**Conflict in the West: 1**

You are Susanna Boyd, an English colonist living in Virginia.  Just like most people in your town, your parents came to America as indentured servants and worked very hard for seven years growing tobacco for a rich family in Virginia.  When your parents’ contracts were up, they received clothes, tools and money to buy new land.  They have a small farm in Western Virginia where they grow corn and raise pigs.  You have grown up with plants and animals your whole life, and you are looking forward to getting married and raising a family on your own farm.

Your parents want to be able to give you some land to start your own farm, but they barely have enough land for themselves.  They cannot afford to give you any of their land.  They also can’t afford to buy you land, because it is so expensive.  Europeans have been settling in Virginia since the 1600s and all the land is owned by someone—someone who will only sell their land if they can make a profit.  It feels sometimes like you’ll have to live on your parents’ farm forever.

One day you are talking to your friends after church, and your friend Abby tells you that she is planning to marry the blacksmith’s son, Roger.  Roger says that he has saved up a little money to buy land.  It definitely isn’t enough to buy land here in the civilized part of Virginia, but way out west in the Ohio Valley, land is very cheap.  The Ohio Company sells land for less than half of what it is near the coast.  Roger and Abby will be able to get married and start their own form in Ohio.  They suggest that when you get married, you should move to the Ohio Valley to live near them.

You’re not sure about this idea.  You’ve heard that the Native Americans out west try to kill settlers and burn their farms.  You’ve also heard that there are huge bears and dangerous snakes.  Are they just rumors, or are those true?  If these rumors aren’t true, living in the Ohio Valley sounds great.  The land is very cheap and the climate is similar to Virginia.

**Why do people like Susanna, Abby & Roger want to move to the Ohio Valley?**

**Do you think Abby & Roger should move to the Ohio Valley?  Why or why not?**

**Conflict in the West: 2**

Your name is Jacques Gladieux and you are a French fur trader living in New France (see the map on the right).  You have lived in New France for six years, trading with the Native Americans.  The natives trap animals with valuable fur such as foxes and beavers, and you buy them in exchange for European goods such as iron pots and steel sewing needles.  The Native American tribes in this region do not have the technology to make steel and iron products, so they are very eager to trade.

After six years in New France, you have made a comfortable life for yourself.  You married a Native American woman named Onahtah, from the Iroquois tribe.  She helps you communicate with her people.  You have made a lot of money living in America and enjoy your life here.

Things have started to change recently.  English colonists from the coast have started moving into the Ohio Valley, where you do most of your trading.  Some of them have started trapping the same animals that you buy from the Native Americans, which is upsetting the Native Americans.  Other English colonists are cutting down the forest to build farms, which is scaring the animals and taking land away from the Native Americans.

**How does Jacques Gladieux feel about what the English colonists are doing?  Why?**

**What should he do next?**

**Conflict in the West 3**

You are Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, which means that you are the second most powerful member of the colonial government.  Having an important job is great, but it doesn’t pay for the expensive clothes that your children want.  Your daughters are getting older—old enough to get married—and they want to look beautiful all the time so they can attract a rich husband.  You want them to be happy, so you need to find a way to make more money.

To make more money, you decide to sell land out west in the Ohio Valley (see the map below).  Because you’re the Lieutenant Governor, you have the power to give a company the right to sell that land.  You then become the president of the new Ohio Company so you can get rich selling that land in the Ohio Valley to the colonists.  This plan works well, and you are able to make your children very happy.

The only problem with your scheme is that the French colonists in New France think that they own the land.  To show how serious they are about keeping the land, the French send 800 soldiers and start building forts in the Ohio Valley.

**Should Lt. Governor Dinwiddie be allowed to sell that land in the Ohio Valley?  Why/why not?**

**How should Lt. Governor Dinwiddie respond to what the French are doing in the Ohio Valley?**

**Conflict in the West 4**

You are Lieutenant Colonel George Washington, an American-born English soldier.  You have been sent by the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia to defend the Ohio Valley.  The French want access to the Ohio Valley so they can continue to use it for fur trading.  You have orders to stop them, because the Lt. Governor insists that the Ohio Valley is part of Virginia.

You assemble your soldiers and march to the Ohio Valley.  This is the first command you have gotten, and you are eager to do a good job.  If this goes well, you might get promoted to a full colonel, or even a general.

When you get to Ohio, it’s a total wilderness: you have marched for days and all you see are miles and miles of trees.  You arrive at Fort LeBoeuf, one of the French forts, and deliver a polite letter asking the French to leave.  The French commander informs you that they will not.  You return to Virginia to inform the Lt. Governor of the bad news.

To secure the English claim on the Ohio Valley, another English military commander goes west to set up a fort.  They have a difficult time building the fort, and before they are finished, the French attack and take over the fort.  The French finish building the fort and name it Fort Duquesne.  It takes days for the news of this event to reach you in Virginia.

**When Lieutenant Colonel Washington hears about what happened to the English fort, what will he think?**

**What should Lieutenant Colonel Washington do next?**