



Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 7, WEBISODE 3

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

Our American history has painful and sad stories to tell. One such story is the Cherokee Trail of Tears that took place under the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The act federalized the planned destruction of Native American culture. By 1800 enough settlers had pushed west to flood the Ohio valley and bring new territories like Tennessee into the Union. Settlements for trade and commerce mushroomed on the banks of the Mississippi River, and the Native Americans found themselves once more engulfed by the nation's westward expansion.

Tribes known as the Choctaw, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Muskokees (Creeks) and Natchez flourished in Georgia, the Carolinas, and the Mississippi Territory. This land became desirable real estate to the westward moving settlers. Armed friction and broken promises eventually gave way to the Indian Removal Act, a formal policy passed by Congress in 1830 that legalized the removal of local tribes. Even though the act was challenged in the Supreme Court and the Cherokees received a favorable ruling, the court had no power to enforce its ruling.

President Andrew Jackson and the American people watched as the Indian land was physically taken from the people whom the Supreme Court had ruled its lawful owners. The army rounded up an estimated 18,000 Native Americans and forced them on a six-month march into Oklahoma Territory. Many did not reach their destination, dying of exposure, hunger, and exhaustion on the Trail of Tears.

Teacher Directions

1. Ask the students to share their views on the following questions.
 - How did early American settlers view the Native Americans?
 - How did the Native Americans view the settlers?
 - In your opinion, who owned the land and had a right to it?
2. Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions.

Conflict arose between the settlers and the Native Americans because of great differences in their cultures, beliefs, and lifestyles. The settlers felt superior to the Native Americans and viewed them as a hindrance to white settlement, progress, and the growth of the new nation. White settlers believed they had a right to the land; Native Americans could not understand the white view of land ownership.



Let's Discuss

**Teacher Directions:**

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Andrew Jackson's Case to Congress for the Indian Removal Act*. Explain the purpose of the Indian Removal Act to the students.
2. Explain to the students that Jackson was a trained lawyer, and a lawyer argues a case by stating reasons, one after another, to support his or her case.
3. Help the students identify Andrew Jackson's case and state it in their own words. (Jackson's case was that the removal of the Cherokee Indians from their land was good for the nation, for individual states, and for the Indians themselves.)
4. Help students find each of Jackson's reasons why the removal of the Indians would be of benefit to the new nation and the states.
5. Help the teams put these reasons into their own words and write them on sentence strips.
6. Help students find each of Jackson's reasons why the removal of the Indians would be of benefit to the Indians themselves.
7. Help the teams put these reasons into their own words and write them on sentence strips.

Note to the Teacher: If students have access to the Internet and wish to view the whole text of Jackson's address to congress on the Indian Removal Act they can visit: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/andrew.htm>.

8. Remind the students that Jackson was known for his desire to bring the American government within reach of every American citizen.
9. Ask the students.
 - Considering Jackson's remarks about the Indian Removal Act, how would Jackson classify the Native Americans in relation to white citizens?
 - How do you think Jackson felt when the Cherokees pursued justice though the Supreme Court?
 - How did the Supreme Court classify Native Americans in relation to other citizens? How did the court demonstrate this classification in their opinion?



Teacher Directions

1. Discuss with students.

- How could the settlers and Native Americans have lived successfully together?
- What would have had to change for the two groups to successfully live with each other?
- In what ways does the lesson of the Trail of Tears have modern day applications? (Students may research life on today's Indian reservations or recent Supreme Court cases that seek redress for today's Indian tribes.)

2. Explain the Two Sides of the Coin activity to the students.

3. Each student works with a partner. Give each partner an Opinion Card.

Opinion Card One: We were here first. No one can own the land. The settlers should not have taken what did not belong to them.

Opinion Card Two: The Indians should have become like us. They stood in the way of change and progress. If they would have changed, they would have survived.

4. Each partner has five minutes to study his or her Opinion Card and jot down as many reasons as possible that support that position.

Partner One has one minute to state his or her position and supporting reasons to his or her partner, then Partner Two has one minute to state his or her position and supporting reasons. The two partners end the discussion by jointly discussing the merits of each other's argument.

5. Discuss the two sides of the coin with the class. Make sure the students consider the following circumstance in that discussion.

The government could not stop westward expansion. Even when they prohibited settlers from entering Indian territory, people just kept moving west on their own, demanding government help and protection when they got into trouble.

6. Ask the students.

- Did that make the actions of the white settlers right? Explain.



Moving Toward
Freedom



Connections

Teacher Directions

1. Students research the Cherokee Nation, past and present, using *The New Nation*, Book 4 of Joy Hakim's *A History of US*, other books, and Internet sources such as the official site of the Cherokee Nation @ <http://www.Cherokee.org>.
2. The students ponder the following questions.
 - What are the past and present consequences to the Cherokees that resulted from the denial of their rights?
 - What are the past and present consequences to the American people that resulted from the denial of the rights of the Cherokee people?
 - What was the Cherokee response to the denial of their rights?
 - How might life for the Cherokees been different if their relationship with the settlers had worked out better?
 - How did the events concerning the Cherokees help or hinder us in moving toward freedom?

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Math — The Native Americans mostly walked from Georgia to Oklahoma. Students use a map and measure the distance of that trip in miles. How far did they walk? If it took six months to make the journey, how many miles were they forced to walk in a day?

Literature/Language Arts — Students research Native American writings and poems from the Trail of Tears and create their own poems detailing the hardships of the journey.

Andrew Jackson's Case to Congress for the Indian Removal Act

The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. The pecuniary advantages which it Promises to the Government are the least of its recommendations. It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters. By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of the whites it will incalculably strengthen the southwestern frontier and render the adjacent States strong enough to repel future invasions without remote aid. It will relieve the whole State of Mississippi and the western part of Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community. These consequences, some of them so certain and the rest so probable, make the complete execution of the plan sanctioned by Congress at their last session an object of much solicitude.