

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

IPERSPECTIVE

ENGLISHMAN: George Washington

It is 1753 & you are 22-year-old George Washington, an American-born major in the Virginia militia. You have just received your first assignment from Virginia's Lt. Governor Dinwiddie, who is concerned because he believes the French are trespassing on Virginia's territory in the Ohio River Valley. Land such as this, and the resources it contains, is extremely valuable. The Governor must make sure the French are not trying to stake their own claim on what he feels is not theirs to take. He puts you in charge of some soldiers and sends you marching into the vast wilderness to order the French to vacate the area. Your country is depending on you and you are eager to do a good job. When you get to Fort LeBoeuf in the Ohio River Valley, you deliver a letter asking the French to leave. The French commander informs you that they will not. You return to Virginia to inform the Governor of the bad news.

The Governor is now angrier and knows he must get rid of the French or else risk losing England's rights to this valuable tract of land. He makes you an officer and sends you back with a militia force of 150 men and orders to build a fort and establish a strong hold in the Ohio Valley. Upon your arrival, much to your dismay, you and your men find the French already occupying a fort they called Duquesne (on the site of today's Pittsburgh).

Even though you and your men are outnumbered, you attack a French work party, take some prisoners, and hastily construct a fort named Necessity. Even with your gallant effort however, you and your men are surrounded by French forces and are forced to surrender and return to Virginia. Interestingly, even though you were officially defeated by the French, you are hailed a hero for taking on the sworn enemies of England.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why are the English upset with the French?
- Why do the English want the French to vacate the land they feel is their own?
- How do you think Washington felt when the French would not leave Fort LeBoeuf as ordered?
- What do you think you will be told to do next and how do you feel about this?