

RS#3: Educational materials developed through the Baltimore County History Labs Program, a partnership between Baltimore County Public Schools and the UMBC Center for History Education.

The Suspects

Introduction: *Jamestown was the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. The French decided they also wanted a piece of America and the treasure that was surely there. The French settled in Quebec and built a fort there the year after Jamestown. Years later, the French began to build many forts along the Ohio River Valley and Great Lakes region, which was prime real estate. The British Colonists had planned on settling in this territory. George Washington, a young 21 year old planter and surveyor, was sent to tell the French that they were trespassers. The French replied “that it was their absolute design to take possession of the Ohio, and by God they would do it.”*

The French: They have established a ring of forts to protect themselves from the English. Their livelihood was made by trading furs with the Hurons (Native Americans.) Their land was sparsely settled and they explored the western portion of America and claimed all the land for France. They put troops in the Ohio Valley to protect their interests.

The English: The English resented France’s claim of the land. The King said that anyone that settled out West would receive land. He did this to encourage settlement and to keep the French away. The King thought that if people owned land near the French that they would fight to keep it. He said, “Nothing can more effectively tend to defeat the dangerous designs of the French.”

Colonists: The Colonists feared that the French would stop them from exploring and settling out West. Thereby, diminishing the opportunity for trade and future gains of personal wealth. They became upset and asked the Iroquois (England’s Native American allies) to fight against the French. The Iroquois refused.

Native Americans: The Native Americans were initially on good terms with the French and the English. They traded with them both and at first did not want to fight. A Native American stated that, “We don’t know what you Christians, English and French together, intend. We are so hemmed in by both that we have hardly a hunting place left.”

Directions: Using material from above and prior knowledge answer the following questions.

1. What is the common motive among the suspects? Explain your answer.

2. If conflict erupts, claims to land, resources and trade will be significantly impacted.
 - a. Which group has the most to gain? Support your selection.

- b. Which group has the most to lose? Support your selection.
