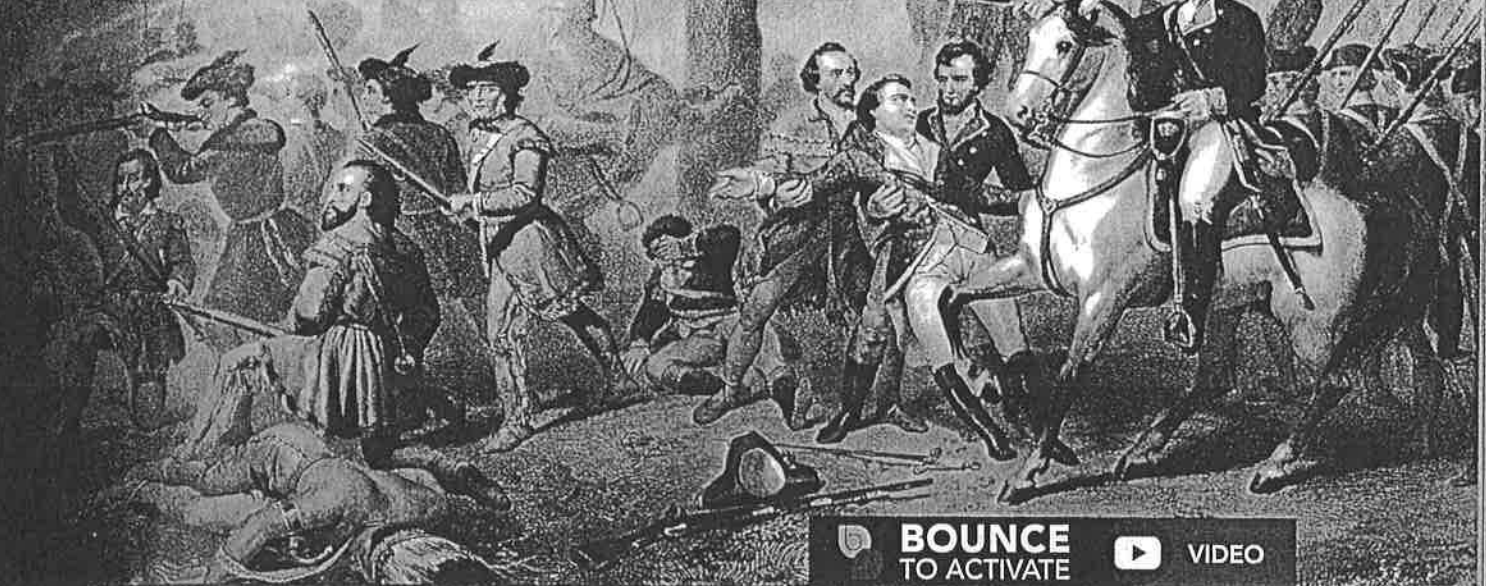


# LESSON 1

HSS 8.1

# The French and Indian War



**BOUNCE**  
TO ACTIVATE

**VIDEO**

## GET READY TO READ

### START UP

Examine the illustration of George Washington at the Battle of Monongahela during the French and Indian War. Write what you would like to learn about his role in the war.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Why were Britain and France rivals in the mid-1700s?
- What role did American Indians play in the British-French rivalry?
- How did power in North America shift after the French and Indian War?

### TAKE NOTES

#### Literacy Skills: Sequence

Use the graphic organizer in your Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

### PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

#### Vocabulary

ally

French and Indian War

Albany Plan of Union

Treaty of Paris

#### Academic Vocabulary

extensive

devise

By the mid-1700s, the major powers of Europe were locked in a worldwide struggle for empire. Britain, France, Spain, and the Netherlands competed for trade and colonies in far-flung corners of the globe. The British colonies in North America soon became caught up in the contest.

## Why Did Europeans Fight Over North American Land?

The most serious threat came from France. It claimed a vast area that circled the English colonies from the St. Lawrence River west to the Great Lakes and south to the Gulf of Mexico. To protect their land claims, the French built an **extensive** system of forts. These forts blocked the British colonies from expanding to the west.

### The Importance of the Ohio River Valley

At first, most settlers in the British colonies were content to remain along the Atlantic coast. By the 1740s, however, traders were crossing the Appalachian Mountains in search of furs. Traders pushed into the forests of the Ohio Valley.

Most British settlers were farmers. These settlers usually ignored American Indian rights by felling trees and clearing land for crops. However, an English trader and official, William Johnson, helped gain Iroquois support for Britain. The Iroquois respected Johnson. He was one of the few British settlers who had an Indian wife, Molly Brant. She was the sister of the Mohawk chief Thayendanegea, known to the British as Joseph Brant. Both Joseph and Molly Brant became valuable allies for the British.

In the end, Britain managed to convince the powerful Iroquois nations to join with them. The British alliance was attractive to the Iroquois because they were old enemies of the Algonquin and the Huron. The war reignited old conflicts in the Ohio Valley between the Iroquois and the Algonquins and Hurons. Some groups, like the Shawnees, Delawares, and Mingos, formed alliances to push Europeans off their lands. More often, however, the alliances formed with the British and the French pitted Indian groups against each other in the fighting to come.

**READING CHECK** Identify Supporting Details Which American Indian groups sided with the British and which sided with the French as the war began?

## Where Did the French and Indian War Begin?

Three times between 1689 and 1748, France and Great Britain fought for power in Europe and North America. Each war ended with an uneasy peace.

In 1754, fighting broke out for a fourth time. British settlers called the conflict the **French and Indian War** because it pitted them against France and its American Indian allies. The French and Indian War was part of a larger war called the Seven Years' War that involved conflicts not just in North America but also in Europe and Asia. In North America, the Ohio River Valley was at the center of the dispute. There, the opening shots of the war were fired by soldiers led by George Washington.

### Washington Heads to

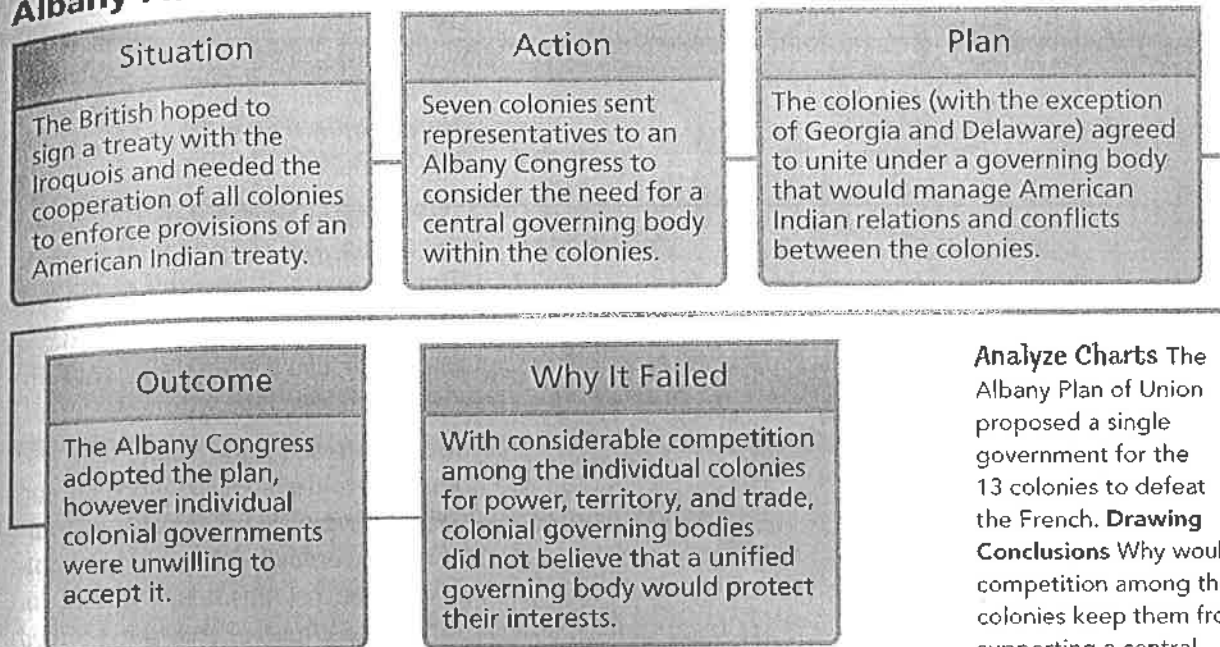
**Ohio** When Washington took part in the Ohio Valley conflict he was only 22 years old. He had grown up on a plantation in Virginia, the son of wealthy parents.

Gifted at mathematics, he began working as a land surveyor. His job took him to frontier lands in western Virginia.

▼ Many French living in North America were fur trappers who traded with American Indians for furs.



## Albany Plan of Union, 1754



**Analyze Charts** The Albany Plan of Union proposed a single government for the 13 colonies to defeat the French. **Drawing Conclusions** Why would competition among the colonies keep them from supporting a central governing body?

It called for a Grand Council made up of representatives from each colony. The council would make laws, raise taxes, and set up the defense of the colonies.

The delegates voted to accept the Plan of Union. However, when the plan was submitted to the colonial assemblies, not one approved it.

None of the colonies wanted to give up any of its powers to a central council. A disappointed Benjamin Franklin expressed his frustration at the failure of his plan:

### Primary Source

**"Everyone cries a union is necessary. But when they come to the manner and form of the union, their weak noodles are perfectly distracted."**

—Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to Massachusetts Governor William Shirley, 1755

**READING CHECK** Identify Main Ideas Why did the delegates from the colonies want to form a union?

### British Defeats in the Ohio Valley

In 1755, General Edward Braddock led British and colonial troops in an attack against Fort Duquesne. Braddock was a stubborn man who had little experience at fighting in the forests of North America. Still, the general boasted that he would sweep the French from the Ohio Valley.

**Climbing Cliffs to Attack Quebec** Quebec was vital to the defense of New France. Without Quebec, the French could not supply their forts farther up the St. Lawrence River. Quebec was well defended, though. The city sat on the edge of the Plains of Abraham, on top of a steep cliff high above the St. Lawrence. An able French general, the Marquis de Montcalm, was prepared to fight off any British attack.

General Wolfe **devised** a bold plan to capture Quebec. He knew that Montcalm had only a few soldiers guarding the cliff because the French thought that it was too steep to climb. Late at night, Wolfe ordered British troops to row quietly in small boats to the foot of the cliff. In the dark, the soldiers climbed up the cliff and assembled at the top.

The next morning, Montcalm awakened to a surprise. A force of 4,000 British troops was drawn up and ready for battle.

Quickly, Montcalm marched his own troops out to join in battle. By the time the fierce fighting was over, both Montcalm and Wolfe lay dead. Moments before Wolfe died, a soldier gave him the news that the British had won. Wolfe is said to have whispered, "Now, God be praised, I will die in peace." On September 18, 1759, Quebec surrendered to the British.

**The British Make Huge Gains** The fall of Quebec sealed the fate of New France, though fighting dragged on in Europe for several more years. Finally, in 1763, Britain and France signed the **Treaty of Paris**, bringing the long conflict to an end.

The Treaty of Paris marked the end of French power in North America. By its terms, Britain gained Canada and all French lands east of the Mississippi River except New Orleans. France was allowed to keep only two islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and its prosperous sugar-growing islands in the West Indies. Spain, which had entered the war on the French side in 1762, gave up Florida to Britain.

In return, Spain received all French land west of the Mississippi. In addition, Spain gained the vital port city of New Orleans. Spain retained control of its vast empire in Central America and South America.

#### Academic Vocabulary

**devised** • v., planned or invented a method of doing something



#### INTERACTIVE

Effects of the French and Indian War

**Analyze Images** After sneaking up a steep cliff under the cover of darkness, the British defeated the French on the Plains of Abraham the next morning and captured the capital city of Quebec. **Use Visual Clues** Why is the bird's-eye-view perspective helpful to understanding the action?

