

WebQuest

George Rogers Clark: Writing A Petition

Introduction

In Chapter 8, George Rogers Clark goes to Williamsburg to deliver a letter from his father to the Virginia House of Burgesses. You will learn about the House of Burgesses and the real letters, or petitions that were submitted in the 1700s. Then you will write your own petition for a change that you would like to see in class or at school.

Process

Step 1

You will need a journal or other notebook to take notes as you go to each Web site listed below.

Step 2

Visit each of the Web sites and make notes about the kinds of letters, or petitions, that were submitted to the House of Burgesses. You will learn that in Virginia, people sent letters, or petitions to the House of Burgesses asking for decisions to be made on such issues as town improvements, slavery, and divorces. Read some of the actual petitions on the Web sites.

Web Sites:

[The Virginia House of Burgesses](#)

[The House of Burgesses](#)

[Legislative Petitions at The Library of Virginia](#)

Step 3

Think of something that you would like to ask, or petition, your teacher for. Make sure it's something that could really happen. Don't ask for things that you know won't happen, like no longer having homework or tests! Make sure your petition includes specific details of what you would like to see happen and the reasons why.

For example, a petition to plant a new tree on the school yard might include one paragraph describing how a local nursery will provide the tree and that students will plant and care for it together. A second paragraph might explain that a new tree is needed to provide shade so that the classrooms located near it will stay cooler in warm weather and so that students have a shady place to relax during recess.

Step 4

Once your petition is complete, check it for spelling and punctuation errors. Make all the necessary corrections, then read your petition aloud to the class.

Conclusion: Things to Think About

The story never tells us the subject of George's father's petition. What do you think it was about? Why?