

THE ROSENBACH

March 18, 2020

Level: Grades 3-5

Before George Washington became president, he was a farmer. George inherited a farm called Ferry Farm in Virginia when he was only 11 years old. His older brother Lawrence lived nearby and George was always asking him for help and advice about running his farm. George wrote this letter to Lawrence when he was 17 years old. So he had owned Ferry Farm for a while but he still had a lot to learn. This letter was written 271 years ago so George Washington uses words and phrases that are different from ones we use today so I thought it would be helpful if I told you what's going on. George starts out the letter by saying that he hopes that Lawrence's cough is better and that he has decided not to leave Virginia. He says that his horse isn't doing well so he won't be able to come visit Lawrence and sign some papers. He hopes that's okay. Then he complains a little about his neighbor who is planning on building a dock on the river. George hopes his neighbor changes his mind.

The Rosenbach doesn't have Lawrence's response. Can you imagine you are George Washington's brother Lawrence and write a response letter? George seems a little worried. Would you tell him not to worry? What other advice would you give to help your younger brother?

Do you ever ask for help and advice from your siblings? If not, who do you go to when you need help? Think of something you needed help with recently. Write a letter to someone asking for assistance.

For more interesting facts about George Washington, visit <https://sn3.scholastic.com/issues/2018-19/020419/washington-s-secrets-revealed.html#On%20Level>

May 5th, 1749

Dear Brother, I hope your Cough is much mended since I saw you last, if so likewise hope you have given over the thoughts of leaving Virginia. – As there is not an absolute occasion of my coming down, hope you'll get the Deeds acknowledged without Me; my Horse is in very poor order to undertake such a journey, and is in no likelihood of mending for want of Corn sufficient to support him; tho' if there be any certainty in the Assembly's not rising untill the latter end of may, will if I can be down by that; As my Mothers term of Years is out at that Place at Bridge Creek, she designs to Settle a Quarter on that Peice at Deep Run, but seems backward of doing it, untill the right is made good, for fear of accidents. – It's Reported here that Mr. Spotswood intends to put down the Ferry that is kept at the Wharf where he now Lives, and that Major Frans: Taliaferro intends to petition the assembly for an act to have it kept from his House over against my Mothers

Quarter, and right through the very Heart and best of the Land; whereas he can have no other view it but for the Conveniency of a small Mill he has on the Water side, that will not Grind above three Months in twelve, and the great Inconveniency and prejudice it will be to us, hope it will not be granted; besides, I do not see where he can Possibly have a Landing Place on his side that will ever be sufficient for a Lawful Landing (by reason of the steepness of the Banks;) I think we suffer enough with the Free Ferry, without without being troubled with such an unjust and iniquitous Petition as that, but hope as its only a flying report he will consider better of it and drop his pretentions. I should be glad (if its not too much trouble) to hear from you in the meanwhile remain with my Love to my Sister Dear sir

Your affectionate Brother George Washington