

## MOVIE GUIDE SHEET: *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS*

The *LAST OF THE MOHICANS* takes place during the French and Indian War (1754-1763), a war to determine who would dominate and control North America- the British or the French. It became part of a larger war- the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), arguably the World's first world war. In fighting each other in America the French and British employed, some would say "used" Indian allies.

Based loosely on the James Fennimore Cooper novel of the same name (1826), "The Last of the Mohicans" tells the story of Hawk-eye, a colonial settler adopted by a Mohican family after the death of his parents, as he aids a British military party through the forests of upstate New York during the French and Indian War. In the war for control of the American colonies, the British, with Colonial militia and Mohican allies, take on the French, allied with the Hurons. A budding romance between Hawk-eye and Cora Munro, the daughter of a British colonel, is interwoven into this political story of war and colonialism on the early American frontier.

In some ways the war is a run-up to the American Revolution, of this you should be aware (**IMPORTANT**). Compounding the issues of the Navigation Acts, the war and its aftermath bring to light the question of who will pay for the war.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS:

- 1) Hawkeye (aka the long rifle, Natty or Nathaniel)
- 2) Chingachgook- father of Uncas, adoptive father of Hawkeye  
Uncas- son of Chingachgook
- 3) Colonel Munro- British commander at Fort William Henry
- 4) Cora Munro- brown-haired, older daughter of Munro, love interest of Major Duncan Heyward
- 5) Alice Munro- blonde, younger daughter of Munro
- 6) Major Duncan Heyward- British officer newly arrived to frontier and in love with Cora Munro. A firm believer in British colonial policy
- 7) Magua- a Huron
- 8) General Montcalm- commander of French army
- 9) General Webb- British commander of the frontier, directs Magua to lead/accompany Heyward to Fort William Henry
- 10) Sachem- an Indian wise man
- 11) Hurons- Indians allied with the French, enemies of British and Colonists

## 12) Mohicans- Indians allied with the British

1. What is the significance of this scene with regards to how they value the animal they killed?
2. Why were the settlers reluctant to join the militia (and fight for the British cause)?
3. Who is the British soldier arriving in Albany where the settlers are negotiating with General Webb? Why is he so surprised at what he finds?
4. What happens on the way to Fort William Henry?
5. What disaster does the small party come upon?
6. What does Hawkeye refuse to do that makes Cora Munro so angry?
7. Why would the white settlers try to live in the wilderness?
8. What is happening when Hawkeye and his party arrive at Fort William Henry?
9. What discovery do you make about Magua – who is he working for?
10. What name does Magua call Colonel Munro?
11. What is the attitude of the Indians, as evidenced by Magua, towards the British?

12. What is the attitude of the Indians, as evidenced by Magua, towards the French?

13. What is the conflict between Colonel Munro and the frontiersmen? What do the frontiersmen want to do but Munro will not approve of?

14. What causes Hawkeye to be thrown in the brig/jail? What is the punishment for his crime?

15. What are the particular experiences of the frontier settlers? Why might they not see it as in their interests to ally themselves with Britain?

16. What happens when the English soldiers leave the fort?

17. Magua offers three white captives to the old chief Tamenund. What are Magua's plans for them?

18. How does Hawkeye reason to the chief that the French will no longer be friends with the Huron? What proof does Hawkeye offer to the chief?

19. What is the final decision of the old chief with regards to the prisoners and Hawkeye?

20. What is the significance of the final scene of the film?

**Essay question:** Based on the film, and with specific references to scenes, describe the rising tensions between American colonists and the British. How does *The Last of the Mohicans* illustrate a pretext to the Revolutionary War?

