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Agents of Change: How American Indians Helped Change the World in Only Seven Years

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The Seven Years' War, (French and Indian War), had far-reaching implications. As the first of the world wars, it was perhaps more important than the Revolutionary War. Contrary to depictions across academia and the media, the Indians were certainly not menacing savages, nor helpless victims cowering anxiously on the sidelines. The Seven Years' War, fought in the mid-eighteenth century on virtually every continent, started and ended in the interior of North America. From the first battle at Fort Duquesne to the final shots of Pontiac's War near Detroit, Indians were central to the story, politically and militarily. Early contact, characterized by energetic diplomatic and trade relations described pre-war relations and attitudes. The war and its aftermath then set the stage as England's victory brought tremendous change, not just to European geopolitics, but also in the form of tremendous debt and violent outbreaks of Indian resistance. Britain responded by bringing an end to salutary neglect to exert greater control over the colonists in terms of taxes and a standing army in the colonies. Since either of these were requested by the colonists, the seeds of revolution were sown. And in a revenge-minded France, America will find a very willing ally.

(Developed for U. S. History, grade 8; recommended for U. S. History, grade 11)

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