

Student Resource Page 4-1
Original Documents
Voices from Pontiac's War, 1763

Directions: Read the five selections below and then answer the questions.

1. Pontiac, Ottawa Chief

It is important for us my brothers that we exterminate from our land this nation which only seeks to kill us.... When I go to the English chief to tell him that some of our comrades are dead...he makes fun of me and you. When I ask him for something for our sick, he refuses, and tells me he has no need of us. You can well see by that that he seeks our ruin....There is no more time to lose, and when the English shall be defeated...we shall cut off the passage so that they cannot come back to our country.

Source: Quoted in *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian*, by Lee Miller, p. 93.

2. Shingas and Turtle's Heart, Lenape (Delaware)

Why do you complain that our young men have fired at your soldiers, and killed your cattle and your horses? You marched your armies into our country and built forts here, though we told you, again and again, that we wished you to remove. My brothers, this land is ours, and not yours.

Source: Quoted in *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian*, by Lee Miller, p. 94.

3. Simeon Ecuyer, British Army captain at Fort Pitt

[W]e shall never abandon it [Fort Pitt] as long as the white man lives in America. I despise the Ottowas, and am very much surprised at our brothers the Delawares, for proposing to us to leave this place and go home. This is our home.

Source: Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada* [Boston: Little, Brown, 1886], p. 24.

4. Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Commander of British forces

I Wish there was not an Indian Settlement within a Thousand Miles of our Country....Could it not be contrived to send the Small Pox among those disaffected tribes of Indians? We must on this occasion use every stratagem in our power to reduce them.

Source: Amherst, Sir Jeffery in: Stevens et al. *The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet*, Series 21634, 1940, p. 232. Online at http://www.gbl.indiana.edu/archives/miamis14/M63_32a.html.

Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada* [Boston: Little, Brown, 1886], p. 39. Facsimiles of original letters on this topic online at Native Web http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/amherst/lord_jeff.html.

5. William Trent, Trader

[On May] 24th [1763] The Turtles Heart a principal Warrior of the Delawares and Mamaltee a Chief came within a small distance of the Fort [Pitt]. ...[T]hey made a Speech letting us know that ...[a] great numbers of Indians [were coming and] that out of regard to us, they had prevailed on 6 Nations [not to] attack usThe Commanding Officer thanked them, let them know that we had everything we wanted, that we could defend it against all the Indians in the Woods.... Out of our regard to them we gave them two Blankets and an Handkerchief out of the Small Pox Hospital. I hope it will have the desired effect.....

Source: *William Trent's Journal*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, French and Indian War Primary Sources, <http://www.hsp.org/files/excerptsfromwilliamtrent.pdf>

1. What is Pontiac's goal? Does his statement "he seeks our ruin," referring to the British leader ring true?
2. How does each side, the British and Indians, describe their reasons for staying in Ohio country?
3. Turtle's Heart, a Lenape (Delaware), appears in two quotes. Paraphrase his words and explain how he was treated by the commanding officer and soldiers at Fort Pitt.
4. In Amherst's view what purpose would spreading small pox serve? How is the small pox plan consistent with his attitudes toward Indians?