

## **Life Lessons for Teenagers**

### **from the Life of George Washington**

- **Seize the opportunity when it appears.** Lord Fairfax offered the trip; Lawrence urged the journal. Washington said yes. That single decision opened the door to surveying work, land knowledge, and influential connections that shaped the rest of his life.
  
- **Embrace hardship as training.** Rain, swollen rivers, lice-filled straw beds, hunger, and the “worst road that ever was trod” forced adaptation. Washington learned to sleep outdoors by a fire, cook simply, and keep moving—habits of resilience that later served him in war and leadership.
  
- **Observe carefully and record what you see.** The journal is full of precise notes on land quality, trees, distances, and conditions. Cultivating the habit of careful observation and written reflection turned raw experience into lasting knowledge and self-discipline.
  
- **Networks and mentors accelerate growth.** Family ties to the Fairfaxes, guidance from experienced surveyors like James Genn, and companionship

with George Fairfax provided both access and on-the-job learning that a young man could not have gained alone.

- **Practical skills + character = readiness.** Washington had already studied math and surveying; the journey tested and refined those skills under real pressure. Competence combined with grit prepared him for greater responsibilities ahead.
- **Growth often requires leaving comfort behind.** At 14 Washington had already left his mother's home; at 16 he willingly entered the wilderness. Independence and calculated risk-taking marked every stage of his early development.