



Rookie Mistakes

When **George Washington** was young and just beginning his military career, he faced real challenges that showed he was still learning how to lead. In 1754, during the early days of the **French and Indian War**, Washington built a makeshift fort at a place called *Fort Necessity*. Because he chose a poor location, did not fully understand the terrain, and was outnumbered by the French forces, his army was forced to surrender—a rare defeat that taught him important lessons about planning, strategy, and leadership. Now think about a time in your own life when you were new at something—like starting a sport, joining a club, learning a musical instrument, trying a difficult subject, or taking on a job for the first time.

In a paragraph, **write about your own “rookie mistakes.”** Be sure to include:

1. **What you were trying** (the new activity or responsibility)
2. **A mistake you made or something that didn't go well at first**
3. **What you learned from that mistake or experience**
4. **How that learning helped you improve the next time**