



## The French and Indian War: Nine Perspectives

*Read the vignettes below to get a sense of different participants in the French and Indian War. Choosing one vignette, write a short profile of the character represented in the vignette. How does the character you choose shape your view of the war? Based on their perspective, how do you think your character would name that war?*

(1) Your family immigrated to Pennsylvania from Switzerland in the early 1750s and purchased land in the Susquehanna Valley from the Pennsylvania government. You live near a Native American village that you trade with regularly. Recently, though, some of your European neighbors have fled east because of Native American attacks. One neighbor was shot, another tomahawked, and a third captured. You see two options: flee or support a militia to kill and destroy the Native Americans.

(2) You are a member of a Quaker family which came to Pennsylvania in the early 1700s seeking religious freedom. You live near Philadelphia and support cordial relations with Native Americans. The Quakers, or Society of Friends, are pacifists and you do not want violence. You do not support forming a militia or raising taxes for arms and ammunition or forts. You don't agree with the new European immigrants in the west who seem to incite violence. Your family supports the "Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with the Indians by Pacific Measures."

(3) Your family is Scots-Irish and squats on land near the Susquehanna River. You believe that you have a right to the land because the Native Americans and wealthy Philadelphia land speculators weren't using it productively. Your family has a small farm and homestead. Your Native American neighbors, however, do not appreciate your farming achievements and brutally attacked your family, home, and farm. Feeling helpless against Indian attacks, your family fled east to escape.

(4) You are a Pennsylvania soldier living at a fort in western Pennsylvania. You had been an indentured servant but left servitude to join the British army. You hate the French and Native Americans and have participated in killing dozens of Native Americans, burning their homes and crops. You believe that getting rid of the Indians is the only way to provide security for the European immigrants who use the land productively. You also believe Pennsylvania should raise taxes on the city dwellers to support the construction of forts and strengthen the militia.

(5) You are a Lenape whose nation's land has been taken over by European colonists. You've been pushed westward as Europeans take your land in the east. Your elders tried to share the land with the invaders but the Europeans tricked your nation with false treaties in order to take large portions of the land. You also don't recognize the control of your land by the Iroquois League. You don't understand why the Europeans who converted you to their God and traded and ate with your family are now destroying your villages and killing your family.

(6) You are a member of the Six Nations Iroquois. Your nation claims the right to the lands of the Susquehanna Valley because it defeated the native people living there in the early 1700s. Your nation has benefited from its alliance with the British. You support working with the Penn family to make treaties to settle land claims. You believe that your nation should control the land, not the weaker Lenape or Delaware or other Native American groups.

(7) You are a young English woman from Philadelphia. You fear the potential invasion of French troops. You have read about the brutality of the French and Native Americans in the west. In response, you've joined the British war effort. You've hosted soldiers in your family home, provided oil and wood, and loaned a horse. You are willing to make sure Philadelphia remains a British colonial city. Your brother is fighting in western Pennsylvania.

(8) You are a French soldier who was sent to New France to fight the British. You believe the British are to blame for the war. There would not have been a war if the British fur traders hadn't started moving into French territory. Because of the British, the French had to build Fort Duquesne at La Belle Riviere (Ohio River) to support France's missions, trading posts, and other forts.

(9) You are a free African American male. You become involved in the war because in 1755 British General Edward Braddock, desperate for soldiers, used a loophole in a 1723 Virginia law which prohibited most African Americans from carrying firearms but made an exception for those who lived on the frontier and had a license from a justice of the peace, or for free black men who were in the militia. General Braddock originally recruited you as a "batman" but, as he was losing the battle at Fort Duquesne, had you carry firearms. More African American men would have joined the militia but Virginia's legislature prohibited African Americans from enlisting as soldiers who carried arms. Planters and owners of enslaved African American were afraid that they would turn the armaments on the planters and lead an insurrection against slavery.