Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, voicing the proclamations of the "Master of Life," 1763

Background: The core of Neolin's teachings was that Indians had been corrupted by European ways and needed to purify themselves by returning to their traditions and preparing for a holy war. "Drive them out" he declared of the settlers. A confederacy of tribes organized by a group of chiefs led by Ottawa chief Pontiac, made plans for a coordinated attack against the British in the spring of 1763. This combination of inspirational religious and political leadership was a pattern in the long history of Indian resistance to colonial expansion in North America. Their attacks on the British captured Eight forts in the Ohio country. The British successfully defended the key forts of Detroit and Pitt (Duquesne) and the eventually won the war. The result of the rebellion, however, was that the British banned colonists from moving onto Indian lands west of the Appalachian Mountains.

I am the Master of Life, whom thou desirest to know and to whom thou wouldst speak. Listen well to what I am going to say to thee and all thy red brethren. I am he who made heaven and earth, the trees, lakes, rivers, all men, and all that thou seest, and all that thou hast seen on earth. Because . . . I love you, you must do what I say and [not do] what I hate. … When you are going to war, you juggle, join the medicine dance, and believe that I am speaking. You are mistaken, it is to Manitou to whom you speak; he is a bad spirit who whispers to you nothing but evil, and to whom you listen because you do not know me well. This land, where you live, I have made for you and not for others. How comes it that you suffer the whites on your lands? Can you not do without them? I know that those whom you call the children of your Great Father supply your wants, but if you were not bad, as you are, you would well do without them. You might live wholly as you did before you knew them. Before those whom you call your brothers come on your lands, did you not live by bow and arrow? You had no need of gun nor powder, nor the rest of their things, and nevertheless you caught animals to live and clothe yourselves with their skins, but when I saw that you inclined to the evil, I called back the animals into the depths of the woods, so that you had need of your brothers to have your wants supplied and I shall send back to you the animals to live on. I do not forbid you, for all that, to suffer amongst you the children of your father. I love them, they know me and pray to me, and I give them their necessities and all that they bring to you, but as regards those who have come to trouble your country, drive them out, make war on them. I love them not, they know me not, they are my enemies and the enemies of your brothers. Send them back to the country which I made for them. There let them remain.

Source: http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/primarysource/viewdetails.aspx?PrimarySourceId=1186

Guiding Questions:

1. Why was the Master of Life's message helpful in unifying and motivating the Indians to attack the British?

2. What can you observe about Native American culture from this speech?

Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, voicing the proclamations of the "Master of Life," 1763

Purify: clean oneself

Alliance: countries or tribes working together

Expansion growth, control of land

Brethren brother

Inclined leaning towards

Background: The core of Neolin's teachings was that Indians had been corrupted by European ways and needed to **purify** themselves by returning to their traditions and preparing for a holy war. "Drive them out" he declared of the settlers. An **alliance** of tribes organized by a group of chiefs led by Ottawa chief Pontiac, made plans for a coordinated attack against the British in the spring of 1763. This combination of inspirational religious and political leadership was a pattern in the long history of Indian resistance to colonial **expansion** in North America. Their attacks on the British captured Eight forts in the Ohio country. The British successfully defended the key forts of Detroit and Pitt (Duquesne) and the eventually won the war. The result of the rebellion, however, was that the British banned colonists from moving onto Indian lands west of the Appalachian Mountains.

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Guiding Questions:

1. How does the religious message of Neolin lead to war?

2. How should Indians change their behavior?

3 Why does this message of love and hate help motivate Indians to attack the British?