

Part B: Becoming a Leader

The conflict that Americans call “the French and Indian War” played a pivotal role in the life of George Washington. As Washington himself recalls in his “Remarks,” his experiences were dramatic and life-changing. At the beginning of the conflict, Washington was an inexperienced young officer. Just a year later, he was acclaimed a hero after the Battle of the Monongahela, or “Braddock’s Defeat.”

By reading the “Remarks,” written when Washington was in his fifties, students will visit key moments in Washington’s life during the French and Indian War. They will see Washington as a widely known military officer devoted to furthering his reputation and serving his country, England. They also will see a man who suffered both defeat and glory and who matured during this time. The war laid the foundations for the person George Washington would become: family man, farmer, visionary entrepreneur, statesman, general, and first president of the United States.



For Part B, Level One use Resource Pages 9–11 and Images 2, 7–10 on the CD-ROM.

Level One (Grades 4-6)

Getting Started

1 To visualize how George Washington changed as he grew up, ask students to compare the picture of Washington as a young surveyor (**Image 2: Washington as a Young Surveyor**) with a painting of him in the Battle of the Monongahela (**Image 7a: Washington at the Battle of the Monongahela**) just seven years later. Remind students of how young Washington is in both scenes (16 and 23 years old respectively) and ask them

to speculate on how different he seems in the two images. Ask them to imagine themselves in each situation. Tell the class that they are going to find out what it was like to be in that battle scene; they’ll see how far away the soldier was from the boy who worried about fleas and lice!

2 To prepare students for this “close up” study of Washington’s experiences, either teach or review the subject of the French and Indian War, using your text or other classroom resources.

3 As an additional resource on the war and Washington, distribute **Resource Page 9: Timeline: George Washington and the French and Indian War**. Suggest that students use the timeline as a mini-biography that will provide background knowledge to the readings.

GOALS

In Part B students will:

Expand knowledge of Washington’s young adult years

Examine Washington’s role in pivotal events of the French and Indian War

Explore Washington’s reactions to key experiences as described in the “Remarks”

Analyze historical perspective as reflected in a memoir

Answer the Focus Question: How did Washington’s experiences in the French and Indian War prepare him for his role as a military leader?



“...from 1754 to 1759, Washington spent the bulk of his time west of the Blue Ridge, leading a series of expeditions into the Ohio Country that served as crash courses in the art of soldiering. They also provided him with a truly searing set of personal experiences that shaped his basic outlook on the world.”

Joseph J. Ellis,
*His Excellency,
George
Washington*

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The excerpts in Part B come from the manuscript historians call the “Remarks.” The “Remarks” were written by Washington when he was in his fifties, shortly before he became the country’s first president. The manuscript consists of comments about a biographical manuscript submitted to him by his close friend David Humphreys. Washington intended his comments for Humphreys’ eyes only. Be sure that students understand that the “Remarks” are a primary source, as much as a personal letter or journal entry.

4 Invite students to continue to add to and change entries on the Who Was George Washington? chart, which they began in Part A.

5 Tell students that they are going to learn, in Washington’s own words, of his first experiences in defending his country. Note that in a little more than 20 years, George Washington would be the most important military leader in America. Post the *Focus Question* for this investigation: *How did Washington’s experiences in the French and Indian War prepare him for his role as a military leader?*

Reading and Reflecting

At the Start of War

1 Explain that on May 28, 1754, George Washington and his men were involved in a minor skirmish with the French in the woods near Great Meadows, Pennsylvania. It was during this skirmish that the first shots of the French and Indian War were fired. Tell the class that Washington believed the French would counterattack and so, out of necessity, he had his soldiers erect a protective stockade, which he called Fort Necessity. Show students **Image 8: Fort Necessity Today**, explaining that this re-creation from a film shows George Washington in front of a reconstruction of the fort on the original site. Discuss with students what kind of protection they think this would have provided. *(Based on the photograph of the reconstructed Fort Necessity, students should see that the fort was hastily erected and would have offered little safety.)*

2 Tell students that in early July the French did counterattack, and Washington found himself involved in the first major battle of the war. This was also Washington’s first true battle experience, and the first time he was in command. Washington did not emerge a victor or hero. Instead, he was defeated by the French and their Indian allies and forced to surrender. So that students can visualize the scene, distribute or display **Image 9: The Battle at the Great Meadows**, which shows Robert Griffing’s painting “A Charming Field for an Encounter.”

3 Distribute copies of **Resource Page 11: At the Great Meadows, 1754** and tell students that they are going to hear Washington’s own recollections of this battle. Provide some background on the “Remarks” (see boxed text above, and page 30 in this Guide) before students study the adapted version. Ask students to imagine being there as you read

the excerpts aloud to the class. Then have students work in pairs to answer the Guided Reading Questions.

4 Copy the sequence below so that students can follow it as they reread the account. Display or distribute **Image 10: Map of the War at the Forks of the Ohio, 1754–1758**, so that they can track the actions on the map.

Sequence Chart:

- **Troops marched from Winchester, Virginia, toward the Forks of the Ohio.**
- **Washington learned that the French had taken Fort Duquesne (the post at the meeting of the Forks of the Ohio).**
- **Washington’s troops fell back to the Great Meadows.**
- **On May 28, they skirmished with a party of French soldiers sent out from Fort Duquesne.**
- **Washington’s troops built Fort Necessity.**
- **The French attacked on July 3.**
- **There was heavy rainfall.**
- **The French offered terms of surrender.**
- **Washington accepted terms of surrender.**
- **Next morning (July 4) Washington and troops retreated.**

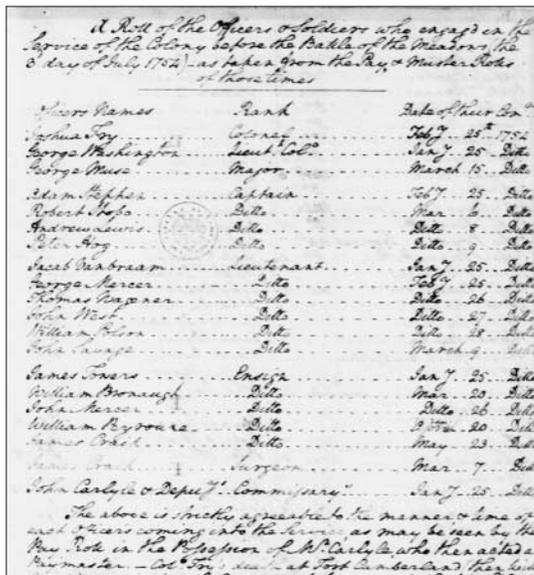
5 After students have read the excerpts, pose the following questions for discussion. Ask students to cite evidence in their answers and to keep in mind the Focus Question.

~According to his “Remarks,” how did Washington feel about his situation at the Great Meadows? (*Washington reported the details about the battle unemotionally, in a matter-of-fact manner. He appears to believe that he did the best job possible. Before the rain, he said, his men were capable of defending the fort. Remind the students that Washington was jotting down notes here, concerned with recording his impressions of the battle.*)

~Why did Washington surrender? (*He saw no signs of improving his situation. The soldiers were out of supplies and food, and a large number of officers and soldiers were killed or wounded. Washington appears realistic rather than desperate.*)

~What kind of leader does Washington appear to be? (*Washington described himself as the brave, aggressive leader at the beginning of the confrontation. He and his men attacked and were successful, forcing the French to gather all their forces and counterattack. It was not until Washington found himself in an unfortunate location and plagued by heavy rains that he had to surrender, according to his account. Washington accepted responsibility for the troops’ actions and their predicament, and in doing so showed leadership qualities.*)

~Do these excerpts change your image of Washington? (*In revealing the “ups and downs” of the encounter at the Great Meadows, Washington appears human. Not everything came easily to him. He also appears to be a compassionate leader. Washington recognized defeat, acknowledging that many of his men had been killed or wounded and that they could not have survived much longer.*)



This record of the First Virginia Regiment, written in April 1771, lists the officers and men in the regiment before the Battle at the Great Meadows in 1754.



Artist Robert Griffing took the title of his painting from Washington’s comment that the Great Meadows was “a charming field for an encounter.”

Explain that Washington for the most part describes himself in the third person (“he”) in the “Remarks,” because he was responding to a biography written in the third person.

The Young Hero

1 Explain to students that after the battle at Fort Necessity, George Washington hoped to improve the status of his soldiers, the Virginia Regiment. He wanted his colonial troops to become part of the regular British Army. As an officer in the regular British Army, Washington's own rank would have been higher, too. Instead, he learned that the Virginia Regiment would be dispersed. A proud Washington resigned from the military, but was not out of service for long. He knew the military life was a good way to get ahead. Less than a year after Fort Necessity Washington signed on as a volunteer with British General Braddock's campaign to oust the French from the Ohio River Valley. (You might want to ask the students if they agree with these decisions—to resign and then to volunteer.) Washington played a major role in the campaign. Although the campaign failed, Washington survived and became a hero. Shortly afterwards, Washington took over the command of the reorganized Virginia forces.

2 To set the scene, display the two paintings in **Image 7: The Battle of the Monongahela** from the Image Gallery. Distribute copies of **Resource Page 12: The Battle of the Monongahela, 1755** and have students read the adapted version of the excerpt to themselves first and then answer the questions on the handouts. Washington's recollection of the events at what is called "Braddock's Defeat" makes dramatic reading, to say the least. Although there are words and references that your students may not understand, they should grasp the confusion, danger, and bravery that Washington described. The painting "Defeat of General Braddock" (**Image 7b**) presents an especially dramatic visual scene of the defeat.

3 Have students locate key sites on **Image 10: Map of the War at the Forks of the Ohio, 1754–1758**. Then, working in pairs, students should reread the account of "Braddock's

Defeat" and make sequence charts of the excerpt's account. Charts should include:

SEQUENCE CHART

- **Washington resigned from military, then volunteered for the Braddock campaign.**
- **He tried unsuccessfully to convince Braddock and officers how best to fight the enemy.**
- **The attack at the Monongahela happened on July 9.**
- **Troops panicked.**
- **Washington offered to lead troops in a different style of fighting but his offer was not accepted in time.**
- **Braddock and other commanding officers were wounded.**
- **Washington survived under heavy fire and led the retreat.**
- **Braddock died and was buried by Washington.**

4 Pose the following questions for discussion. In their answers, students should cite evidence from the documents. They will also need to keep in mind the Focus Question.

~Based on these excerpts, what did Washington think of himself and his decisions? (*He was angry about the military situation that led him to resign; was happy that he had the opportunity to impress Braddock. He seems sure of himself—thought that his opinion about attacking the French and Indians was right. He was opinionated, as well as arrogant about British attitude. He probably felt very lucky to have survived unhurt.*)

~Does Washington seem eager to get ahead and please his superiors? Did he want to be a leader? (*Yes. He wanted a higher rank. He was proud that Braddock noticed him. He admitted that he wanted to impress the general and the principal officers. He voiced his opinions about*

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improving the troops' situations. Washington also took charge when the general and his aides were wounded and the troops were in a state of confusion without leadership.)

~Was Washington successful as a leader? *(Yes and no. Washington voiced his opinions about when and where to attack but his superiors did not listen to him or immediately recognize that his opinions were valid. But Washington was lucky in battle. Unwounded, Washington rose to the occasion and took charge, especially overseeing the burial of General Braddock.)*

~Can you put yourself in George Washington's shoes? *(Have students ever felt unappreciated, felt that they deserved something but a less qualified person was selected? Have they ever felt that their opinions were not taken seriously? Have they ever been the only one to handle a difficult situation, to have others rely on them?)*

Pulling It All Together

1 Have students review the excerpts on **Resource Pages 11 and 12** to consider how Washington changed over the course of a little more than one year, 1754–55. Have them consider the following questions in order to write a short essay on Washington the Young Leader. Remind students of the Focus Question; they should conclude their



essays by analyzing how Washington's leadership as a young soldier prepared him for the roles he would play later on.

~Was Washington ambitious? *(Washington was determined to fight the enemy at the Great Meadows and only surrendered because of location [without defenses] and weather. Afterwards, Washington was not discouraged and resigned from the military rather than accept a lower rank. Washington volunteered again for active duty, and to please his superiors, voiced his opinions about military strategies. He was determined to succeed in battle, but he also was determined to succeed personally—to be noticed. After Braddock was wounded, Washington stepped in and took charge, handling difficult situations and decisions.)*

~Did he grow as a military leader? *(From his defeat at the Great Meadows, Washington understood that in order to succeed in battle one must know the enemy. Based on his prior knowledge, he understood during Braddock's Defeat how and from where the French and their Indian Allies would fight. In all the excerpts Washington never questioned his abilities. He was fully capable of being a leader. Washington also recognized that a leader must accept responsibility—whether in defeat at the Great Meadows or in difficult situations at Braddock's Defeat.)*

~Was Washington a successful military leader as a young man? *(Yes. Washington learned from his mistakes at the Great Meadows and emerged a hero after Braddock's Defeat, mostly because he miraculously survived and because he showed that he was brave and competent.)*

2 Ask for volunteers to read their short essays out loud. In a class discussion have students consider ways in which Washington changed as he experienced the war and ways he remained the same.

A detail from Junius Brutus Stearns' painting of the Battle of the Monongahela.



The CD activity Interactive Learning Journey: Exploring the French and Indian War allows students to consider the who, why, what, and how of the war in a digital exploration.

Image 2

Washington as a Young Surveyor



Image 7a

The Battle of the Monongahela

Washington at the Battle of the Monongahela, July 9, 1755

“Washington as Captain in the French and Indian War” by Junius Brutus Stearns



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Image credit: ©Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch. Photo by Ron Jennings.

Image 7b

The Battle of the Monongahela

“Defeat of General Braddock” by Edwin Willard Deming



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Image credit: The Wisconsin Historical Society

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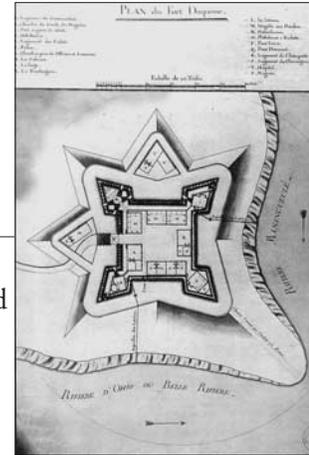
Timeline: George Washington and The French and Indian War

George Washington travels to Fort LeBoeuf to deliver a message asking the French to leave the Ohio River Valley. He returns to Williamsburg, Virginia, with the French reply: They refuse to leave.

1753

1754

In the spring, the French build Fort Duquesne at “the Forks of the Ohio,” where the



Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers meet. At the end of May, Lieutenant Colonel Washington is involved in a skirmish with the French, during which the first shots of the French and Indian War are fired. Washington and his troops build Fort Necessity at Great Meadows, Pennsylvania. In July, the French attack at Fort Necessity and force Washington to surrender. It is the only time in his life that Washington surrenders his army. Shortly afterwards, Washington resigns from the military rather than accept a lower rank. Washington rents Mount Vernon from Anne Fairfax, widow of his half-brother Lawrence.

Washington volunteers to serve as an aide to British General Edward Braddock. (Braddock came to America to force the French from the Ohio River Valley.)

Though the campaign fails, Washington survives and is hailed as a hero. At the Battle of the Monongahela Washington had four bullets shot through his coat yet he was unhurt. With so many officers injured during the battle, Washington was instrumental in carrying out Braddock's orders for retreat. Shortly afterwards, Washington is put in charge of Virginia's forces trying to defend the Virginia frontier from raiding French and Indians.

1755

1756

Washington meets with William Shirley, British commander-in-chief in North America, in Boston. Washington seeks to have his Virginia Regiment incorporated as part of the British Regular Army, but is unsuccessful. Washington has a hard time defending the Virginia frontier with his troops. He lacks the strength and number of men to do the job and his troops are underpaid and badly equipped. There is much discontentment and he considers his troops undisciplined. The British formally declare war on the French. The French capture Fort Oswego and now control all of Lake Ontario.

General Washington is elected to Virginia's House of Burgesses, and his political career begins. Washington and his troops, under the command of British Brigadier General John Forbes, plan to attack Fort Duquesne, the French fort at the Forks of the Ohio. Washington escapes unhurt in a "friendly fire" incident when by mistake other Virginia troops fire on him and his men. The French burn and abandon Fort Duquesne, allowing the British and colonists to move in. At the end of the year, Washington resigns his commission as commander of Virginia's forces. The British capture the Fortress at Louisbourg and Fort Frontenac. They also sustain heavy losses trying unsuccessfully to capture Fort Ticonderoga.



George III becomes King of Great Britain and Ireland. The British capture Montreal. The fighting ends between the French and the British in North America

Washington is elected again to the House of Burgesses. The British need to pay for the British soldiers now stationed in all the French forts gained as a result of winning the French and Indian War and institute the Stamp Act. Tensions between the colonists and Britain grow. Pontiac's War ends when the British change their trade policy with the American Indians in a manner the Indians find agreeable.

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1757

Washington continues to do his best to defend the Virginia frontier. He meets in Philadelphia with Lord Loudoun, now British commander-in-chief in North America. Washington is unsuccessful in efforts to obtain a commission in the British army. Again, Washington is not elected to Virginia's House of Burgesses. Washington contracts dysentery and recu-

1758



perates at Mount Vernon. Begins work to improve Mount Vernon. The French capture Fort William Henry.

1759

Washington marries Martha Dandridge Custis, a rich widow with land, property, slaves, and two young children. Washington adds a story and a half to Mount Vernon. The British begin building Fort Pitt at the Forks of the Ohio. They capture Fort Niagara, Fort Ticonderoga, and Crown Point. In September they capture the capital city of New France, Quebec.

1760

Washington purchases more land around Mount Vernon in 1759 and 1760.

1763

The Seven Years War in Europe (of which the French and Indian War is a part) ends with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The British now own almost all of France's former possessions in North America. New British trade policies with the American Indians cause the Indians real hardship and suffering. Pontiac attacks Fort Detroit and Pontiac's War begins. The American Indians capture eight British forts and both Fort Pitt and Fort Detroit are surrounded. In an effort to stop all the American Indian fighting, King George III issues the Proclamation of 1763, which requires British colonists to live east of the Appalachian Mountains.

1765

Text credit: Adapted from George Washington: The Writer, compiled and edited by Carolyn P. Yoder, Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2003.

Image credits: Mount Vernon Ladies' Association

Image 8

Fort Necessity Today

Reenactment of George Washington at the fort



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Image credit: National Park Service/Fort Necessity National Battlefield

Image 9

The Battle at the Great Meadows

“A Charming Field for an Encounter,” by Robert Griffing



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Image credit: ©Robert Griffing, courtesy of Paramount Press, Inc.
National Park Service/Fort Necessity National Battlefield

At the Great Meadows, 1754

Reading George Washington's Words



Original

“He [George Washington] began his March in the Month of May in order to open the Roads, and this he had to do almost the whole distance from Winchester...for the especiall purpose of siezing, if possible, before the French shd arrive at it, the important Post at the conflux of the Alligany and Monongahela; with the advantages of which he was forcibly struck the preceeding year;...he had but just ascended the Lawrel Hill 50 M: short of his object: after a March of 230 Miles from Alexa. when he received information from his Scouts that the French had in force, siezed the Post he was pushing to obtain ... The object of his precipitate advance being thus defeated...it was thought advisable to fall back a few miles, to a place known by the name of the great meadows—abounding in Forage more convenient for the purpose of forming a Magazine & bringing up the rear—and to advance from (if we should ever be in force to do it) to the attack of the Post which the enemy now occupied; and had called Du Quesne...

“...previous to this junction the French sent a detachment to reconnoitre our Camp to obtain intelligence of our strength & position; notice of which being given by the Scouts G. W. marched at the head of a party, attacked, killed 9 or 10 & captured 20 odd. This, as soon as the enemy had assembled their Indian allies, brought their whole force upon him;...

“About 9 Oclock on the 3d of July the Enemy advanced with Shouts, & dismal Indian yells to our Intrenchments, but was opposed by so warm, spirited, & constant a fire, that to force the works in that way was abandoned by them—they then, from every little rising—tree—Stump—Stone—and bush kept up a constant galding fire upon us; which was returned in the best manner we could till late in the aftern when their fell the most tremendous rain that can be conceived—filled our trenches with water—wet, not

Adaptation

George Washington began his march in May in order to open the roads, almost the whole way from Winchester [Virginia]. The object was to attempt to take the important post at the meeting of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers [the Forks of the Ohio] before the French got there. He had just ascended the Laurel Hill 50 miles short of his object after he had marched 230 miles from Alexandria [Virginia] when he received word from his scouts that the French had forcefully seized the post he was hoping to obtain. Because the object of his march was defeated, it was thought advisable to fall back a few miles to a place known as great meadows [Pennsylvania]. Here was a good place to find grass for the horses, and it was a good place to set up a fort. It was also a good place to advance from if we ever had to attack the French fort—called Duquesne—where the enemy now was...

The French sent a group of soldiers to survey our camp and to see our strengths and position. When his scouts told him this, George Washington marched at the head of his party and attacked, killing nine or ten and capturing about twenty. The enemy assembled their Indian allies and forcefully counterattacked.... About 9 o'clock on July 3, the enemy advanced with shouts and dismal Indian yells to our fort and entrenchments, but they were met by warm, spirited and heavy fire. They soon abandoned their idea of running over the entrenchments and taking the fort that way.

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Image credit: ©Robert Griffing, Courtesy of Paramount Press, Inc.
National Park Service/Fort Necessity National Battlefield

only the ammunition in Cartouch boxes and firelocks, but that which was in a small temporary Stockade in the middle of the Intrenchment called Fort necessity erected for the sole purpose of its security, and that of the few stores we had; and left us nothing but a few (for all were not provided with them) Bayonets for defence. In this situation & no prosp [ec] t of bettering it [,] terms of capitulation were offered to us by the ene<my. wch with some alterations that were insisted upon were the more readily acceded to, as we had no Salt provisions, & but indifferently supplied with fresh; which, from the heat of the weather, would not keep; and because a full third of our numbers Officers as well as privates were, by this time, killed or wounded—The next Morning we marched out with the honors of War, but were soon plundered contrary to the articles of capitulation of great part of our Baggage by the Savages.”

They then attacked us with constant fire from every hill, tree, stump, stone, and bush. We tried to counterattack in the best way possible until late afternoon when a heavy rain fell and filled our trenches with water. The rain also wet the ammunition that was in cartridge boxes and muskets as well as what was in a small temporary stockade called Fort Necessity. Fort Necessity was built to keep things secure and to house our supplies. All we had left to defend ourselves were a few bayonets.

We had no hope to improve our situation. The enemy offered us terms of surrendering. We insisted on a few changes which they readily agreed to. We had no salt, provisions, and little meat, which would not keep because of the heat. Also a third of our officers as well as privates were killed or wounded. The next morning we marched out with certain privileges. Despite the terms of surrender, were attacked by American Indians They took a lot of our supplies and equipment.



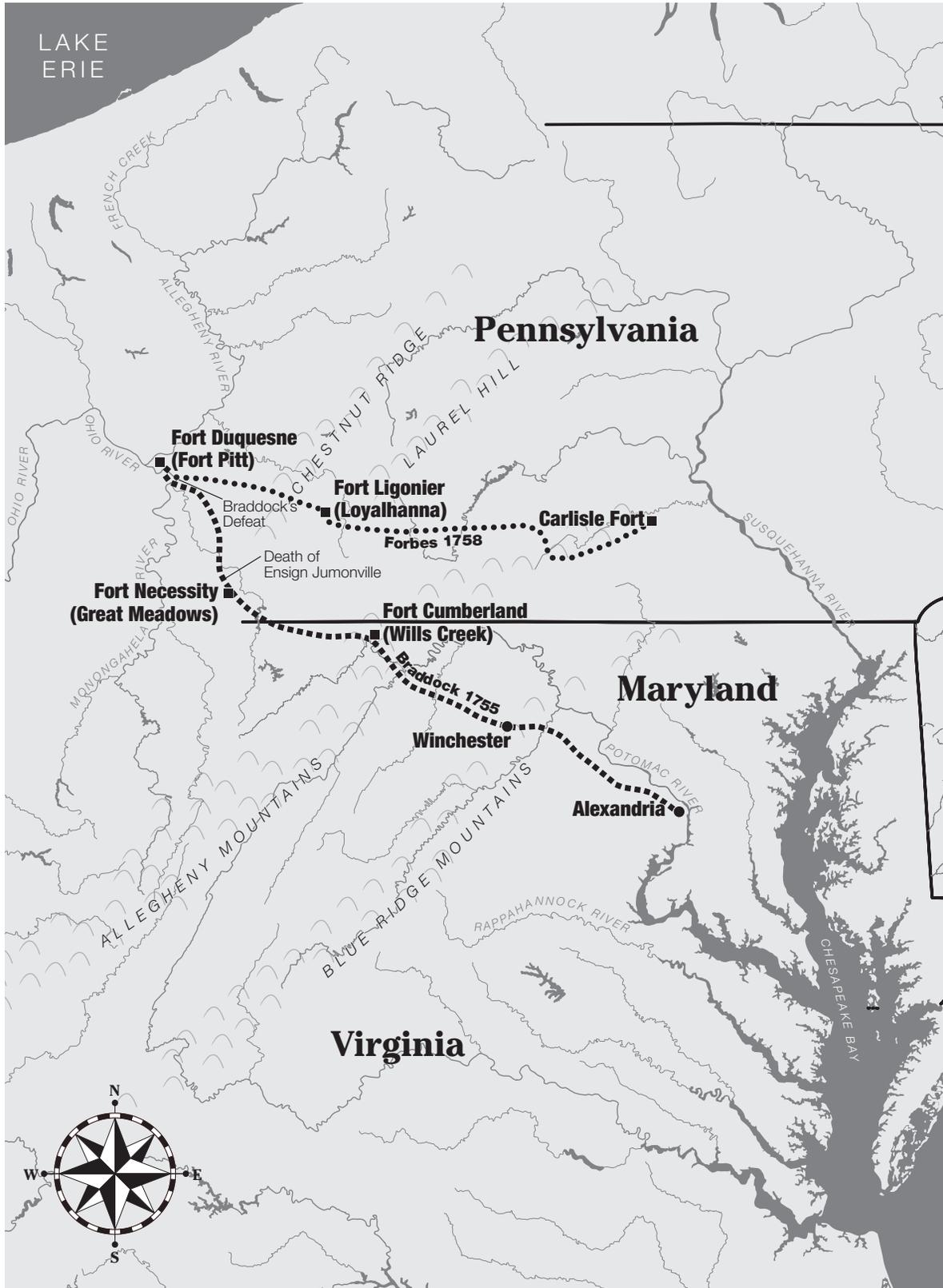
Guided Reading Questions

- 1 What were Washington's goals in taking troops from Virginia into the Ohio country?
- 2 Why did he fall back to the Great Meadows?
- 3 What caused the French to attack Washington at the Great Meadows?
- 4 What was the weather like on July 3, 1754?
- 5 Where were Washington and his men situated? Where was the enemy?
- 6 What happened when it rained?
- 7 What happened at the end of the battle?
- 8 How many men did Washington lose?
- 9 What happened on the morning of July 4?

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Image 10

Map of the War at the Forks of the Ohio, 1754-1758



The Battle of the Monongahela, 1755



Reading George Washington's Words

Original

"...no officer who did not immediately derive his Comn from the King could command one who did – This was too degrading for G.W. to submit to; accordingly, he resigned his Military employment; determining to serve the next campaign as a Volunteer; but upon the arrival of Genl Braddock he was very particularly noticed by that General – taken into his family as an extra-Aid..."

"In this capacity he commenced his second Campaign and used every proper occasion ...to impress the Genl, & the principal Officers around him, with the necessity of opposing the nature of his defence, to the mode of attack which, more than probably, he would experience from the Canadian French, and their Indians on his March through the Mountains & covered Country but so prepossed were they in favr of regularity & discipline and in such absolute contemp <t> were these people held, that the admonition was suggested in vain...."

"About 10 Oclock on the 9th, after the Van had crossed the Monongahela the second time...the front was attacked; and by the unusual Halloing and whooping of the enemy, whom they could not see, were so disconcerted and confused, as soon to fall into irretrievable disorder. The rear was forced forward to support them, but seeing no enemy, and themselves falling every moment from the fire, a general panic took place among the Troops from which no exertions of the Officers could recover them...Before it was too late, & the confusion became general an offer was made by G.W. to head the Provincials, & engage the enemy in their own way; but the propriety of it was not seen into until it was too late for execution [...] after this many attempts were made to dislod<ge> the enemy from an eminence on the Right but they all proved eneffectual; and fatal to the Officers who by great exertions and good examples endeavourd to

Adaptation

No officer who did not receive his commission from the King could command one who did. This was too degrading to George Washington to accept so he resigned from the military. He was determined to serve the next time as a volunteer. However, when General Braddock arrived, he was noticed by the general and accepted into his circle of advisors as an extra aide.

In this role he began his second military operation and used every opportunity to inform the general and the important officers around him with the right way to defend themselves. He told them about the way the Canadian French and their Indian allies would probably attack them in his march through the mountains and forests. But Braddock and his officers were in favor of regularity and discipline and would not be persuaded. His warning was not even considered.

About 10 o'clock on the 9th [of July] after the lead units of the army had crossed the Monongahela the second time, the front was attacked. The unusual hollering and whooping of the enemy, whom they could not see, was so disconcerting and confusing to them that they fell into disorder. The troops in the rear advanced to help them out, but they too couldn't see the enemy and were themselves being attacked by musket fire. A general panic took over the troops. The officers could not help them. Before it was too late and the confusion took over all the troops, George Washington offered to head the troops and fight the enemy like the enemy was fighting them. But by the time the plan was accepted, it was too late to execute it.

After this many attempts were made to move the enemy from controlling the right but all of them failed and were fatal to the officers who tried hard to

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accomplish it. In one of these the Genl recd the Wd of which he died; but previous to it, had several horses killed & disabled under him. Captns Orme & Morris his two Aids de Camp having received wounds which rendered them unable to attd G. W. remained the sole aid through the day, to the Genl; he also had one horse killed, and two wounded under him – A ball through his hat – and several through his clothes, but escaped unhurt....

“No person knowing in the disordered State things were who the Surviving Senr Officer was & the Troops by degrees going off in confusion; without a ray of hope left of further opposition from those that remained; G. W. placed the Genl in a small covered Cart,...and in the best order he could, with the last Troops (who only contind to be fired at) brought him over the first ford of the Monongahela;...he rode forward to halt those which had been earlier in the retreat... The shocking Scenes which presented themselves in this Nights March are not to be described...

“at an Incampment near the Great Meadows the brave, but unfortunate Genl Braddock breathed his last. He was interred with the honors of war, and as it was left to G. W. to see this performed, & to mark out the spot for the reception of his remains... Thus died a man, whose good & bad qualities were intimately blended.”

accomplish them. On one of these attempts the general [Braddock] received the wound that would kill him. Before this he had several horses killed and wounded under him. Captains Orme and Morris, his two aides, received wounds which made them unable to help the general. George Washington was the only aide to the general throughout the day. He also had one horse killed and two wounded under him, a musket ball through his hat, and several through his clothes, but he escaped unhurt.

In all this disorder nobody knew who the surviving senior officer was. The troops also were leaving in a state of confusion. Sure that he would not be opposed in his actions, George Washington placed the general in a small covered cart. As well as he could – with the rest of the troops who continued to be fired on – he brought Braddock over the first crossing of the Monongahela. He rode forward to stop those who had retreated earlier.

The shocking scenes in that night march cannot be described.

At a place near the Great Meadows, the brave but unfortunate General Braddock breathed his last. He was buried with the honors of war. It was left to George Washington to see this performed and to mark the spot where his remains were placed. Thus died a man in whom both good and bad qualities were blended.



Guided Reading Questions

- 1 Why did Washington resign his commission? How did he serve General Braddock?
- 2 What did Washington try to warn Braddock about? What was Braddock's reaction and why?
- 3 What happened when the British front lines were attacked?
- 4 What did George Washington offer to do and why? Was he successful?
- 5 What happened to Washington's horses, hat, and clothes?
- 6 What happened to General Braddock in the battle? What did Washington do?
- 7 What was George Washington's opinion of General Braddock?

Becoming GEORGE WASHINGTON

- 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.)

- 8 How many men did Washington lose?
(One third of his officers and soldiers were killed or wounded.)
- 9 What happened on the morning of July 4?
(Washington and his men marched out of the fort.)

Student Resource Page 12

Guided Reading Questions

- 1 Why did Washington resign his commission? How did he serve General Braddock?
(Washington did not accept the fact that he could not command any officer of the British Regular Army. He volunteered to serve Braddock and became his extra aide.)
- 2 What did Washington try to warn Braddock about? What was Braddock's reaction and why?
(Washington tried to tell Braddock about defensive strategies in the wilderness. Used to regularity and discipline, Braddock and his officers did not follow his advice.)
- 3 What happened when the British front lines were attacked?
(The soldiers in the front lines were upset and confused by the unusual cries and yells of the enemy [the French and their Indian allies]. The soldiers who came forward to help them panicked when they were attacked by the unseen enemy.)
- 4 What did George Washington offer to do and why?
(Washington offered to take over the troops and lead them in fighting in the same way or style that the enemy was using. By the time Washington's plan was accepted, it was too late to be put into action.)
- 5 What happened to Washington's horses, hat, and clothes?
(One of his horses was killed and two were wounded. One musket ball went through his hat and several went through his clothes.)
- 6 What happened to General Braddock in the battle? What did Washington do?
(Braddock was wounded. Washington placed him in a covered cart and took him over the Monongahela River to a place near the Great Meadows. Braddock then died, and Washington had his body buried.)
- 7 What was George Washington's opinion of General Braddock?
(He considered him a mix of both good and bad qualities.)