7)(1)(3) (115)(31)(8) (115)(31)(9) (116)(1)(6) (116)(1)(7) (116)(1)(8) (116)(1)(9)
(116)(1)(10) (116)(1)(11) (116)(2)(1) (116)(2)(2)

(Answer: *Benedict Arnold changed sides to be the greatest hero of his time.*)

Make a caption for the bulletin board, such as: See the last paragraph on page 118 of the novel for decoding directions.

Recommended Procedure

This book may be used in several ways: a) read to the entire class; b) read with the class; c) read in reading groups; d) read individually. The questions and activities at the end of each chapter, as well as any supplementary activities, are provided so that you may, using discretion, make selections from them that will be suitable for use by the students in your group.

Graphic Organizers

Included in the Novel Unit are several types of graphic organizers, such as the Venn Diagram, the T-Diagram, and brainstorming or cluster circles. A variety of possible answers should be listed by the teacher, either on large sheets of paper or the chalkboard. Only then should the students be asked to develop their own graphics. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, and to state what they know about a topic. The teacher lists these opinions and "facts" and later, as the students read and research, discovery may be made that some of their ideas are incorrect.

through the woods with his men to Fort Ticonderoga.) There is mixed reaction to this battle:

- British officers called Arnold, “a spirited fellow: for the way he evaded capture.”
- General Gates said: “Few men have met with so many hair-breadth escapes in so short a space of time.”
- General Maxwell called Arnold, “our evil genius to the north,” who “with a good deal of industry, got us clear of all our fine fleet...”
- John Brown charged him with “misconduct of the Continental fleet in Lake Champlain.”

Which of these comes the closest to your opinion of Benedict Arnold’s conduct with the fleet? Explain the reason(s) for your answer.

Postreading Activities

1. On August 24, 1776, General Benedict Arnold sets sail from Crown Point, New York, commanding a fleet of schooners, sloops, and gondolas ready to do battle on Lake Champlain. Create a motto for the General to use with his fleet. Place it on a banner, for display. For example:

Fiercer war; sooner peace.

He that makes a good war makes a good peace.

He who cannot stand the smell of gunpowder should not engage in war.

He who holds a sword will maintain peace.

There is no lasting peace without battle.

To a man equipped for war, peace is assured.

2. Thomas Paine, thought of as the greatest phrasemaker and popular writer of the Revolutionary period, wrote a poem about this time. Read “Liberty Tree” and make an illustration to go with the poem.

Chapter 6—pages 70–86

Vocabulary

ramshackle (71)
 aspersed (74)
 approbation (74)
 uninitiated (75)
 haughty (78)
 plateau (83)
 imprudent (83)
 intermediary (84)

Vocabulary Activity

Match four words from the vocabulary list to their antonyms below.

established humble wise solid

(Answers: established/uninitiated; humble/haughty; wise/imprudent; solid/ramshackle)

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. On page 71, Benedict Arnold is described as making “himself at one with danger.” What do you think that means? (*Opinion—answers will vary.*) Read aloud the paragraph that contains this quote. It is in the middle of page 71, starting with, “Then down the road came the British.” The paragraph ends with, “...and who could say now what was possible and what was not?”
2. Because he considers that his honor has been challenged when any inquiry or challenge to his word is made, Benedict Arnold’s life is imbued with controversy. “Honor,” he said, “is a sacrifice no man ought to make.” (page 75) Do you agree or disagree with Arnold’s feeling about honor? Why? Is honor important to you? (See Postreading Activity #1.)

3. In the Battle of Bemis Heights, New York, at the farm of Mr. Freeman, the Americans practiced some of the first “guerrilla” warfare. (page 83) Discuss the strategies that could be used in that type of warfare. Why would the Americans have an advantage? (This kind of battle relies on using the natural cover of one’s surroundings. The American riflemen and musketmen are sharpshooters, and are able to shoot the British one at a time. All but one of the British officers on the field are shot.)

Postreading Activities

1. Locate and list sayings about honor. Choose one to explain. Could this saying represent your feeling(s) with regard to honor? For example:
 - Better to deserve honor and not have it than have it and not deserve it.
 - Better to die in honor than live in disgrace.
 - Better to retire in honor than advance in disgrace.
 - Honor is much dearer than money.
 - Honor once lost never returns.
 - It is no honor for an eagle to vanquish a dove.
2. General Gates has been given the nickname “Granny Gates.” Think of nicknames for some of the other officers, both American and British, fighting in this war. Explain your reason(s) for the nickname(s) that you have chosen for these people. Why do you think that Gates, Henry Lee, Grey and Marion were given their nicknames? Share your ideas with the group.

OFFICER	NICKNAME
General Horatio Gates	Granny Gates
General Benedict Arnold	
General George Washington	
General Philip Schuyler	
General Ethan Allen	
John André	
John Burgoyne	
Charles Cornwallis	
Alexander Hamilton	
John Paul Jones	
Henry Lee	Light Horse Harry
Francis Marion	The Swamp Fox
General Charles Grey	No-Flint Grey

3. Meanwhile, what is happening in Philadelphia on the eighteenth of September? (Fearful of Howe’s army, the members of Congress begin an exodus from the city. They are to reconvene in Lancaster. The Liberty Bell, rung to proclaim American independence on the eighth of July, is shipped on an army baggage train to Allentown to be hidden in the Zion Reformed Church.)
4. The chapter ends with General Gates agreeing to allow Arnold to remain through the next battle on the condition that Arnold will not take any part in the battle itself. Make a prediction. Will Arnold stay out of the next battle? What do you think will happen?