

For Part A, Level Two use Resource Pages 1–8, 10, and Images 1–6 on the CD-ROM.

Level Two (Grades 7-12)

Getting Started

1 To stimulate discussion of what students already know about George Washington—their perceptions and misconceptions—hold up a one dollar bill (and if possible display other classical images of Washington—alone and on horseback). Ask the class to imagine him as a boy, a teenager, and a young man “just starting out.” On a wall chart titled *The Young George Washington*, record their prior knowledge of Washington (both events in his life and his personality traits) before he became widely known.

2 As background information, distribute **Resource Page 1: Timeline: Young George Washington**. Invite students to correct myths and misconceptions on the wall chart as they meet the “real” George Washington. Interested students can research the Julian calendar, used in Great Britain and the colonies until 1752. According to the Julian calendar, Washington was born on February 11th, not February 22nd.

3 Introduce the “real” George Washington by distributing copies of **Resource Page 3: George Washington, Surveyor, 1748**. Pointing out that these are excerpts from the journals Washington began keeping as a teenager, discuss what private journals or diaries can reveal about their writer. Depending on your students’ understanding of the nature of primary sources, you may wish to review the wide range of materials in addition to formal documents that are considered primary sources. Students should understand that their own journals are primary sources on their experiences and opinions.

As background information, give students copies of **Resource Page 2: Washington as a Record Keeper**.

4 Explain that 16-year-old George Washington wrote these journal entries about his first trip to the wilderness. Washington and others were surveying land on the Virginia frontier for Lord Fairfax, an important landowner. Ask students to read the adapted versions of the journal entries. Discuss what practical skills Washington would have gained as a surveyor. (*Learning how to determine land boundaries, how to survive in the wilderness, how to work as part of a team.*)

5 Engage the class in a short discussion about Washington’s character traits based on these excerpts and add them to the wall chart. Have them consider whether Washington was concerned with doing a good job and impressing others. (*Elicit an understanding that this was a determined young man. Remind students that he was out working when he was about the age of a high school sophomore or junior.*) Ask students to speculate on why Washington was motivated to do a good job. What motivates *them* to succeed? Use this as a jumping off point for a discussion of the personality and drive needed to reach the professional heights Washington would achieve later in life.

6 Point out to the class the two different versions of Washington’s journals on the handout—the original as written by Washington and an adaptation into modern English. Invite students to compare the two. Then discuss the spelling, capitalization, and “shorthand” that Washington used. Ask a volunteer to read the original entries aloud and point out that this is a good technique for figuring out what some of the “oddly spelled” words mean. If your students find the original wording and spelling fascinating, you may want to use **Resource Page 4: Spelling the Washington Way** to help them understand more about 18th-century writing.

Part A:
Level One
Level Two
Making
Connections

Part B:
Level One
Level Two
Making
Connections



An accomplished mapmaker, Washington used his surveying skills to create this map in 1753. A detail is shown here.

7 In a Washington Resource Center, provide books, videos, or other resources about Washington, which students can consult during the study. (See the Additional Sources listed on the CD-ROM.) Encourage students to correct any misconceptions or misinformation on the wall chart as they learn more.

8 As well as handing out individual copies, you may wish to display in the Resource Center copies of maps and pictures from the Image Gallery on the CD-ROM. Begin now with **Image 1: Map of the Virginia Colony** and **Image 2: Washington as a Young Surveyor**. These images will provide historical and geographical context and help students imagine the scenes.

9 In addition, provide copies of **Resource Page 7: Cast of Characters** and encourage students to consult it as names come up in the discussion. Invite students to add other short biographies to the list as they do further research.

10 To focus students' investigation, write this **Focus Question** on the chalkboard:
What can you learn about young George Washington's personality and ambitions by reading his journals?

Reading and Reflecting

A Man of Responsibility

1 Using the Interactive Learning Journey on the CD-ROM, explain or review the competing claims of French and British in the Ohio River Valley in the 1750s. When Robert Dinwiddie, governor of the British colony of Virginia, learned that the French were laying claim to land the British themselves claimed in the Ohio River Valley, he wanted to send a message demanding their withdrawal. George Washington volunteered to deliver the message.

Explain to students that Washington was just 21 years old and intent on making a name for himself. This was almost one year after Washington had become an officer in one of Virginia's militia districts and six months before the start of the French and Indian War. To set the stage for reading Washington's journal, give students **Resource Page 5: Washington's Journey to Fort LeBoeuf** and copies of **Image 3: Map of the Journey to Fort LeBoeuf**. Have students locate key places on the map. For further information about the organization of the Virginia troops, students can consult **Resource Page 10: All Kinds of Soldiers**.

2 Hand out **Resource Page 6: Return from Fort LeBoeuf, 1753** and tell students that this excerpt deals with one event in the long and dangerous trip back to Virginia with guide Christopher Gist. Have the students read the adapted version of the excerpt to themselves first. (Ambitious students may wish to begin with the original.) You may want to invite students to work in pairs to answer the Guided Reading Questions on the handout. Ask students why Washington found himself in this situation. (*He had to get the message back to Dinwiddie and was determined to push ahead.*) Students should understand that Washington easily could have died in the frigid river.



Like other militias, the Virginia militia was made up of ordinary citizens rather than professional military officers.

Explain to the class that Noah Webster did not publish his first dictionary of the American language until 1828. Interested students can begin a "dictionary" of 18th century terms and spellings based on Washington's journals.



Tell students that artist John Buxton recreated the Allegheny crossing on a handmade raft before he painted “Washington’s Crossing, 1753” (Image 4b).

Ask students to speculate on how Washington was able to create a map (Image 5) so accurate that it was used to plan modern roads. How would his surveying skills have helped him?

Part A:

Level One
Level Two
Making Connections

Part B:

Level One
Level Two
Making Connections

Show students the three images in the **Image 4** file, suggesting that they imagine themselves in each of the three scenes. Have students identify the “three nations” shown in **Image 4a: “Domain of Three Nations”** by John Buxton (*British, French, and American Indians*). Discuss why the artist would have shown the American Indians as shadows on the floor (*because they were “outside” of the negotiations*).

3 Then hand out **Resource Page 8: Seeking Promotion, 1754**. Explain to students that this letter was written about two weeks after Washington’s return from the Ohio River Valley. Almost immediately upon his return, Washington had been given more military duties and told to prepare to return to the Ohio River Valley to attack the French and drive them from lands claimed by the British. Washington wrote this letter to Richard Corbin, who was an influential figure in Virginia politics, in charge of the colony’s revenues. (Students should read about him on **Resource Page 7: Cast of Characters**.)

4 Have the students read the adapted version of the excerpt to themselves first and then answer the Guided Reading Questions on the handout. Ask students what this letter reveals about Washington’s personality and ambitions. (*Washington was confident enough to write to this influential person and to describe his qualifications for advancement. He appeared eager, ambitious, somewhat proud, realistic, and concerned, most importantly, with his reputation.*)

Tell students that shortly after writing this letter, Washington’s journal from his first trip to the Ohio River Valley was published in Williamsburg, Virginia, and in London, making Washington a celebrity. (**Image 5: Historic Map of the Ohio River Valley** shows a map Washington drew on the journey and **Image 6: Washington’s Journal of 1754** shows a copy of the book.) He was given the

promotion he requested and from now on will remain in the public eye. This is a major turning point in his life.

5 In order to answer the following questions, students will need to cite evidence from the documents. They will also need to keep in mind the Focus Question about ambition.

~What do you think Washington’s motivations were for writing each piece? (*1753: on an important assignment, recording every detail, sense of duty, Washington as main character. 1754: seeking a higher rank in military, relying on connections, reviewing his qualifications, emphasizing his sense of duty and capabilities. Washington’s motive in both pieces was to prove himself.*)

~Based on the originals, how do the language and style of each excerpt reflect who Washington was? (*1753: short action sentences, informal, simple language, realistic, articulate. 1754: longer, detailed sentences; more formal polished and structured prose; clear—stating his case, positive, inner thoughts, articulate. Students also should take into account the different forms: journal and letter.*)

~Based on these materials, how do you think Washington related to other people? (*In the trip from Fort LeBoeuf, Washington had to work closely with Gist. At the same time, he seemed to take charge in steering the raft. In the letter to Corbin, Washington clearly knew what it took to get ahead—not only to obtain the promotion but also to be qualified for it: a “high” position in the military and knowing the right people.*)

~What do these excerpts tell you about Washington’s personality and ambitions? (*In entirely different situations, Washington comes across as brave, ambitious, resourceful. He took advantage of the situations: survival in the wilderness and promotion in the military. The excerpts show him as realistic, smart, capable, ambitious, with a strong sense of duty.*)

Pulling It All Together

1 Have students answer the Focus Question by writing a short essay titled “The Man for the Job.” Based on the journal entries, they should consider the personal characteristics and experiences that led George Washington to feel that he was worthy of becoming a lieutenant-colonel at 21.

2 To focus students’ thinking, discuss:

~What skills did Washington have that made him so confident and ambitious? *(In 1753, Washington was able to survive in the wilderness. He was resourceful—built a raft, survived falling overboard by holding onto the raft, survived the night by sleeping on an island. He almost appears invincible or just plain lucky. The cold didn’t seem to affect him. In 1754, Washington had completed the trip, delivered the French reply, and was prepared to take on more assignments. He was confident that he would be successful because he knew the value of hard work and a sense of duty. He had digested what he learned from his earlier experiences.)*

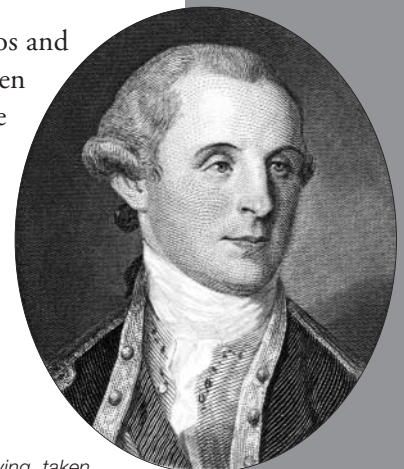
~Are Washington’s personality and motivations reflections of the times or are they timeless? Are young people today motivated by the same desires? Are ambitious people of the past the same as ambitious people today? *(Washington was brave, resourceful, smart, realistic, articulate, proud, ambitious, dutiful, capable, and political. All of these characteristics would prove helpful—essential—to his later military, personal, and political careers. Discuss with students in what ways these characteristics remain important in their world today.)*

3 Ask for volunteers to read their essays to the class.

Making Connections

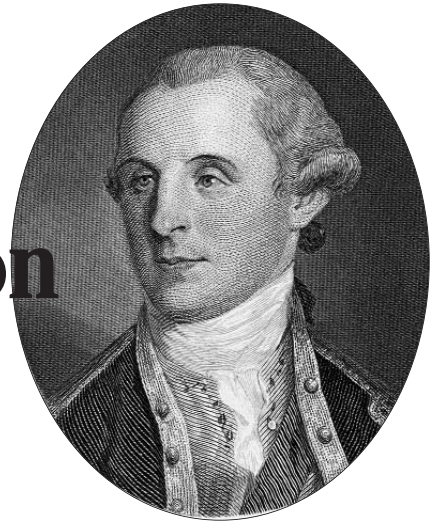
Topics for students to consider in discussion or in writing

- Why should we know George Washington today? What can we learn about ourselves and our lives by studying leaders of the past?
- Do you think that people are products of their past? How do you think the personality and ambitions Washington exhibited as a young man affected the person he became? How do you think that your own personality and ambitions will affect the person you will become?
- When George Washington was a teenager, he copied down 110 rules of civility, or conduct. He felt that by following them he would be a proper gentleman and could better “get ahead.” What rules do you think will help you “get ahead”?
- Would you be willing to take a dangerous journey for your country, a journey in which you might sacrifice your life? Why or why not?
- Work with a partner to research and write about the youth of both George Washington and another famous American man or woman. Compare similarities and differences in their experiences and ambitions as young people.
- Have a class debate on the pros and cons of ambition. Consider when ambition can be a positive force and when it could have a negative impact.



This engraving, taken from a miniature on ivory, shows Washington as a young man.

Timeline: Young George Washington



George Washington is born on February 22 in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He is the first child of Augustine and his second wife, Mary Ball Washington. Washington has two half brothers, Lawrence and Augustine, and one half sister, Jane.

1732

Brother Samuel is born.

1733

Sister Betty is born.

1734

Brother John Augustine is born.

1735

Half sister Jane dies. Washington and his family move to a family property on the Potomac River in Virginia. Lawrence will inherit this house and call it Mount Vernon. After Lawrence's death, George will inherit Mount Vernon and the surrounding lands.

1736

Sister Mildred is born.

1738

Brother Charles is born. Washington and his family move to Ferry Farm on the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

1739

Washington's father dies. Washington will inherit Ferry Farm, some land, ten slaves, and three town lots when he is 18 years old.

1740

Mildred dies.

1743

At the age of 15, Washington's formal education ends. (Little is known about his education, including whether he attended school or was tutored at home.)

Washington spends a great deal of time with Lawrence and his family at Mount Vernon and at Belvoir, the nearby Fairfax estate. He attends balls, hunting parties, and fancy dinners. Washington becomes a skilled horseman and dancer.

1747

Washington becomes the official surveyor of Culpeper County, Virginia.

1748

Washington takes a surveying trip to the Virginia wilderness for Lord Fairfax, a wealthy landowner.

1749

Washington takes his only trip out of the country, accompanying Lawrence to Barbados where they seek a cure for Lawrence's tuberculosis. He contracts smallpox but recovers. He attends the theater for the first time.

1750

Washington buys land in Frederick County, Virginia. In two years, he will own more than 1,000 acres of land there.

1751

Washington volunteers to deliver a message to the French in the Ohio River Valley, for the Virginia governor.

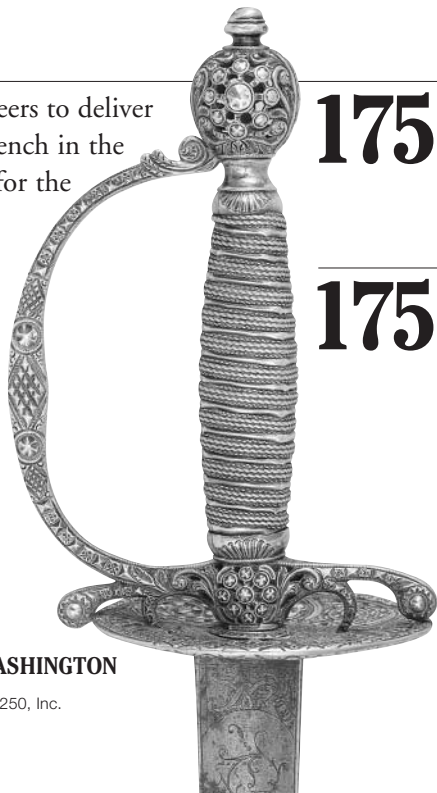
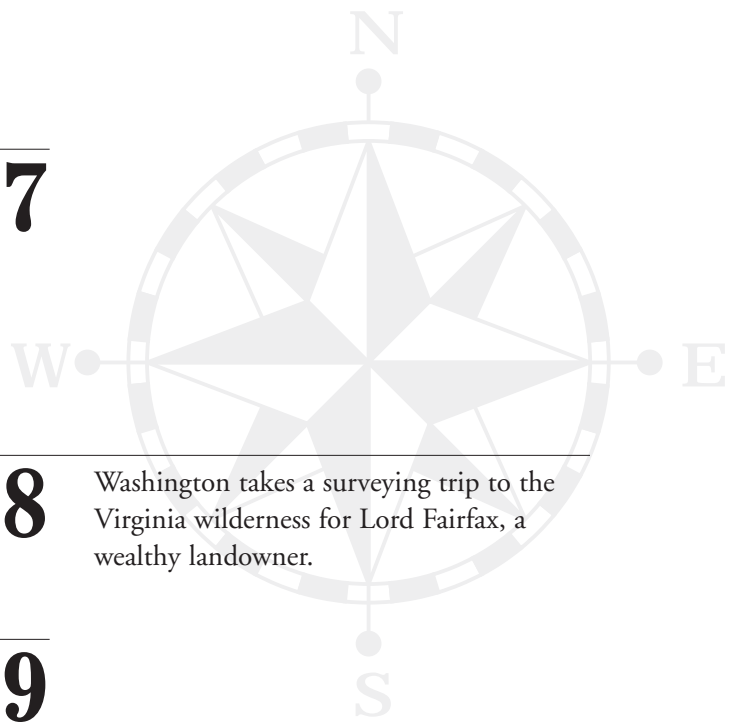
1752

Lawrence dies. Washington becomes an officer in one of Virginia's military districts.

1753

1754

Washington returns from his trip to the Ohio River Valley in January. His journal about his trip is published, and he becomes widely known. In May, Lieutenant Colonel Washington is involved in a skirmish that sparks the beginning of the French and Indian War.



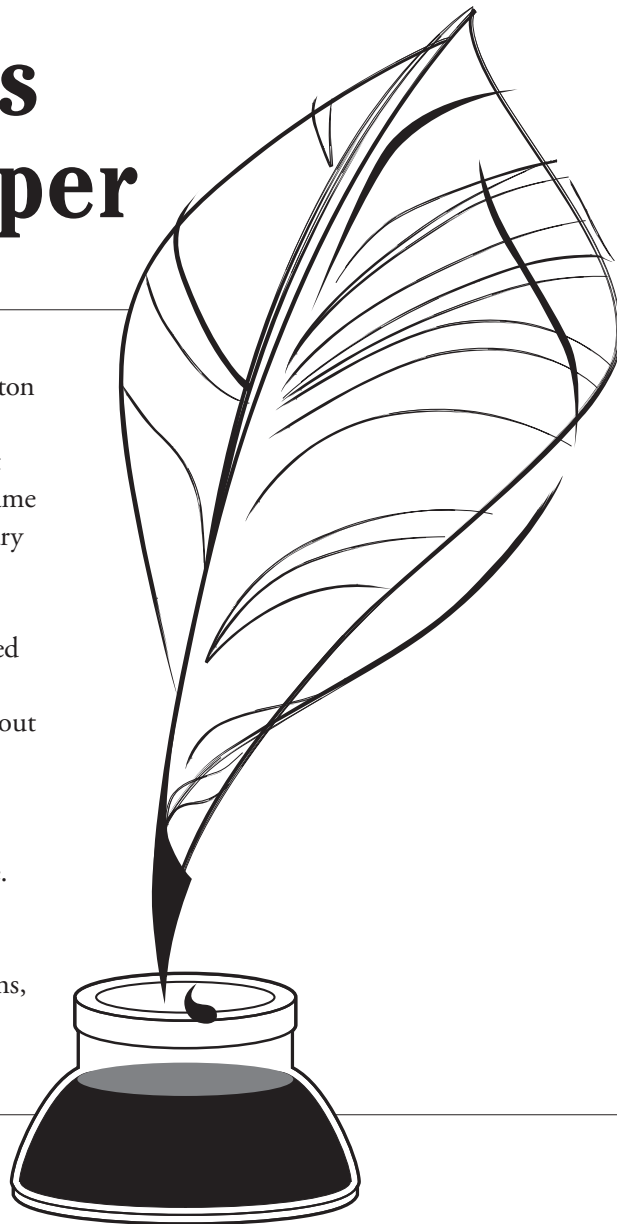
Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Washington as a Record Keeper

Keeping Track of His Life

Beginning when he was a teenager, George Washington kept a record of his life. He was devoted to diary writing in his late teens and early twenties, but it wasn't until he was in his mid-thirties that he became serious about the writing. During the Revolutionary War, General Washington was preoccupied with fighting and writing letters, orders, and addresses. After the war he returned to his diary and remained faithful to it for the rest of his life. On the day before he died, for example, Washington wrote about the weather in his diary.

Washington felt that a diary should include the where, the how, and with whom he spent his time. He kept journals while he was away from home (such as the two journals quoted in Part A). He compiled his thoughts on the weather, his farms, and personal activities in his diary.



Your Turn

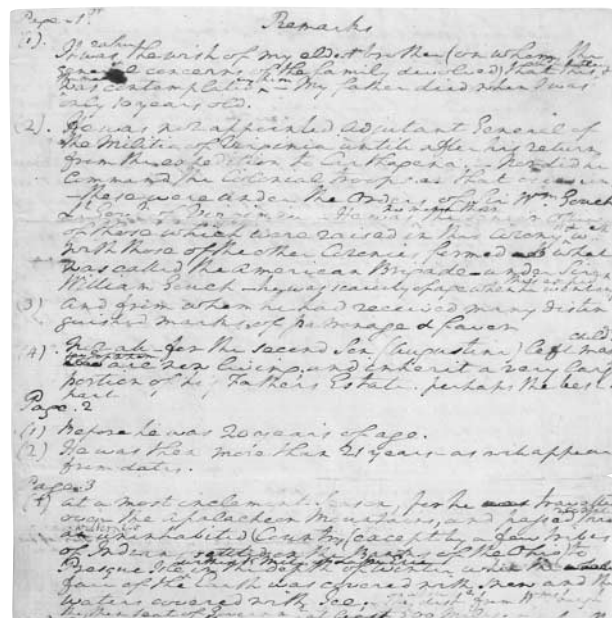
Do you keep a diary?

What do you record in it?

Compare your writings to Washington's in Part A.

For much of his adult life Washington probably knew that his diaries and journals would be read by future generations. How do you think that affected his writing? Write about an event, person, or thing as if you are writing for yourself only. Then write about the same subject as if future generations would read it. How are the two entries different? How are they alike?

Image credit: Fort Ligonier Association



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

George Washington, Surveyor, 1748

Reading George Washington's Words



Original

Tuesday, March 15

We set out early with Intent to Run round the sd. Land but being taken in a Rain & it Increasing very fast obliged us to return. It clearing about one oClock & our time being too Precious to Loose we a second time ventured out & Worked hard till Night & then returned to Penningtons we got out Suppers & was Lighted in to a Room & I not being so good a Woodsman as the rest of my Company striped my self very orderly & went in to the Bed as they call'd it when to my Surprize I found it to be nothing but a Little Straw—Matted together without Sheets or any thing else but only one Thread Bear blanket with double its Weight of Vermin such as Lice Fleas &c I was glad to get up (as soon as the Light was carried from us) & put on my Cloths & Lay as my Companions. Had we not have been very tired, I am sure we should not have slep'd much that night. I made a Promise not to Sleep so from that time forward chusing rather to sleep in the open Air before a fire will Appear hereafter.

Wednesday, March 16

We set out early & finish'd about one oClock & then Travell'd up to Frederick Town where our Baggage came to us. We cleaned ourselves (to get Rid of the Game we had caught the Night before) & took a Review of the Town & then return'd to our Lodgings where we had a good Dinner prepar'd for us ... & a good Feather Bed with clean Sheets which was a very agreeable regale.

Adaptation

Tuesday, March 15

We set out early to inspect the surveyed land, but it started to rain heavily and we had to return. It cleared up about 1 o'clock. We had little time to waste, so we went out again a second time and worked hard until nighttime.

We then returned to the Penningtons. We had supper and were taken into our rooms. I was not as experienced a woodsman as the rest of the company. I carefully took off my clothes and got into bed. The bed turned out to be nothing but a little straw matted together without sheets or anything else. There was only a thin blanket and lots of lice and fleas.

When it was dark, I got out of bed, put on my clothes, and lay like my friends. If we weren't so tired we wouldn't have slept much that night. I made a promise to myself that from that time on I would sleep outside before a fire.

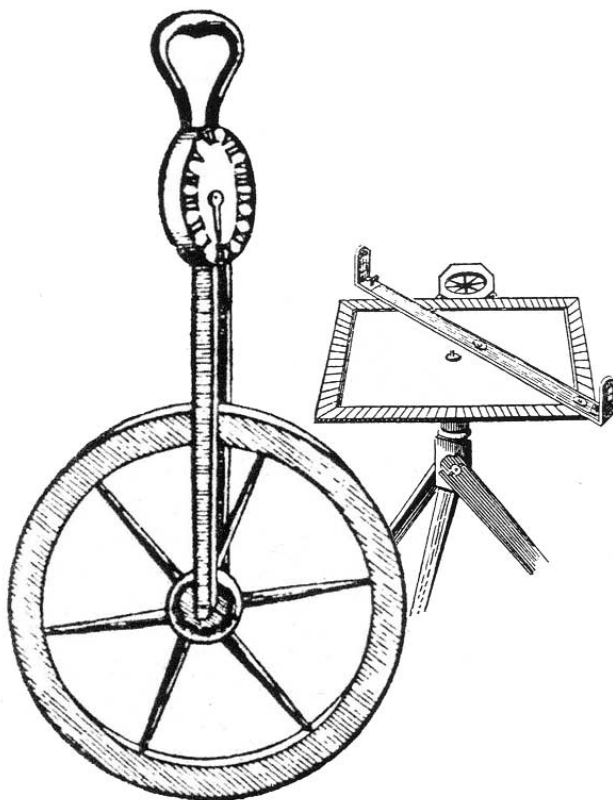
Wednesday, March 16

We got up early and finished about 1 o'clock. We then traveled to Fredericktown. (Our baggage was being sent there.) We washed up. (We smelled of the animals we had caught the night before.) We then toured the town and then went back to where we were staying. We had a good dinner and a good feather bed with clean sheets. It was a very agreeable time.



Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
- 2 Where was he?
- 3 What did George Washington do before “returning to the Penningtons”?
- 4 What did George Washington do that was unlike his companions?
- 5 Did Washington have a good night's sleep? What was his bed like?
- 6 What was Washington's attitude?
- 7 What decision did Washington make at the end of the March 15th journal entry?
- 8 What happened the next day?



People spelled and constructed their sentences a bit differently in Washington's time. Some words that are easy to identify—such as “child'n”—might be missing a few letters. The word *sd.* probably stands for “surveyed.”

child'n
perhaps the best
as we appear

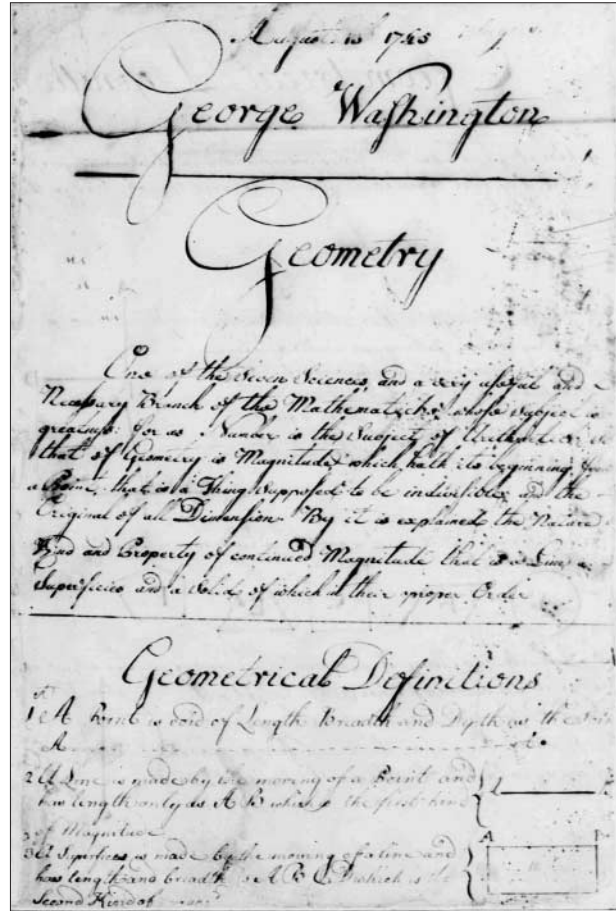
Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Spelling the Washington Way

Like most other young people at the time, George Washington did not spend much time going to school. It has been said that he “spelled like a gentleman,” however. Washington learned to spell, write clearly, and form good sentences by copying passages into his copybook. One of his best-known entries was a list of 110 rules from an etiquette book of the time, *Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation*.

In the 1700s there was no uniform system of spelling in the colonies. In 1828 Noah Webster published *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, which standardized American English. Literate people—those who could read and write—used a variety of accepted spellings or spelled according to how words sounded. Like many people, Washington often invented his own abbreviations and capitalized words that he felt were important.

Washington worked hard to expand and enlighten his mind. As a result of reading and writing so much, his spelling and grammar improved over time.



Your Turn

• Make a copybook—a small book of blank pages. Then copy a favorite poem, song, or part of a book to begin your copybook. Write “in a clear hand”—in other words, as neatly and carefully as you can. Add favorite passages or sayings to your copybook.

• Washington copied more than 100 rules of conduct into his copybook. Can you think of 100 rules of good behavior? In your copybook, list what you consider the 10 most important rules of good behavior.

• Try spelling “the Washington way.” Write a paragraph, spelling words as they sound and making up your own abbreviations. Trade paragraphs with a friend. Can you read one another’s paragraphs?

Additional Sources

on George Washington and the French and Indian War

Books (Grade 4 and up)

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- Fritz, Jean. *George Washington's Mother*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1992.
- Heilbroner, Joan. *Meet George Washington*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers, 2001.
- Harness, Cheryl. *George Washington*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2000.
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Books (Grade 8 and up)

- Alden, John R. *George Washington: A Biography*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984.
- Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001.
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- Flexner, James Thomas. *Washington: The Indispensable Man*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1974.
- Freeman, Douglas Southall. *Washington*. New York: Touchstone (Simon & Schuster), 1995.
- Higginbotham, Don. *George Washington: Unifying a Nation*. Lanham, Md., Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002 (Also see his other books: *Washington and the American Military Tradition* and *Washington Reconsidered*)
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Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

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Zagarri, Rosemarie, ed. David Humphreys' "Life of General Washington," with George Washington's "Remarks." University of Georgia Press, 1991.

Children's Magazines (Ages 8–14)

"Contest for Empire: The French and Indian War," *Cobblestone* (September 2005)

"Contest for Empire: 1754–1763," *Cobblestone* (April 1991)

"George Washington," *Cobblestone* (April 1992)

"Washington," *Kids Discover* (September 2000)

"Young George Washington," *AppleSeeds* (February 2004)

Teacher Materials

"The French and Indian War: 1754–1763: Teacher's Education Kit Grades 4–6," National Park Service/Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Farmington, PA 15437

"George Washington Biography Lesson: Teacher Activity Kit, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens in cooperation with The Society of the Cincinnati

George Washington: Gentleman from Mount Vernon. Vol. 14, Teaching With Primary Sources Series. Peterborough, NH: Cobblestone Publishing, 1998

Video/DVD/CD-ROM (All Ages)

"Bringing History to Life Through the Paintings of Robert Griffing: The French and Indian War Era. Produced by Robert Millward, Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Videocassette.

"Dig Into George Washington" The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, 1998. CD-ROM.

"George Washington: Founding Father." Produced and directed by Adam Friedman and Monte Markham. 50 min. A&E Television Networks, 1999. Videocassette.

"George Washington Remembers." Produced by Argentine Productions for French and Indian War 250, Inc., 2004. DVD.

"The Life of George Washington." Produced by The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association. 30 min. MLVA/Finley-Holiday Film Corp., 1989. Videocassette.

Web Sites (All ages)

www.frenchandindianwar250.org

French and Indian War Commemoration: 250 years

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress

www.mountvernon.org

George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens

www.thewarthatmadeamerica.org

Site for January 2006 PBS film

www.virginia.edu/gwpapers

The Papers of George Washington, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Historic Sites

www.frenchandindianwar250.org

The web site of French and Indian War 250, Inc. offers an Historical Sites Interactive Map listing French and Indian War related sites in 23 states and Canada.

Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

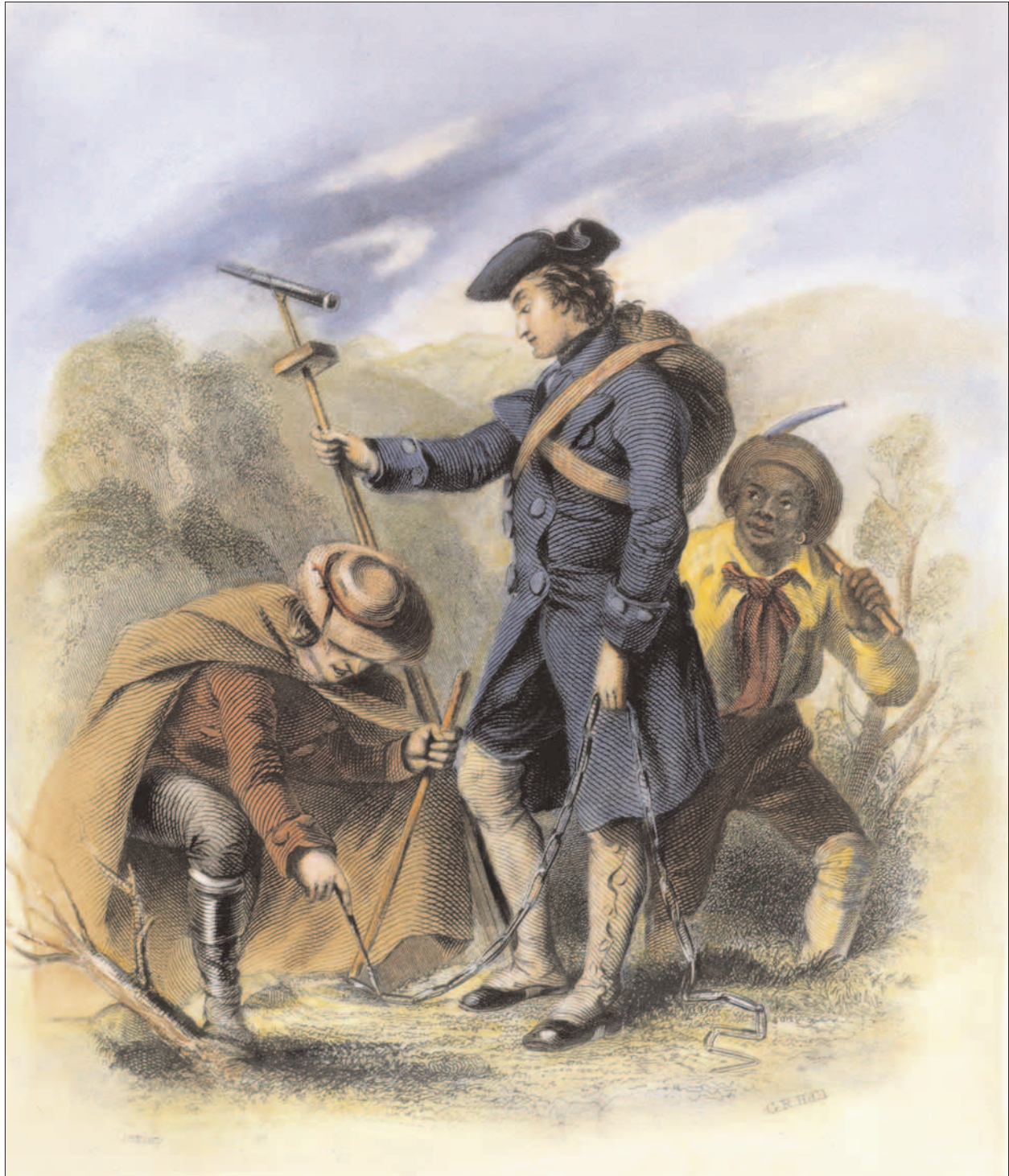
Image 1

Map of the Virginia Colony



Image 2

Washington as a Young Surveyor



Cast of Characters

General Edward Braddock (1695–1755)

was made commander-in-chief of the British army in North America in 1755. His mission was to drive the French from British-claimed land in North America, capturing their forts there. Braddock concentrated on taking Fort Duquesne in the Ohio River Valley. Braddock was new to America and was not familiar with the Valley's wilderness. With a large army, he set out for the Ohio valley in May. In early July, eight miles from Fort Duquesne, Braddock's army ran into an army of French and their Indian allies. Braddock was wounded during the battle. After calling for a retreat, he died on July 13 and was buried by Washington near Great Meadows.



Richard Corbin (1708–1790) served as receiver-general of Virginia from 1754 to 1776. The receiver general controlled the revenues of the colony. Corbin also was the president of the council that appointed officers in the Virginia militia.

Robert Dinwiddie (1693–1770) played a key role in the French and Indian War conflict. He served as lieutenant governor of the Virginia colony from 1751–58 and supported George Washington's early military career. Dinwiddie moved to England in 1758 where he retired.

Lord Fairfax owned more than five million acres of land in Virginia. His cousin, Colonel William Fairfax, owned Belvoir, the estate near Mount Vernon. The Colonel's son, George William Fairfax, was a good friend of George Washington's. The Colonel's daughter, Anne Fairfax, married Lawrence Washington, George's half-brother. Rich and well connected, the Fairfaxes helped George Washington on his path to fame.

Christopher Gist (about 1706–1759) was a well-known surveyor and explorer in the Ohio River Valley. He served as Washington's guide on the trip to Fort LeBoeuf to deliver the message to the French. Like Washington, Gist wrote a journal of their trip. Later, Gist served with Washington at the Battle at Fort Necessity and during the Braddock campaign. The next year, 1756, Gist was in Tennessee looking for allies for the British. In 1759 he died of disease, most likely smallpox.

Ensign Joseph Coulon de Jumonville (1718–1755), an officer in the French army, was involved in a minor skirmish with George Washington and his troops in May 1754. The fifteen-minute confrontation took place near Great Meadows in the Ohio River Valley. No one is certain who fired the first shots, but 12 French soldiers were killed. Then, the wounded Jumonville was killed by the Seneca Indian Tanaghrisson. The shots fired in this skirmish were the first shots of the French and Indian War.

George Mercer (1733–1784) was an officer in the Virginia regiment along with Washington during the French and Indian War. Later he served in the Virginia House of Burgesses and as the London agent of the Ohio Company.

Captain Jacques Legardeur de Sainte-Pierre (about 1700–1755) served as the commander at Fort LeBoeuf in 1753. It was Legardeur de Sainte-Pierre who met Washington at the fort and replied to Dinwiddie’s message to leave the Ohio River Valley. Legardeur de Sainte-Pierre died in 1755 during the French and Indian War conflict, attacking the British near Fort Edward, New York.

**Tanaghrisson—
The Half King** was selected by the Iroquois to serve as the leader of the American Indians in the Ohio River Valley. Born into the Catawba nation, he was captured by the French as a young boy and later



adopted into the Seneca nation. After his father was killed by the French, Tanaghrisson sided with the British. They gave him the title “Half King.” He lived in Logstown where in 1753 he met George Washington and accompanied him to Fort LeBoeuf. The next year he and Washington were involved in the skirmish with Ensign de Jumonville. It was Tanaghrisson who killed the wounded French officer. Tanaghrisson died in 1754.

Captain Louis Coulon de Villiers (1710–1757), the brother of Ensign Jumonville, led the attack on Washington at Fort Necessity in July 1754. His orders were to march against the English to punish them for having “violated the most sacred laws of civilized nations.” (The French believed that Washington and his soldiers had attacked without cause and had “assassinated” Jumonville.) Captain de Villiers died three years after the battle at Fort Necessity.

Washington's Journey to Fort LeBoeuf

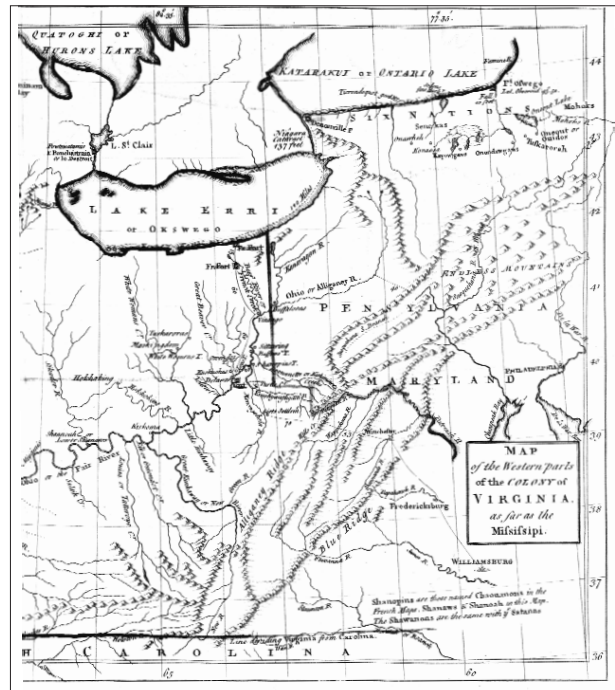
By the 1750s both the French and the British wanted control of the Ohio River Valley. They wanted to trade with the American Indians who lived there. They wanted to travel freely on its vast network of rivers. And the British were looking for land on which to build houses and farm.

By 1753 the British learned that the French were building forts along the rivers in the Ohio River Valley. In October, the British governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie, decided to send a message to the French. The message told the French that the land belonged to Britain and asked them to leave. Young George Washington volunteered to deliver the message. Accompanying Washington on his trip were Christopher Gist, his guide; Jacob Van Braam, his interpreter; and four men who took care of the horses and supplies.

The round trip of nearly 1,000 miles was not easy. There was plenty of rain, snow, and danger. On their way to the fort, Washington and his men met and discussed their mission with Indian chiefs in Logstown. They also met with Tanaghrisson, a Seneca leader who was called “the Half King.”

Half King, two other chiefs, a young warrior, and an Indian interpreter soon joined Washington's group. They traveled to Venango, a French camp where they met with Joncaire, the French officer in charge. He told them that they must continue to Fort LeBoeuf, near Lake Erie. They were accompanied to the fort by French soldiers. At Fort LeBoeuf Washington delivered his message to Captain Jacques Legardeur de Sainte-Pierre.

The French informed Washington that they had no intention of leaving the valley, and they handed him a letter for Governor Dinwiddie. Washington was



anxious to get back to Governor Dinwiddie at Williamsburg, the Virginia capital.

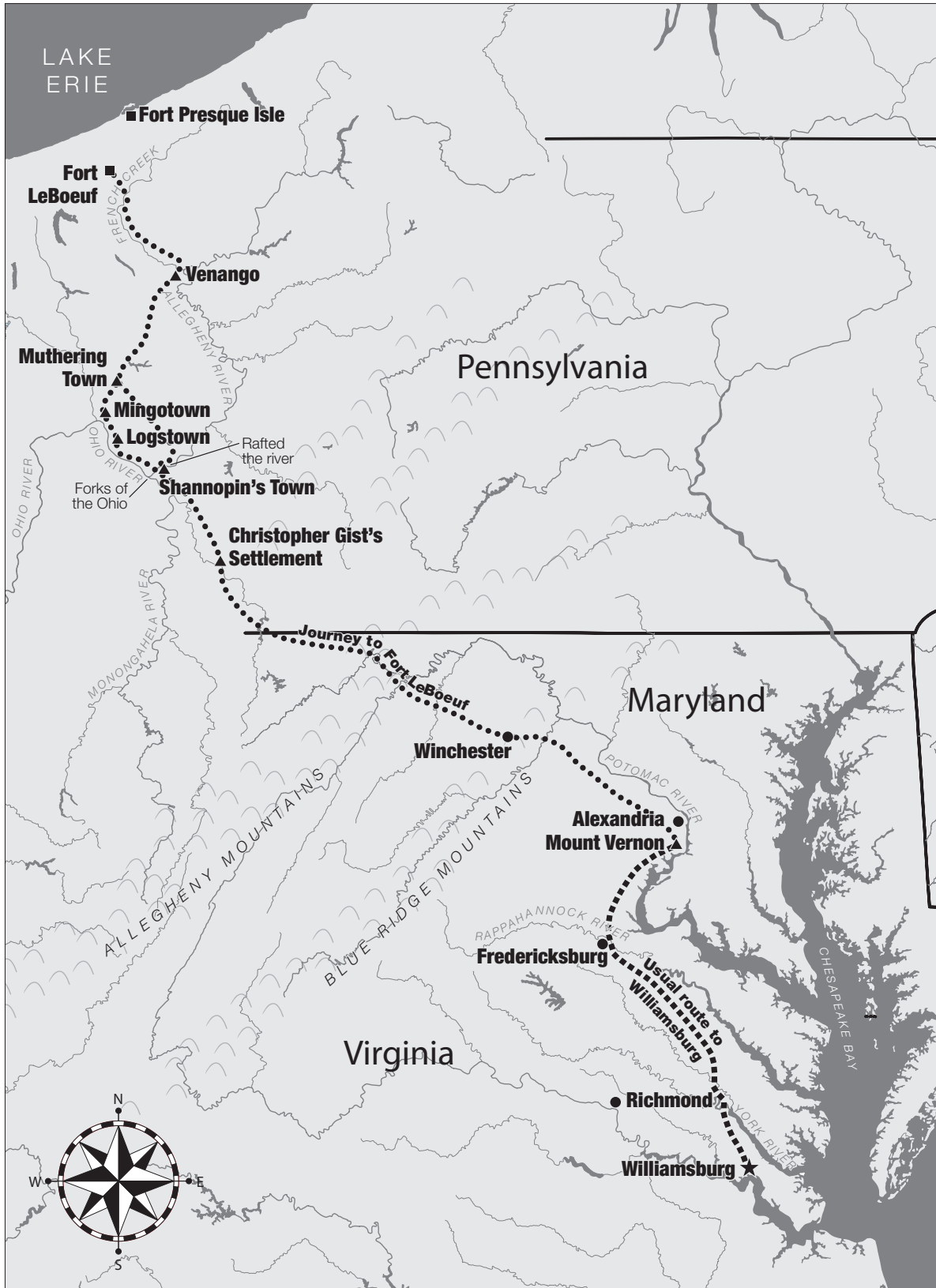
The trip home from Fort LeBoeuf was even more dangerous and difficult. At one point Washington and Gist were shot at by an Indian who had volunteered to be their guide. They had to walk all night to get away from him. When they reached the Allegheny River, which they expected to be frozen, they found that they could no longer walk across it—the ice was not solid. Instead, they had to build a raft. In the process of crossing the river on the raft, Washington fell off and easily could have drowned.

The entire trip to the Ohio River Valley and back took about two and a half months. By January 16 Washington was in Williamsburg, where he handed the letter from the French commander to Dinwiddie. When Dinwiddie read Washington's account of the trip, he was so impressed that he published the journals.

Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Image 3

Map of the Journey to Fort LeBoeuf



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

All Kinds of Soldiers

“Provincials,” “regulars,” “militiamen”—You have read about many different kinds of British soldiers who fought in the French and Indian War. In order to be in an army some government must authorize your enlistment. During the French and Indian War both the colonies and Britain authorized the enlistment of soldiers. Because the colonies were British, both the soldiers who came from Great Britain and the soldiers who came from the colonies were called “the British.”

During the Fort Mifflin campaign in 1754 there were two types of soldiers on the British side. The Virginia Provincial soldiers—Washington’s Virginia Regiment—were one type. These were soldiers who were authorized to be in the army by the Governor of Virginia and were paid by the colony. George Washington was a Virginia Provincial. The other soldiers were British soldiers, sometimes called “British regulars.” They were authorized to be soldiers by the King and were paid by Great Britain.

There also were Virginia militia soldiers at Fort Necessity. These are soldiers who are called together to fight a specific threat or help out with a specific need. These men had other jobs and were only soldiers when they were needed.

Whether Provincials, regulars, or militia, all of these soldiers were British.

A Roll of the Names of Officers & Soldiers who engaged in the Service of the British before the Battle of the Clouds, the 8th day of July 1754, as taken from the Army Muster-Rolls of those times.

Officers Names	Rank	Date of their Service
George Washington	Colonel	July 7 th 25 th 1754
George Moore	Lieut. Col.	July 20 th 1754
Robert Taylor	Major	March 15 th 1754
Robert Taylor	Captain	July 25 th 1754
Robert Taylor	Ensign	March 4 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Burnaby	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
John Sarracine	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Bryson	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
John Sarracine	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Bryson	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754

The above is a list of the names of the officers & soldiers who engaged in the Service of the British before the Battle of the Clouds, the 8th day of July 1754, as taken from the Army Muster-Rolls of those times. It is a list of the names of the officers & soldiers who engaged in the Service of the British before the Battle of the Clouds, the 8th day of July 1754, as taken from the Army Muster-Rolls of those times. It is a list of the names of the officers & soldiers who engaged in the Service of the British before the Battle of the Clouds, the 8th day of July 1754, as taken from the Army Muster-Rolls of those times.

Officers names	Rank	Time of enlistment
John Sarracine	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Bryson	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
John Sarracine	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Bryson	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
John Sarracine	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
William Bryson	Ensign	July 25 th 1754
James Owers	Ensign	July 25 th 1754



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Return from Fort LeBoeuf, 1753

Reading George Washington's Words

Original

December 1753

The next Day we continued traveling 'till it was quite Dark, & got to the River...we expected to have found the River Froze, but it was not, only about 50 Yards from each Shoar; the Ice I suppose had broke up above, for it was driving in vast Quantities.

There was no way for us to get over but upon a Raft, which we set about with but one poor Hatchet, & got finish'd just after Sunsetting, after a whole days Work: We got it launch'd, & on board of it, & sett off; but before we got half over, we were jamed in the Ice in such a Manner, that we expected every Moment our Raft wou'd sink, & we Perish; I put out my seting Pole, to try to stop the Raft, that the Ice might pass by, when the Rapidity of the Stream through it with so much Violence against the Pole, that it Jirk'd me into 10 Feet Water, but I fortunately saved my Self by catching hold of one of the Raft Logs. Notwithstanding all our Efforts we cou'd not get the Raft to either Shoar, but were oblig'd, as we were pretty near an island, to quit our Raft & wade to it. The Cold was so extream severe, that Mr. Gist got all his Fingers, & some of his Toes Froze, & the Water was shut up so hard, that We found no Difficulty in getting off the Island on the Ice in the Morning...

From The Diaries of George Washington, Vol. 1. Courtesy of University Press of Virginia, 1976 and 1979.

Adaptation

December 1753

The next day we continued to travel until it got dark. We got to the river. We expected to find it frozen but the only parts that were frozen were near the shores. The ice had probably broken up above where we were, and you could see a lot of it moving in the river.

There was no way to cross the river except by raft. We went to work building one with only a hatchet that wasn't very good. At sunset, after working all day, we got onboard and set off. When we were halfway across, we got jammed in the ice. We thought our raft would sink, and we would die. I put out my pole that I used to move the raft. I wanted to stop the raft so that the ice might pass by. The water was so powerful against my pole that it threw me into ten feet of water. I saved myself by grabbing hold of one of the raft logs. Despite all our efforts we could not get the raft to either shore. Because we were near an island we left the raft and waded to the island. It was so cold that all of Mr. Gist's fingers and some of his toes froze. In the morning the water was frozen, and we were able to walk across the ice and easily get off the island.



Image credit: The Granger Collection, New York

Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON



Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
- 2 What time of year was it? What was the weather like?
- 3 Who was involved in this incident?
- 4 What did Washington have to do when he got to the river? How was he able to do it?
- 5 What happened to Washington in the river?
- 6 Where did Washington spend the night? How did he get there?
- 7 What happened to the river the next day?
- 8 Did the weather affect Washington's body?

Image 4a

Washington on the 1753 Expedition

"Domain of Three Nations" by John Buxton



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Image credit: ©John Buxton, courtesy of Houston Art & Frame

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Image 4b

Washington on the 1753 Expedition

“Washington’s Crossing, 1753” by John Buxton



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

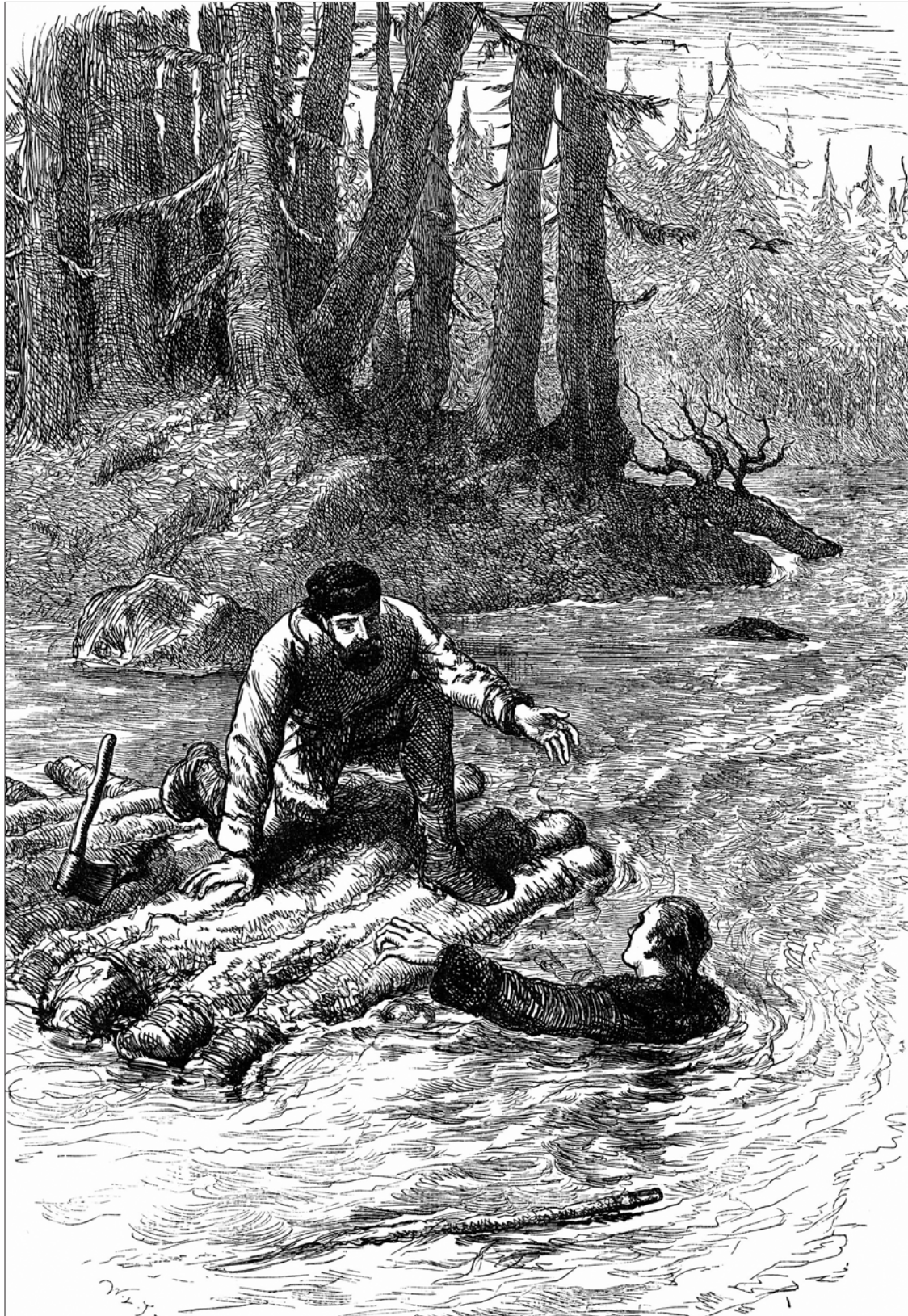
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Image credit: ©John Buxton, courtesy of Houston Art & Frame

Image 4c

Washington on the 1753 Expedition

Wood engraving, 19th century



Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

Image credit: The Granger Collection, New York

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Seeking Promotion, 1754

Letter to Richard Corbin, January 28, 1754

Reading George Washington's Words

Original

Dear Sir:

In a conversation at Green Spring you gave me some room to hope for a commission above that of a Major, and to be ranked among the chief officers of this expedition. The command of the whole forces is what I neither look for, expect, not desire; for I must be impartial enough to confess, it is a charge too great for my youth and inexperience to be intrusted with. Knowing this, I have too sincere a love for my country, to undertake that which may tend to the prejudice of it. But if I could entertain hopes that you thought me worthy of the post of Lieutenant-colonel, and would favour me so far as to mention it at the appointment of officers, I could not but entertain a true sense of the kindness.

I flatter myself that under a skilful commander, or man of sense, (which I most sincerely wish to serve under,) with my own application and diligent study of my duty, I shall be able to conduct my steps without censure, and in time, render myself worthy of the promotion that I shall be favoured with now.

Adaptation

Dear Sir:

When we talked at Green Spring, you gave me reason to hope that I could obtain a commission above that of Major – that I would be ranked among the chief officers of this expedition. I don't seek, expect or want to command ALL the forces. I realize that I'm too young and inexperienced to take on such an important position. I also love my country too much to take a position I'm not qualified for. But I do hope that you think I am right for the post of lieutenant colonel and that you would mention this when officers are appointed. I would be very grateful.

I flatter myself that under a skillful commander or a man of sense, which I hope to serve under, I would do well and wouldn't get into any trouble and would be worthy of the promotion to lieutenant colonel.



Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
- 2 Was Corbin a stranger to Washington?
- 3 What did Washington want?
- 4 Did Washington feel he was capable of commanding all the forces?
- 5 What did Washington want Corbin to do for him?
- 6 Did Washington feel capable of serving as lieutenant colonel?
- 7 Does Washington appear confident, ambitious, and optimistic?

Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

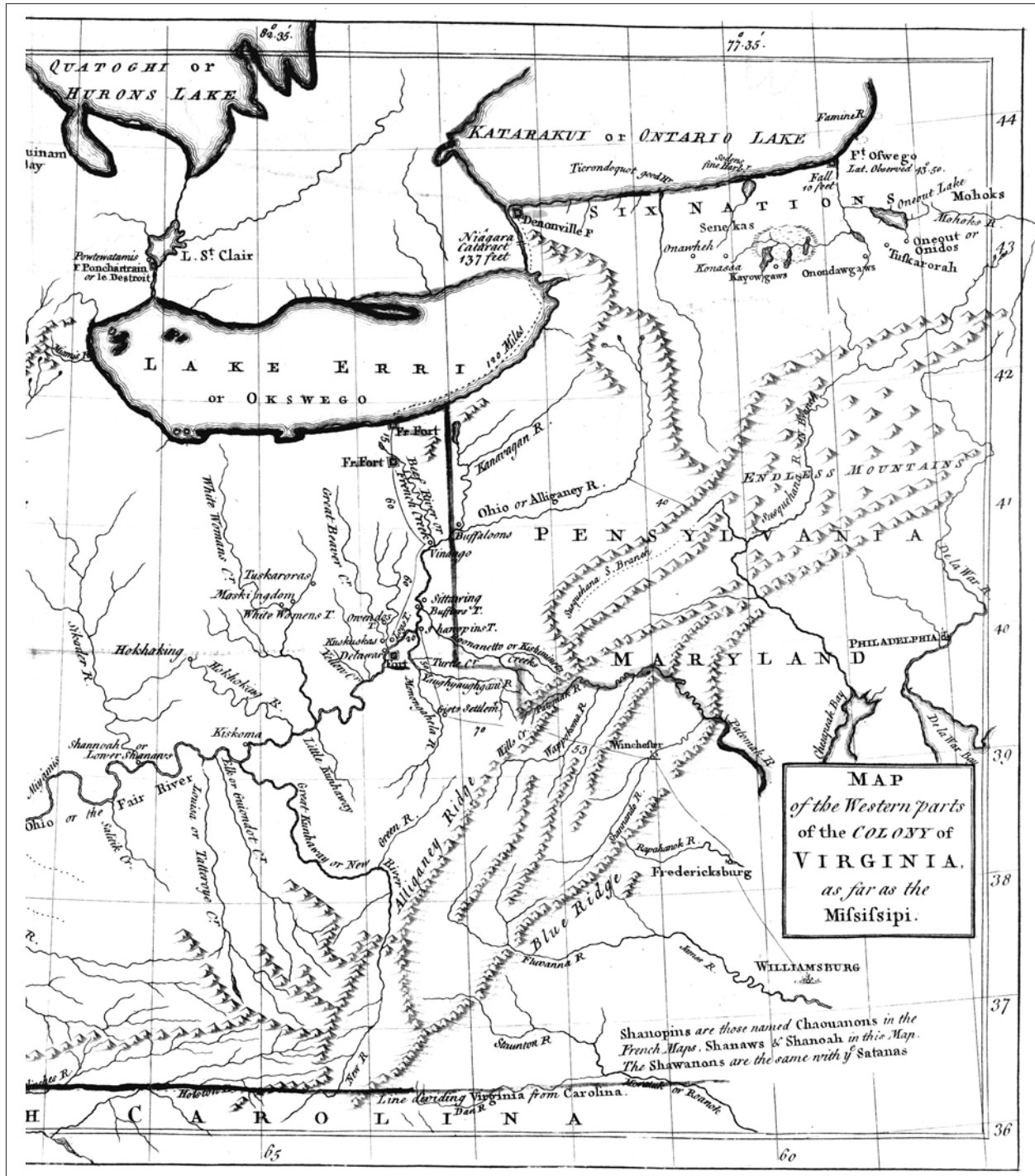
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Text credit: From The Papers of George Washington: Colonial Series, Vol. 1.
Courtesy of University Press of Virginia, 1983.

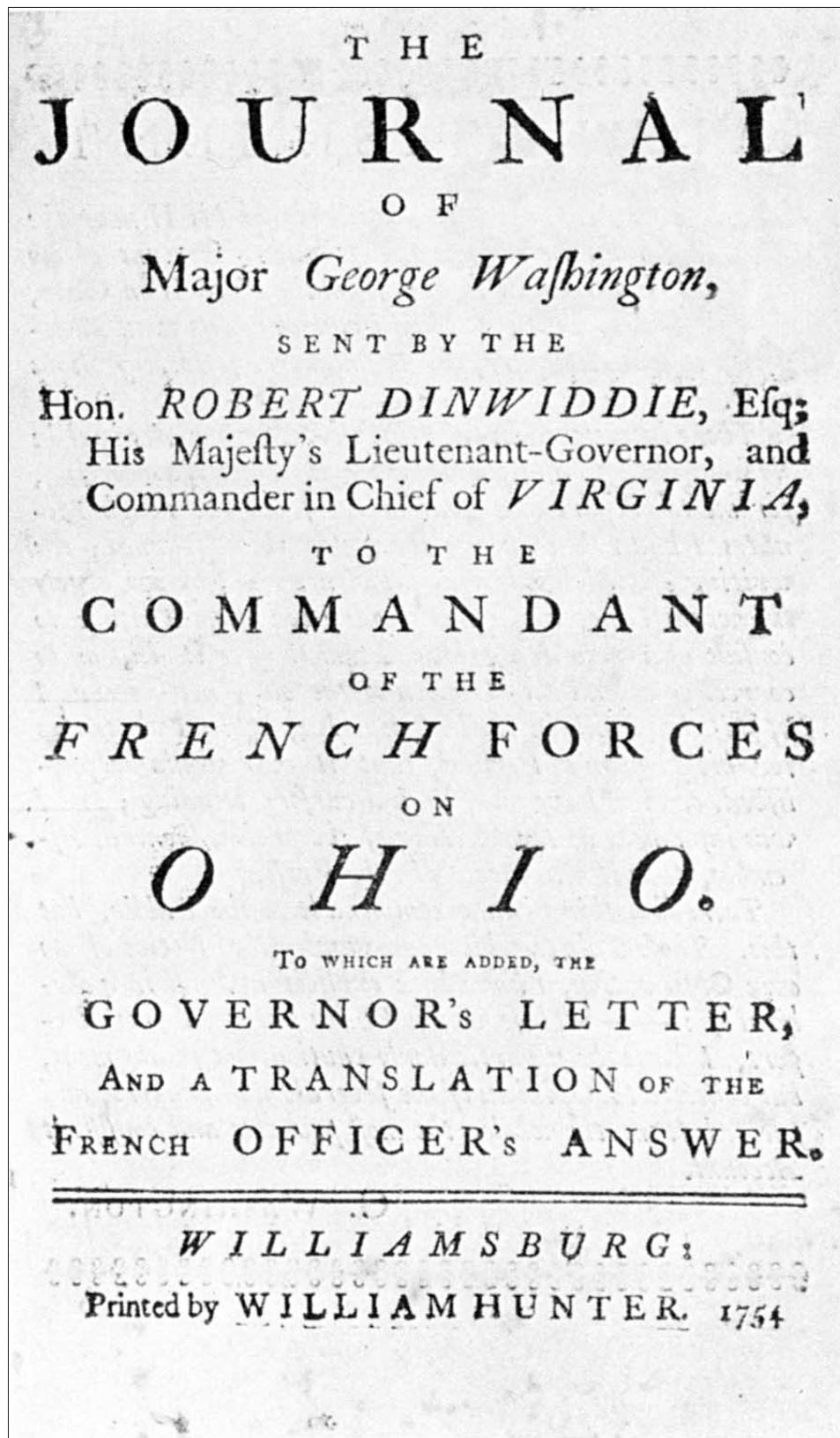
Image 5

Historic Map of the Ohio River Valley

Drawn by George Washington, 1753



Washington's Journal of 1754



Answer Key to Guided Reading and Scaffolding Questions on the Student Resource Pages

Student Resource Page 3 Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
(He was writing to himself in his journal.)
- 2 Where was he?
(He was outdoors surveying land and inside—out of the rain and to eat dinner and go to bed.)
- 3 What did George Washington do before “returning to the Penningtons”?
(He worked hard, surveying land.)
- 4 What did George Washington do that was unlike his companions?
(He took off his clothes before getting into bed.)
- 5 Did Washington have a good night’s sleep? What was his bed like?
(Not at first, but once he lay like his companions, he fell asleep. His bed was uncomfortable. It was made of straw, had no sheets, and only had one thin blanket filled with bugs.)
- 6 What was Washington’s attitude?
(Frustrated. He knew he was young and inexperienced, but he was determined to learn from his mistakes. He makes a decision to “fix” his mistake.)
- 7 What decision did Washington make at the end of the March 15th journal entry?
(To sleep outside before an open fire.)
- 8 What happened the next day?
(He went to Frederickstown, toured the town, returned to where they were staying, ate supper, and slept well in a feather bed with clean sheets.)

Student Resource Page 6 Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
(He was writing to himself in his journal.)
- 2 What time of year was it? What was the weather like?
(It was winter, and it was very cold.)

- 3 Who was involved in this incident?
(George Washington was traveling with Christopher Gist, his guide on the trip.)
- 4 What did Washington have to do when he got to the river? How was he able to do it?
(The river was not frozen as expected, so he and Christopher Gist had to build a raft with only a “poor” hatchet.)
- 5 What happened to Washington in the river?
(He fell in ten feet of water trying to stop the raft. He then grabbed hold of one of the raft’s logs.)
- 6 Where did Washington spend the night? How did he get there?
(He and Gist spent the night on an island. They waded there because their raft could not make it to the shores of the river.)
- 7 What happened to the river the next day?
(The river was frozen, so they were able to walk on it.)
- 8 Did the weather affect Washington’s body?
(He does not mention being affected by the weather but points out that Gist suffered from the extreme cold.)

Student Resource Page 8

Guided Reading Questions

- 1 To whom was George Washington writing?
(Richard Corbin was a person of authority. Washington wrote to him for a military promotion.)
- 2 Was Corbin a stranger to Washington?
(No. Washington had talked to him in Green Spring, Virginia, sometime earlier.)
- 3 What did Washington want?
(He wanted to obtain a military commission higher than that of major so that he would be on the level of the chief officers of the expedition to the Ohio River Valley.)
- 4 Did Washington feel he was capable of commanding all the forces?
(No. Washington recognized that he was young and inexperienced and that commanding all of the forces would be too important a position. He also confessed that he had a duty to his country NOT to take a position he is not qualified for.)
- 5 What did Washington want Corbin to do for him?
(Washington wanted Corbin to use his influence to help him gain the promotion, by mentioning his qualifications when decisions were being made to appoint the officers for the expedition.)

- 6** Did Washington feel capable of serving as lieutenant colonel?
(Yes. Washington felt that under the right commander he would work hard and not do anything wrong and therefore would be worthy of the promotion.)
- 7** Does Washington appear confident, ambitious, and optimistic?
(Yes. This letter was a “pitch” for a promotion to lieutenant colonel. He was confident enough in his abilities to point out his weaknesses [his youth and inexperience]. He was ambitious enough to take the initiative in writing to Corbin, and he was ambitious to be of equal rank with his fellow officers. The tone of the letter seems optimistic, as Washington reminds Corbin that he had given him reason to be hopeful.)

Student Resource Page 11

Guided Reading Questions

- 1** What were Washington’s goals in taking troops from Virginia into the Ohio country?
(To seize the fort at the point where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers meet before the French did.)
- 2** Why did he fall back to the Great Meadows?
(The French had already seized the fort at the Forks of the Ohio. Washington and his men went to Great Meadows because it was a good place to find food for the horses, to set up a fort to defend themselves, and a good location if they had to attack the French fort.)
- 3** What caused the French to attack Washington at the Great Meadows?
(According to Washington, the French came to look at his camp and to assess the British strengths and position. When Washington learned that they were there, he attacked.)
- 4** What happened on the morning of July 3, 1754?
(The French and their Indian allies attacked with shouts and yells. Washington and his men fiercely counterattacked. The French then changed that plan of attack and took up several positions in the forest. Washington and his men counterattacked in the best way possible.)
- 5** Where were Washington and his men situated? Where was the enemy?
(Washington and his men were on the fields [meadows] inside a man-made fort and in trenches. The French and their Indian allies were located in the surrounding woods and hills.)
- 6** What happened when it rained?
(The trenches filled with water, and Washington’s ammunition and supplies became wet and ruined. All that remained dry was a little food and a few bayonets.)
- 7** What happened at the end of the battle?
(Washington had no choice but to surrender. He and his men could not defend themselves and their food supply would not last much longer.)