

Tales and Trails of Betrayal: America's Indian Removal Policies

*"The Americans have hard shoes, and if we permit them to establish that post, they will tread upon our toes."
~ Wolfs Friend, Chickasaw*

"I fought through the civil war and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew." ~John Burnett, US Army

Overview

Students will examine America's Indian removal policies, including the events leading up to the passage of Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act and the effect this had on Native Americans. Through class discussion, an interactive Power Point presentation, and the examination of primary source documents from the 1830s, students will gain an understanding of the political strategies, perspectives, culture clashes, and historical consequences of this time period. Additionally, students will explore the impact of forced removal during the Trail of Tears through art examination, art creation, and creative writing.

Course

11

North Carolina Essential Standards for American History I

- AH1.H.1.2 - Use historical comprehension.
- AH1.H.1.3 - Use historical analysis and interpretation.
- AH1.H.1.4 - Use historical research.
- AH1.H.3.2 - Explain how environmental, cultural and economic factors influenced the patterns of migration and settlement within the U.S. before the Civil War (e.g., economic diversity of regions, mercantilism, cash crops, triangular trade, ethnic diversity, Native American Indian beliefs about land ownership, Lewis & Clark expedition, farming, Industrial Revolution, etc.).
- AH1.H.3.3 - Explain the roles of various racial and ethnic groups in settlement and expansion through Reconstruction and the consequences for those groups (e.g., Germans, Scotch-Irish, Africans, Native American Indians, Irish, Chinese, etc.).
- AH1.H.3.4 - Analyze voluntary and involuntary immigration trends through Reconstruction in terms of causes, regions of origin and destination, cultural contributions, and public and governmental response (e.g., Puritans, Pilgrims, American Indians, Quakers, Scotch-Irish, Chinese, Africans, indentured servants, slavery, Middle Passage, farming, ideas of the Enlightenment, etc.)
- AH1.H.4.4 - Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States through Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., displacement of American Indians, manifest destiny, slavery, assimilation, nativism, etc.)

Essential Questions

- What were the varying perspectives concerning Native Americans during the beginning years of the European settlement of America?
- In what ways did America's Indian removal policies evolve throughout the 1800s?
- What political strategies did Andrew Jackson's administration employ in their quest for Native American land?
- What was the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and how did it affect Native Americans?
- How did the Trail of Tears have an impact on the Cherokee and other Native Americans?
- How did Native Americans such as Junaluska and Tsali react to America's policies concerning Native Americans?

Materials

- Copies of the attached 5 images; teachers should assign each student one of the five images, ideally with an equal number of each image being distributed amongst the class
- “America’s Indian Removal Policies” Power Point available in the Database of K-12 Resources (in PDF format)
 - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click “View” in the top menu bar of the file, and select “Full Screen Mode”
 - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to CarolinaK12@unc.edu
- “Samuel’s Memory,” story attached
- Art supplies (paper, markers, old magazines, glue, etc.)
- Examining Primary Sources – Reading Group Roles, attached
- Instructions for Examining Primary Sources Regarding Indian Removal, attached
- Primary Sources Regarding Indian Removal, 11 documents attached
- Culminating Activity, attached

Duration

Two 60+ minute periods

Preparation

Students should have a basic understanding of Native American history and culture.

Procedure

Day 1

Forced From Your Home

1. As a warm-up, ask students to consider the word “home” and to complete the following prompt on paper:
 - To me, home is...

As students consider this question, ask the following to spur further thinking:

- What feelings, thoughts, and images come to mind when you think of home?
- Where is home for you?
- Is the home that you are envisioning the physical place where you currently reside or does something else come to mind?

2. Next, ask students to share their thoughts and then ask:
 - How would you feel if you were suddenly forced to leave your home permanently? What items would you take with you if you were only allowed to take what you could carry?
 - What would be most upsetting about all that you would have to leave behind?
 - What are some historical events in which people were forced to leave their homes? (Students may note events such as the Holocaust, Japanese Internment Camps, Trail of Tears, etc.)

An Overview of America’s Indian Removal Policies and the Culminating Trail of Tears

3. Next, distribute one of the attached 5 images to each student (ideally, distribute an even amount of each image amongst the class.) Tell students to study the image given to them and to answer (questions are available on slide 2 of the Power Point):
 - What do you see? What first stands out to you in this image?
 - What time period do you think is represented and why?
 - What appears to be happening? What evidence makes you think this?
 - Look closely at the image once more. What can you point out that most people may not notice upon viewing this art?
 - If you were to give this art a title, what would you call it and why?

4. After approximately 5 minutes, ask students to form groups of 5 in which each group member has a different image. (Since it is likely the number of students will not be an even multiple of 5, a group can have 4 students and thus examine one less image, or six students and have one image repeated.) Once all students have formed their groups of five, tell students to take turns showing their image to their group members and summarizing their thoughts about the image. After each student has shared, students should then discuss the following as a group (questions are available on [slide 3](#) of the Power Point):
 - In what ways are these images similar? In what ways are these images different?
 - How might all of these images connect to one another? If they were all part of the same painting, what story might the painting be telling?
 - What would you title the painting containing all of these images?
5. After groups have had sufficient time to discuss, ask volunteers from the various groups to summarize their conversation, noting what story they feel the images would tell together. Project [slide 4](#) and let students silently observe the painting for a few moments, allowing them to find their image within the larger painting. Ask students to comment on what they now believe may be the story of the painting. Also discuss whether or not their thoughts regarding the story of the painting as they see it now is similar or different from how they imagined it when viewing their five excerpts from the image. (Teachers can also use this as a way to discuss how we can often form opinions without having all of the information needed, or how we make assumptions without having all of the pieces of a story.)

Finally, let students know that this painting by Max Standley is titled “The Trail of Tears.” Ask students to share what they already know about the “Trail of Tears” and move on to [slide 5](#) for an historical overview. After providing the overview, remind students of their warm-up and ask them whether they can imagine being forcibly removed from their home.

6. Let students know that they will be exploring the period of Indian removal in America, which resulted in the Trail of Tears, in today’s lesson, but explain that to fully understand the impact of the Indian Removal Act, it is first important to understand the history of North America’s land and some of the policies that occurred before 1830. Move on to [slide 6](#) and further review/discuss:
 - Who were the first people living on the continent of North America?
 - Think back to the colonial history you have studied. When settlers from Europe first came here, who did they encounter along the East Coast? As those settlers decided to make their homes along the East Coast of North America, onto whose land did they move?
 - How did Native American views regarding land differ from European views?
 - How did Native Americans receive European settlers? (Some welcomed them and assisted the colonists, arguably sharing skills that helped them survive; others resented the invasion.)
 - As the years passed, the colonies grew and progressed into states. How does this map of America in 1830 compare to the map of America today?
 - The areas shaded in orange were the states that existed as of 1830. Again, as the population of non-Natives increased, how did this impact the Native American populations who had been here first?
7. Move on to [slide 7](#) and tell students that you want to go back in history a bit more, to the presidency of Thomas Jefferson. Explain to students that during the presidency of Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809), America’s policy was to “allow” Native Americans to remain east of the Mississippi as long as they became “assimilated” or “civilized.” Jefferson’s original plan was to guide the Natives towards adopting a sedentary agricultural lifestyle; his expectation was that by assimilating them into an agricultural lifestyle, they would become economically dependent on trade with white Americans, and would thereby be willing to give up land that they would otherwise not part with in exchange for trade goods. Discuss:
 - What is your opinion of Jefferson’s policy? Was it fair or unfair and why?
 - Do you feel that the Natives should have been expected to assimilate to the white culture and way of life? Why or why not?

- Why did Jefferson want Natives to adapt to an agricultural lifestyle? Was it a trick, in your opinion?
 - Ultimately, what does it seem like Jefferson’s motive was? Based on the little bit you’ve just learned regarding the Indian Removal Act thus far, how will we see this same desire for land illustrated 30 years later during Jackson’s presidency?
8. Project slide 8 and ask a student volunteer to dramatically read the letter excerpt, written by Jefferson in 1803. (Print a copy of the slide to provide to the reader.) Afterwards, discuss student thoughts on the letter:
- Based on this excerpt, how would you describe our nation’s third president and why?
 - Whose interests was Jefferson looking out for? How does this make you feel?
 - Why did Jefferson want to “cultivate the love” of the Natives?
 - What does Jefferson say regarding fear?
 - If you were a Native American who found out about the content of this letter in 1803, how would you feel? What would you do? What would be the potential consequences of such potential actions?
9. Move on to slide 9 and discuss the notion of land “exchange” with Natives, in which Natives would give up their land along the East Coast and move to “equal” or “comparable” land out west. Ask students to consider:
- Imagine that someone came to you and said that they want your home, and if you agree to leave your home and move all of your stuff out, they will give you an “equal or comparable” home somewhere else. What would you say? (Make sure students note that getting a “better” home isn’t part of the deal; they will only receive an “equal or comparable” home, so what would the point of moving be...Likewise, there is no compensation for the hassle of moving, leaving your neighbors, etc.)
 - Is there any compelling reason that a Native American would agree to this? (Perhaps to get away from settlers.)
 - What is a treaty? What do you think makes for an effective treaty? Given what we have discussed thus far, do you think the treaties between the US government and the Native Americans were effective? Explain.
10. Ask a student to read the excerpt from the Treaty of Cherokee Agency on slide 10 and discuss:
- Based on this excerpt, how would you describe the intentions of the United States? Given what you know about the actions of the US, does the tone and language of this treaty match the reality?
 - Why is it ironic that the US government is granting permission to the Cherokee to “remain” or “remove?”
11. Move on to slide 11 and afterwards ask:
- Why do you think the United States engaged in treaties with the Cherokee? If the end result was to be removal, in your opinion, why did they even bother with treaties such as this?
12. Slides 12-14 deal with the “civilizing” of Native Americans. Upon reaching slide 13, ask a student volunteer to read the excerpt from the Cherokee Constitution and discuss:
- How does this compare to the Preamble of The United States Constitution?
 - What do the similarities of these two preambles tell us about the impact of settlers and the American government on the Cherokee?
 - What does this tell us regarding the values of the Cherokee people?
13. When reaching slide 14, again ask a student volunteer to read the excerpt and discuss:
- According to the passage, what was the goal of the white missionaries who were sent to work with Native Americans by Washington?
 - In the view of the white settlers, what do you think it meant to be “civilized?” Why do you think Washington and white settlers assumed that Native Americans were not “civilized?”

- What is your opinion of the settlers' goal to "civilize" the Native Americans?
- Think about something you love to do, such as play basketball. Imagine someone walks onto the court that you've played on your whole life, snatches your ball away, criticizes you and tells you you've been playing wrong this whole time, and tries to force you to play an entirely new way. How would you feel?
- Considering the work of white missionaries, what role did they think religion played in being "civilized?" Did the Cherokee have their own religion before the arrival of such missionaries? Why do you think their religion was disregarded?
- According to Chief Ridge, why do the Native Americans live in fear?
- What dire prediction does Chief Ridge make?

14. Slides 15-20 address the final steps in Jackson's Indian removal policies, with a focus on the Trail of Tears. After going over slide 15, discuss:

- What law were tribal lands originally under? Why did the state governments want tribal lands to fall under their laws and jurisdiction, rather than tribes maintaining their own laws?
- How do you imagine Native Americans would feel about being forced to follow the laws of the invading Americans, rather than the laws they had always followed?

15. Ask a student volunteer to dramatically read the passage from Jackson's First Annual Address to Congress on slide 16. Discuss:

- According to Jackson, what is having a negative impact on Native populations?
- What message and impression of himself is President Jackson attempting to convey? What particular parts of the text illustrate this?
- If this passage is all that you had ever read or knew about President Jackson and his administration's policies towards Native Americans, how would you view him/his policies?
- What do you think is Jackson's ultimate political goal in this address?
- Given what you know about America's policies towards Native Americans thus far, describe the "national character" we exhibited.

16. Move through slide 17 and 18. Once again, ask a student volunteer to dramatically read the passage on slide 18 and discuss:

- What is the tone of this message from the Cherokee Council in response to the American government?
- What emotions can be "read between the lines?" How do you imagine the Cherokee are feeling?

17. On slide 19, ask a student volunteer to read Chief John Ross's excerpt at the bottom. Discuss:

- Who and what is Chief Ross referring to when he addresses "audacious practices of unprincipled men?" Do you think his characterization is a fair one? Why or why not?

18. Finally, as a review and as a means to give students a visual and spatial understanding of Indian removal, project and discuss the map on slide 20.

Exploring the Effect of Removal on Natives with *Samuel's Memory*

19. Next, hand out and instruct students to read the attached story, "Samuel's Memory." Explain to students that eventually, the Cherokee Nation was forced to give up its lands east of the Mississippi River for an area in present-day Oklahoma. "Samuel's Memory" is a story recounting what this removal process was like along the hard journey that became known as "The Trail of Tears."

Tell students that after reading the story, they should consider all of the facts and perspectives regarding the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears that they have learned about throughout class. Instruct them to visualize this period of history and create their own artistic representation of the Indian Removal Act and/or the Trail of Tears, and its impact on the North Carolina Cherokee living in the 1800s. Clarify your expectations of the art work assigned (i.e. it can be literal or abstract; it can be created in mediums such as

painting, drawing, collage; etc.) and provide art supplies for student use. Students should complete their art for homework and be prepared to discuss the story and share their art the next time class meets.

Day 2

Indian Removal & Trail of Tears Art Walk

20. As students enter class, hand them tape or a push pin and instruct them to display their art work somewhere in the room. (Teachers may also want to provide a numbered Post-It note for each student to hang beside their art, so that during discussion students can refer to the various pieces of art by number.) For the first 5-10 minutes of class, allow students to travel around the room, viewing their classmates' work then discuss:
- What do you see in your classmates' art work?
 - What do you think is happening or being represented?
 - What emotions and/or messages are conveyed?
 - How does this painting connect to themes of the Indian Removal Act and/or the Trail of Tears that we discussed in our last class?
 - Of all of your classmates' art, which image is most striking to you and why?
 - Which piece of art do you see connections to the story "Samuel's Memory" in and why?
21. Further the conversation by discussing "Samuel's Memory:"
- How would you characterize Samuel?
 - In your opinion, what is the most difficult experience Samuel endured?
 - How would you feel if you were Samuel, and you and your family were forced to evacuate your home?
 - Why is Samuel bitter towards "white people?"
 - If you could say something to Samuel to ease his pain or lessen his anger and hate, what would you say?
 - If you were a US soldier in 1830 ordered to evacuate the Cherokee, how would you realistically respond?
 - Why do you think Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act into law?
 - What choices/options did the Cherokee have in responding to this mistreatment? What choices/options did settlers who were also against such mistreatment have?

Exploring Primary Sources Regarding Indian Removal

22. Next, tell students that they are going to be further exploring America's history of Indian removal. Divide students into groups of five and provide each student with one of the attached "Reading Group Roles for Exploring Primary Sources." Also, give each student the "Instructions for Examining Primary Sources Regarding Indian Removal" handout. Distribute one of the attached eleven primary sources to each group, so that all students in a group work on the same document. (Based on the size of your classroom, teachers can either select particular documents from the eleven provided to use, or assign each group two documents.)

Explain to students that the document provided to them is an actual document written in the 1830s that addresses Indian removal in some way. Tell students that their job, as a group, is to carefully study, analyze, and reflect upon this document, and to be prepared to teach the other groups about the document and its content. Go over the instructions with students and give them approximately 15-20 minutes to work on their document. Teachers should circulate among groups to ensure they are focused and on the right track with their interpretations.

23. Once all groups have discussed their document, review your expectation for respectful audience members and have each presenter summarize their group's document and discussion with the remainder of class. Make sure each presenter also shares a quote or excerpt from the document as part of their presentation. Allow the remainder of class to pose clarifying questions; teachers should also pose additional discussion questions for each document as necessary.
- **Optional alternative:** Rather than having each group present to the entire class, students can be instructed to "jigsaw," so that new groups are re-formed with one person representing each excerpt in every group. (Teachers who plan to use this option should copy the excerpts on different colors of paper; thus, in this step, each new group member will have a different color of paper.) Once students are settled in their new groups, have each member take 3-4 minutes to teach their new group members about their document.
24. Once all groups have presented, discuss:
- Ultimately, how would you describe America's policies regarding Native Americans?
 - How much did you already know about these policies and the Trail of Tears prior to this lesson? Are you shocked by anything that you have learned? Why or why not?
 - Are there any other events in United States' or other countries' history that compare to these events? Explain.
 - How do you think this period of history affected Native American life and culture over the subsequent years? Can the effects still be seen today? Explain. How did this period of history affect American progress? Explain.
 - How do you think Native Americans coped with these policies? (Some hid in the mountains of North Carolina, some fought with words and others fought with weapons, some organized, etc.) What reasons do you think led Natives to make each of these different choices?
 - How do you imagine you would have handled this situation? (Allow students to share their thoughts, but then discuss how it is easy for us to sit in the safety of our modern classroom and claim we would have fought back, risked our lives, etc. In actuality, were we in that situation with our families in danger, we have no idea how we would actually have behaved and it is likewise difficult to comprehend the magnitude of the bravery and perseverance Native Americans exhibited.)

Effects of Americas Indian Removal Policies

25. Return to the "America's Indian Removal Policies" Power Point and go through slide 21- 27. These slides address the effects of Indian removal and the Trail of Tears on Native Americans, as well as how Native Americans responded. Points to discuss:

Slide 21:

- Out of everything the Cherokee endured, what do you think would have been most difficult and why? (i.e. the fear of losing your home, the moment when you were forced from your home, being held in stockades, marching through extreme cold, etc.)

Slide 23: (Ask a student to dramatically read the words of John Burnett before posing the discussion questions.)

- What message is John Burnett trying to convey?
- Who does he say will judge what took place on the Trail of Tears?
- Here we are – the historians of a future day. Who should we teach about this history and why? How do you think we could best honor those who lost their lives?

Slide 26:

- How do you think Junaluska felt being ignored by Andrew Jackson, whose life he had saved years ago?
- What do you think motivated him to attempt to lead an escape from Oklahoma?
- Why do you think Junaluska walked all the way back to North Carolina?

Slide 27:

- How would you describe Tsali? Why do you think he is considered a hero?
- Why do you think he was assassinated?

- Overall, how would you characterize the Cherokee who were able to survive the Trail of Tears (whether escaping, resettling in Oklahoma, fighting, etc.)?

Culminating Activity: Write a Diary, Letter, Speech, or Dialogue on Indian Removal

26. As a culminating activity, give students the attached assignment sheet and instruct them to choose one of the four options (writing a diary, letter, speech, or dialogue concerning Indian removal) for their assignment. Go over the four options and let students know that they will share their final product with the class (or in small groups). If time permits, allow students to begin brainstorming and writing in class, during which time teachers should circulate around the room to ensure students are on track with appropriate ideas. Encourage creativity, but make sure students adhere to the facts. Respectfully correct any stereotypes that may surface.

Let students know when their final products are due and remind them that they will be expected to present their final product to classmates.

27. Once students are ready to present, review the expectations for respectful audience members and place students into groups of approximately 6 (ensure any students who completed the dialogue are assigned to the same group as their partner). Students should each take turns sharing their writing with their group. After each student presents, the remainder of the group should offer positive feedback (“What I liked/What I learned...”). Teachers can optionally have each group collectively select which piece of writing was most dramatic, meaningful, creative, etc.; that student or pair can then present to the whole class.
28. Once students are done sharing and offering feedback to one another, debrief as a class:
- What was most interesting about what you heard in your classmates’ writings?
 - Based on what you heard, how would you characterize Andrew Jackson? Native Americans?
 - What is the value in hearing all of the voices and perspectives regarding a controversial situation (i.e. why hear from the Natives, the settlers, the government, etc.)?
 - Why is studying the perspectives of the Native Americans important for understanding democracy and our history? Why is it also important to study the perspectives and actions of the US government, even if it isn’t history to be proud of?
 - Could something like the Indian Removal Act be issued in our society today? Why or why not? What responsibilities do we have to ensure rights for all people?
 - Why is it important to study legislation such as the Indian Removal Act and historical occurrences such as the Trail of Tears today?
 - How do you think Indian removal effected history and why?

Additional Activities

- “This Land is Ours:” This lesson plan by Teaching Tolerance addresses Indian resistance throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. It and additional lesson plans regarding Indian removal, the Trail of Tears, etc. are available at: <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/land-ours> (source link not working)
- “Indian Boarding Schools – Civilizing the Native Spirit:” This lesson plan utilizes primary sources from the Library of Congress (photographs, letters, reports, interviews, and other primary documents) to teach about the forced acculturation of American Indians through government-run boarding schools. It is available at <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/01/indian/overview.html>.
- “Cherokee Removal and the Trail of Tears:” This section of NC LEARN’s digital textbook provides readings, primary sources, discussion questions, lesson plan ideas, and more at <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-newnation/10.0>
- Have students research North Carolina Cherokee further, examining governmental policies towards Natives since the 1800s to the present. Allow students to present their findings to the class.

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Samuel's Memory

It is Spring. The leaves are on the trees. I am playing with my friends when white men in uniforms ride up to our home. My mother calls me. I can tell by her voice that something is wrong. Some of the men ride off. My mother tells me to gather my things, but the men don't allow us time to get anything. They enter our home and begin knocking over pottery and looking into everything. My mother and I are taken by several men to where their horses are and are held there at gun point. The men who rode off return with my father, Elijah. They have taken his rifle and he is walking toward us.

I can feel his anger and frustration. There is nothing he can do. From my mother I feel fear. I am filled with fear, too. What is going on? I was just playing, but now my family and my friends' families are gathered together and told to walk at the point of a bayonet. We walk a long ways. My mother does not let me get far from her. My father is walking by the other men, talking in low, angry tones. The soldiers look weary, as though they'd rather be anywhere else but here.

They lead us to a stockade. They herd us into this pen like we are cattle. No one was given time to gather any possessions. The nights are still cold in the mountains and we do not have enough blankets to go around. My mother holds me at night to keep me warm. That is the only time I feel safe. I feel her pull me to her tightly. I feel her warm breath in my hair. I feel her softness as I fall asleep at night.

As the days pass, more and more of our people are herded into the stockade. I see other members of my clan. We children try to play, but the elders around us are anxious and we do not know what to think. I often sit and watch the others around me. I observe the guards. I try not to think about my hunger. I am cold.

Several months have passed and still we are in the stockades. My father looks tired. He talks with the other men, but no one seems to know what to do or what is going to happen. We hear that white men have moved into our homes and are farming our fields. What will happen to us? We are to march west to join the Western Cherokees. I don't want to leave these mountains.

My mother, my aunts and uncles take me aside one day. "Your father died last night," they tell me. My mother and my father's clan members are crying, but I do not understand what this means. I saw him yesterday. He was sick, but still alive. It doesn't seem real. Nothing seems real. I don't know what any of this means. It seems like yesterday, I was playing with my friends.

It is now Fall. It seems like forever since I was clean. The stockade is nothing but mud. In the morning it is stiff with frost. By mid-afternoon, it is soft and we are all covered in it. The soldiers suddenly tell us we are to follow them. We are led out of the stockade. The guards all have guns and are watching us closely. We walk. My mother keeps me close to her. I am allowed to walk with my uncle or an aunt, occasionally.

We walk across the frozen earth. Nothing seems right anymore. The cold seeps through my clothes. I wish I had my blanket. I remember last winter I had a blanket, when I was warm. I don't feel like I'll ever be warm again. I remember my father's smile. It seems like so long ago.

We walked for many days. I don't know how long it has been since we left our home, but the mountains are behind us. Each day, we start walking a little later. They bury the dead in shallow graves, because the ground is frozen. As we walk past white towns, the whites come out to watch us pass. No words are spoken to them. No words are said to us. Still, I wish they would stop staring. I wish it were them walking in this misery and I were watching them. It is because of them that we are walking. I don't understand why, but I know that much. They made us leave our homes. They made us walk to this new place we are heading in the middle of winter. I do not like these people. Still, they stare at me as I walk past.

We come to a big river, bigger than I have ever seen before. It is flowing with ice. The soldiers are not happy. We set up camp and wait. We are all cold and the snow and ice seem to hound us, claiming our people one by one. North is the color of blue, defeat and trouble. From there a chill wind blows for us as we wait by a frozen river. We wait to die.

My mother is coughing now. She looks worn. Her hands and face are burning hot. My aunts and uncles try to take care of me, so she can get better. I don't want to leave her alone. I just want to sit with her. I want her to stroke my hair, like she used to do. My aunts try to get me to sleep by them, but at night, I creep to her side. She coughs and it wracks her whole body. When she feels me by her side, she opens her blanket and lets me in. I nestle against her feverish body. I can make it another day, I know, because she is here.

When I went to sleep last night, my mother was hot and coughing worse than usual. When I woke up, she was cold. I tried to wake her up, but she lay there. The soft warmth she once was, she is no more. I kept touching her, as hot tears stream down my face. She couldn't leave me. She wouldn't leave me.

I hear myself call her name, softly, then louder. She does not answer. My aunt and uncle come over to me to see what is wrong. My aunt looks at my mother. My uncle pulls me from her. My aunt begins to wail. I will never forget that wail. I did not understand when my father died. My mother's death I do not understand, but I suddenly know that I am alone. My clan will take care of me, but I will be forever denied her warmth, the soft fingers in my hair, her gentle breath as we slept. I am alone. I want to cry. I want to scream in rage. I can do nothing.

We bury her in a shallow grave by the road. I will never forget that lonesome hill of stone that is her final bed, as it fades from my sight. I tread softly by my uncle, my hand in his. I walk with my head turned, watching that small hill as it fades from my sight. The soldiers make us continue walking. My uncle talks to me, trying to comfort me. I walk in loneliness.

I know what it is to hate. I hate those white soldiers who took us from our home. I hate the soldiers who make us keep walking through the snow and ice toward this new home that none of us ever wanted. I hate the people who killed my father and mother.

I hate the white people who lined the roads in their woolen clothes that kept them warm, watching us pass. None of those white people are here to say they are sorry that I am alone. None of them care about me or my people. All they ever saw was the color of our skin. All I see is the color of theirs and I hate them.

Source: http://www.wwnorton.com/college/history/foner2/contents/common/documents/ch10_1838_1_transcript.htm

Examining Primary Sources – Reading Group Roles

Facilitator

Your job is to lead the discussion on the reading provided to your group. Pose discussion questions to the group and ensure that every voice is heard (including your own). Make sure the group stays focused on the task assigned.

While ensuring everyone else participates in the discussion, you should also provide your thoughts. Make sure you listen to your other group members and add on to their ideas whenever possible. Pose any of your own questions that come to mind as well.

Recorder

Your job is to take notes during the discussion your group has regarding the reading assigned to you. Make sure you write down a final answer to each discussion question. You will assist the Presenter in preparing his/her notes for the summary he/she provides to the other groups.

You should also participate in the discussion by providing your thoughts to the questions posed regarding the reading assigned to your group. Make sure you listen to your other group members and add on to their ideas whenever possible. Pose any of your own questions that come to mind as well.

Task Manager

Your job is to monitor the time as your group works and to provide time warnings (i.e. “10 minutes left,” “5 minutes left,” etc.) to your group. Make sure that your group equally divides its time among the questions and tasks, while ensuring all aspects of the assignment are completed before time is up. If any supplies are needed, you are responsible for getting them and ensuring they are returned. Also, assist the Facilitator in ensuring everyone in the group participates and stays on track.

You should also participate in the discussion by providing your thoughts to the questions posed regarding the reading assigned to your group. Make sure you listen to your other group members and add on to their ideas whenever possible. Pose any of your own questions that come to mind as well.

Presenter

Your job is to summarize your group's discussion for the remainder of class once time is up. Make sure you do this in a way that teaches the other groups about the reading assigned to your group. Be prepared to speak in a clear, concise manner. The Recorder can help you in preparing and writing the summary to be presented.

You should also participate in the discussion by providing your thoughts to the questions posed regarding the reading assigned to your group. Make sure you listen to your other group members and add on to their ideas whenever possible. Pose any of your own questions that come to mind as well.

Q & A-er

Your job is to keep track of any questions that your group members pose throughout the discussion. Whenever possible, assist in finding the answers to these questions. (For example, you may need to look up a word in the dictionary, or consult your text book for further information on a topic.) If the group needs the teacher's assistance, you are responsible for communicating the group's questions or needs to the teacher. Also, after the Presenter summarizes your group's reading and discussion with the remainder of class, you are responsible for answering any clarifying questions other groups may have of your group.

You should also participate in the discussion by providing your thoughts to the questions posed regarding the reading assigned to your group. Make sure you listen to your other group members and add on to their ideas whenever possible. Pose any of your own questions that come to mind as well.

Name: _____ Your Role: _____

Title of Your Document: _____

Instructions for Examining Primary Sources Regarding Indian Removal

- 1. Group Up:** Arrange your group so that you are in a circle so that everyone can see and effectively communicate with everyone else.
- 2. Skim:** First, silently skim the document provided to you. Does anything pop out first? (i.e. do you see any clues as to what the document may be about; is there anything that catches your attention or that you find interesting or confusing?; etc.)
- 3. Read:** Together, carefully read through the document provided to you. The language may be confusing to you, or seem difficult to understand. Take your time and reread as needed. As you read, mark the text:
 - Circle any words that are unfamiliar to you.
 - Underline any parts of the document that you think are most important or that stick out to you.
 - If you are confused by any part of the document, write a question mark by that line or section. You can also write out questions on the text.
 - If anything surprises you or evokes a strong emotional response from you, you can write an exclamation mark by the line or section.
 - If a particular thought pops in your head that connects to the reading, write it in the margins.
- 4. Discuss:** The “Facilitator” will lead your group in discussing the following questions. You can also raise your own questions for discussion.
 - What parts of this text did you underline as most important or interesting and why?
 - What does this document tell us regarding America’s Indian Removal policies in the 1830s?
 - What emotions or feelings are evident in this document? Or, what emotions or feelings would it have aroused in Natives, government officials, and/or European settlers?
 - What is the purpose of this document? What evidence in the text makes you think this?
 - Predict what impact you think this document, or the subject matter it addresses, will have on Native Americans and on the European/American settlers.
 - Based on this document, who would be impacted by America’s Indian removal policies and in what ways?
 - Imagine you are living in the 1830s and you come across this document. How would you feel about it and why?
 - As you read this document, what images came to mind? If you were going to create a painting based on this document or the subject it addresses, what might your painting contain or look like and why?
- 5. Prepare to Present:** Each group in class has read a different document. In order to teach the remainder of class about the document your group read and discussed, assist the Presenter in preparing to summarize the text and your discussion/opinions regarding the text for the remainder of class. In addition, choose at least 3-5 sentences of the text that you think are most important that the Presenter will read to the class during his/her presentation.
- 6. Extra Time?** If your group has time left after completing all of the above steps, each of you should return to the question posed above: If you were going to create a painting based on this document or the subject it addresses, what might your painting contain or look like and why? Reconsider this question, then as individuals, create your own piece of art that in some way represents or symbolizes the document you read. The Task Manager will retrieve the art supplies you need from the teacher.

CHEROKEE PHOENIX

Wednesday, February 4, 1829

Volume 1 No. 47

Page 2 Col. 3a-4a

We understand upon good authority that our frontier neighbours in Georgia are moving in fast and settling on the lands belonging to the Cherokees. Right or wrong they are determined to take the country.

Attempts of this kind have been made heretofore, but without any success, for the intercourse law of the United States has been invariably executed. Whether the President will again use the military force to oust these intruders as the law provides, we are not able to say. The law is explicit, and we hope, for the honor of the General Government, it will be faithfully executed. It is as follows:

Sec. 5. And be it further enacted, That if any such citizen or other person, shall make a settlement on any lands belonging, or secured, or granted, by treaty with the United States, to any Indian tribe, or shall survey, or attempt to survey, such lands, or designate any of the boundaries, by marking trees or otherwise, such offender shall forfeit a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars, and suffer imprisonment, not exceeding twelve months. And it shall, moreover, be lawful for the President of the United States to take such measures, and to employ such military force, as he may judge necessary, to remove from lands, belonging, or secured by treaty as aforesaid, to any Indian tribe, any such citizen, or other person, who has made or shall hereafter make, or attempt to make, a settlement thereon.

There is one fact connected with this affair, which we think proper to mention. When known, in the view of every honest and liberal man, it ought to redound to the credit of the Cherokees. It is this. In all cases of intrusions, when white men have behaved in a provoking manner, and with the greatest degree of impudence, the Cherokees have never, to our knowledge, resorted to forcible measures, but have peaceably retired, and have patiently waited for the interference of the United States, and the execution of the above section. Does not this show that they are faithful to the treaty contracts, and that they expect the like faithfulness from the United States. We hope that they will not now be disappointed.

The quoted "Sec. 5" is an excerpt from the Act to Regulate Trade and Intercourse with the Indian Tribes, and to Preserve Peace on the Frontiers, May 19, 1796

Primary Source 2

Excerpt from John Ross's Letter to Congress, 1829

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, the undersigned, Representatives of the Cherokee Nation, beg leave to present before your honorable bodies a subject of the deepest interest to our nation, as involving the most sacred rights and privileges of the Cherokee People. The Legislature of Georgia, during its latest session, passed an act to add a large portion of our territory to that State, and to extend her jurisdiction over the same, declaring "all laws and usages, made and enforced in said Territory by the Indians, to be null and void after the first of June, 1830. No Indian, or descendent of an Indian, to be a competent witness, or a party to any suit to which a white man is party."

This act involves a question of great magnitude and of serious import, and which calls for the deliberation and decision of Congress. It is a question upon which the salvation and happiness or the misery and destruction of a nation depends, therefore it should not be trifled with. The anxious solicitude of Georgia to obtain our lands through the United States by treaty was known to us, and after having accommodated her desires (with that of other States bordering on our territory) by repeated cession of lands, until no more can be reasonable spared, it was not conceived, much less believed, that a State, proud of Liberty, and tenacious of the rights of man, would condescend to have placed herself before the world in the imposing attitude of a usurper of most sacred rights and privileges of a weak, defenseless, and innocent nation of people, who are in perfect peace with the United States, and to whom the faith of the United States is solemnly pledged to protect and defend them against the encroachments of their citizens.

In acknowledgment for the protection of the United States and the consideration of guaranteeing to our nation forever the security of our lands &c., the Cherokee Nation ceded by treaty a large tract of country to the United States, and stipulated that the said Cherokee Nation "will not hold any treaty with any foreign power, individual State, or with individuals of any State." These stipulations on our part have been faithfully observed, and ever shall be.

The right of regulating our own Internal affairs, is a right which we have inherited from the Author of our existence, which we have always exercised, and have never surrendered...

It is with pain and deep regret we have witnessed the various plans which have been devised within a few years past by some of the officers of the General Government, and the measure adopted by Congress in conformity to these plans, with the view of effecting the removal of our nation beyond the Mississippi, for the purpose, as has been expressed, to promote our interest and permanent happiness, and save us from the impending fate which has swept others into oblivion. Without presuming in doubt the sincerity and good intentions of the advocates of this plan, we as the descendants of the Indian race, and possessing both the feelings of the Indian and the white man, cannot but believe that this system to perpetuate our happiness, is visionary, and that the anticipated blessings can never be realized...

We cannot admit that Georgia has the right to extend her jurisdiction over our territory, nor are the Cherokee people prepared to submit to her persecuting edict. We would therefore respectfully and solemnly protest, in behalf of the Cherokee Nation, before your honorable bodies, against the extension of the laws of Georgia over any part of our Territory, and appeal to the United States' Government for justice and protection...

In behalf, and under the authority of the Cherokee Nation, this protest and memorial is respectfully submitted.

Source: WASHINGTON CITY Feb. 7, 1829. *Printed in the Cherokee Phoenix and Indians' Advocate - Wednesday, June 17, 1829*

Primary Source 3

Andrew Jackson's Second State of the Union Address

December 6, 1830

It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly 30 years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy consummation. Two important tribes have accepted the provision made for their removal at the last session of Congress, and it is believed that their example will induce the remaining tribes also to seek the same obvious advantage...

It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites;...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...

Toward the aborigines of the country no one can indulge a more friendly feeling than myself, or would go further in attempting to reclaim them from their wandering habits and make them a happy, prosperous people...

The present policy of the government is but a continuation of the same progressive change by a milder process. The tribes which occupied the countries now constituting the Eastern States were annihilated or have melted away to make room for the whites. The waves of population and civilization are rolling westward, and we now propose to acquire the countries occupied by the red man of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to a land where their existence may be prolonged and perhaps made perpetual....

Doubtless it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but what do they more than our ancestors did or than our children are now doing? To better their condition in an unknown land our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects...Does Humanity weep at these painful separations from everything, animate and inanimate, with which the young heart has become entwined? Far from it. It is rather a source of joy that our country affords scope where our young population may range unconstrained in body or in mind, developing the power and faculties of man in their highest perfection....Can it be cruel in this Government when, by events which it can not control, the Indian is made discontented in his ancient home to purchase his lands, to give him a new and extensive territory, to pay the expense of his removal, and support him a year in his new abode? How many thousands of our own people would gladly embrace the opportunity of removing to the West on such conditions! If the offers made to the Indians were extended to them, they would be hailed with gratitude and joy... Rightly considered, the policy of the General Government toward the red man is not only liberal, but generous...Government kindly offers him a new home, and proposes to pay the whole expense of his removal and settlement... It is, therefore, a duty which this government owes to the new States to extinguish as soon as possible the Indian title to all lands which Congress themselves have included within their limits. When this is done the duties of General Government in relation to the States and the Indians within their limits are at an end...

Primary Source 4

Excerpt from Speech in Congress from Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen, 1830

God, in his providence, planted these tribes on this Western continent, so far as we know, before Great Britain herself had a political existence. I believe, sir, it is not now seriously denied that the Indians are men, endowed with kindred faculties and powers with ourselves; that they have a place in human sympathy, and are justly entitled to a share in the common bounties of a benignant Providence. And, with this conceded, I ask in what code of the law of nations, or by what process of abstract deduction, their rights have been extinguished? ...

Several years ago, official reports to Congress stated the amount of Indian grants to the United States to exceed two hundred and fourteen millions of acres. ... The confiding Indian listened to our professions of friendship: we called him brother, and he believed us. Millions after millions he has yielded to our importunity, until we have acquired more than can be cultivated in centuries—and yet we crave more. We have crowded the tribes upon a few miserable acres on our Southern frontier: it is all that is left to them of their once boundless forests: and still, like the horse-leech, our insatiated cupidity cries, give! give! ...

Our ancestors found these people, far removed from the commotions of Europe, exercising all the rights and enjoying the privileges, of free and independent sovereigns of this new world. They were not a wild and lawless horde of banditti, but lived under the restraints of government, patriarchal in its character, and energetic in its influence. They had chiefs, head men, and councils. ...

[The Indian] opened the hand of his bounty wider and wider. By and by, conditions are changed. His people melt away, his lands are constantly coveted; millions after millions are ceded. The Indian bears it all meekly; he complains, indeed, as well he may; but suffers on: and now he finds that this neighbor, whom his kindness had nourished, has spread an adverse title over the last remains of his patrimony, barely adequate to his wants, and turns upon him, and says, “Away! We cannot endure you so near us! These forests and rivers, these groves of your fathers, these firesides and hunting grounds, are ours by the right of power, and the force of numbers.” Sir, let every treaty be blotted from our records, and in the judgment of natural and unchangeable truth and justice, I ask, who is the injured, and who is the aggressor? ...

Every administration of this Government, from President Washington’s, have, with like solemnities and stipulations, held treaties with the Cherokees; treaties, too, by almost all of which we obtained further acquisitions of their territory. Yes, sir, whenever we approached them in the language of friendship and kindness, we touched the chord that won their confidence; and now, when they have nothing left with which to satisfy our cravings, we propose to annul every treaty—to gainsay our word—and, by violence and perfidy, drive the Indian from his home. ...

How can we ever dispute the sovereign right of the Cherokees to remain east of the Mississippi, when it was in relation to that very location that we promised our patronage, aid, and good neighborhood? ... How were these people to remain, if not as they then existed, and as we then acknowledged them to be, a distinct and separate community, governed by their own peculiar laws and customs? We can never deny these principles, while fair dealing retains any hold of our conduct. ...

Primary Source 5

Document Excerpt from Report Sent by North Carolina's Governor Swain to the US Congress

23d Congress, 1st Session. [Doc. No. 71.] Ho. of Reps.

NORTH CAROLINA—Cherokee Indians Report and Resolution of a Joint Committee of the Legislature of North Carolina, relative to the Cherokee Indians.

January 27, 1834.

The United States, acknowledging the rights of North Carolina, and yielding to her just claims, attempted, by the treaties of 1817 and 1819, with the Cherokee tribe of Indians, to extinguish their title to all the land Within the limits of this State. This attempt proving abortive, by a mistake in describing the territory intended to be surrendered by the Indians, the language of the treaties leaves little doubt of the intention of the contracting parties to extinguish the Indian title to all the lands within this State, but the application of a technical rule produces the difficulty. The treaties stipulate that the Cherokees shall surrender all their lands lying within the limits of North Carolina, and then unfortunately set forth the supposed metes and bounds of the territory intended to be surrendered. In these metes and bounds there is a great mistake; the former is called a general, the latter a particular description; and it is said that the particular controls and restrains the general description. The lands in the occupancy of the Cherokees, not embraced by these metes and bounds, and within the limits of North Carolina, are of great extent and value. This tract of country, from the most accurate information now to be obtained, includes nearly million of acres of land, and is estimated to be worth four hundred thousand dollars, and is occupied by almost twenty-five hundred Indians. The extinguishment of the Indian title to this district of country, and the removal of this unfortunate race beyond the Mississippi, is of momentous importance to the interest of this State. The fertility of the soil, the extent and value of territory, are sufficient inducements to urge the extinguishment of the Indian title, especially as we think we have just claims on the General Government. These are not the only inducements. The red men are not within the pales of civilization; they are not under the restraints of morality, nor the influence of religion, and they are always disagreeable and dangerous neighbors to a civilized people. The proximity of those red men to our white population, subjects the latter to depredations and annoyances, and is a source of perpetual and mutual irritation. It is believed this unfortunate race of beings might easily, at the present, from the policy pursued towards them by the respective States in which their possessions are situate, be induced to exchange their lands in this State for territory beyond the Mississippi, whither so many of their brethren have already gone.

In addition to all these considerations, the right of North Carolina to have this title extinguished by the General Government, is strengthened by the policy which has been pursued towards the Cherokees by the States of Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama. They have been driven, or are now flying from that portion of their lands lying within the limits of these States, and take refuge within our borders, where they are permitted to preserve their own peculiar laws and usages. The effect of this policy will be to transfer their entire population to our territory, until an exhausted soil will compel them to seek another home.

The General Assembly submit it to the justice or Congress to determine whether the continued liberality of North Carolina to this unfortunate race shall be thus rewarded. Let it be recollected that the region of country in Arkansas, on which those Cherokees who have removed are now settled, was once a portion of this State, and that the result of the legislation of Congress, and of the particular States interested, has been, and will be, to remove to it all the Indians but those inhabiting her territory. Shall that State alone, which furnished an asylum for the relief of all, be denied the benefits flowing from her own liberality?

Primary Source 6

Excerpts from Andrew Jackson's Annual Messages to Congress

Third Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1831

"It is pleasing to reflect that results so beneficial, not only to the States immediately concerned, but to the harmony of the Union, will have been accomplished by measures equally advantageous to the Indians. What the native savages become when surrounded by a dense population and by mixing with the whites may be seen in the miserable remnants of a few Eastern tribes, deprived of political and civil rights, forbidden to make contracts, and subjected to guardians, dragging out a wretched existence, without excitement, without hope, and almost without thought."

Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 4, 1832

"After a harassing warfare, prolonged by the nature of the country and by the difficulty of procuring subsistence, the Indians were entirely defeated, and the disaffected band dispersed or destroyed. The result has been creditable to the troops engaged in the service. Severe as is the lesson to the Indians, it was rendered necessary by their unprovoked aggressions, and it is to be hoped that its impression will be permanent and salutary." -- Andrew Jackson

Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1833

"My original convictions upon this subject have been confirmed by the course of events for several years, and experience is every day adding to their strength. That those tribes cannot exist surrounded by our settlements and in continual contact with our citizens is certain. They have neither the intelligence, the industry, the moral habits, nor the desire of improvement which are essential to any favorable change in their condition. Established in the midst of another and a superior race, and without appreciating the causes of their inferiority or seeking to control them, they must necessarily yield to the force of circumstances and ere long disappear." - Andrew Jackson

Sixth Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1834

"I regret that the Cherokees east of the Mississippi have not yet determined as a community to remove. How long the personal causes which have heretofore retarded that ultimately inevitable measure will continue to operate I am unable to conjecture. It is certain, however, that delay will bring with it accumulated evils which will render their condition more and more unpleasant. The experience of every year adds to the conviction that emigration, and that alone, can preserve from destruction the remnant of the tribes yet living amongst us." -- Andrew Jackson

Seventh Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1835

"The extraordinary receipts from the sales of the public lands invite you to consider what improvements the land system, and particularly the condition of the General Land Office, may require. At the time this institution was organized, near a quarter century ago, it would probably have been thought extravagant to anticipate for this period such an addition to its business as has been produced by the vast increase of those sales during the past and present years. It may also be observed that since the year 1812 the land offices and surveying districts have been greatly multiplied, and that numerous legislative enactments from year to year since that time have imposed a great amount of new and additional duties upon that office, while the want of a timely application of force commensurate with the care and labor required has caused the increasing embarrassment of accumulated arrears in the different branches of the establishment." -- Andrew Jackson

Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 5, 1836

"The national policy, founded alike in interest and in humanity, so long and so steadily pursued by this Government for the removal of the Indian tribes originally settled on this side of the Mississippi to the West of that river, may be said to have been consummated by the conclusion of the late treaty with the Cherokees." -- Andrew Jackson

“To the Cherokee Tribe of Indians”

Written by Andrew Jackson in 1835

MY FRIENDS: I have long viewed your condition with great interest. For many years I have been acquainted with your people, and under all variety of circumstances, in peace and war... Listen to me, therefore, as your fathers have listened, while I communicate to you my sentiments on the critical state of your affairs.

You are now placed in the midst of a white population... and you are now subject to the same laws which govern the other citizens of Georgia and Alabama... The game has disappeared among you, and you must depend upon agriculture and the mechanic arts for support.... How, under these circumstances can you live in the country you now occupy? Your condition must become worse & worse, and you will ultimately disappear, as so many tribes have done before you.

Of all this I warned your people,... I then advised them to sell out their possessions East of the Mississippi and to remove to the country west of that river...Your farms would have been open and cultivated, comfortable houses would have been erected, the means of subsistence abundant and you would have been governed by your own customs and laws, and removed from the effects of a white population. Where you now are, you are encompassed by evils, moral and physical, & these are fearfully increasing...

I have no motive,... to deceive you... I tell you that you cannot remain where you now are... You have but one remedy within your reach. And that is, to remove to the west and join your countrymen, who are already established there. And the sooner you do this, the sooner you can commence your career of improvement and prosperity...Why, then, should any honest man among you object to removal? The United States have assigned to you a fertile and extensive country, with a very fine climate adapted to your habits, and with all the other natural advantages which you ought to desire or expect...

The choice now is before you... As certain as the sun shines to guide you in your path, so certain is it that you cannot drive back the laws of Georgia from among you...Look at the condition of the Creeks... their young men are committing depredations upon the property of our citizens, and are shedding their blood. This cannot and will not be allowed. Punishment will follow,... Your young men will commit the same acts, and the same consequences must ensue...Look at your condition as it now is, and then consider what it will be if you follow the advice I give you.

Memorial and Protest of the Cherokee Nation, 1836

... the United States solemnly guaranteed to said nations all their lands not ceded, and pledged the faith of the government, that "all white people who have intruded, or may hereafter intrude, on the lands reserved for the Cherokees, shall be removed by the United States, and proceeded against, according to the provisions of the act, passed 30th March, 1802," entitled "An act to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and to preserve peace on the frontiers." The Cherokees were happy and prosperous under a scrupulous observance of treaty stipulations by the government of the United States,... taught to think and feel as the American citizen,...they were... to become strangers and wanderers in the land of their fathers, forced to return to the savage life, and to seek a new home in the wilds of the far west, and that without their consent. An instrument purporting to be a treaty with the Cherokee people, has recently been made public by the President of the United States, that will have such an operation, if carried into effect. This instrument,... is fraudulent, false upon its face, made by unauthorized individuals, without the sanction, and against the wishes, of the great body of the Cherokee people...

Native American Voices – Colonel Webb (Choctaw)

Brother, when you were young, we were strong; we fought by your side; but our arms are now broken. You have grown large; my people have become small. Brother, my voice is weak; you can scarcely hear me; it is not the shout of a warrior, but the wail of an infant. I have lost it in mourning over the misfortunes of my people. These are their graves, and in those aged pines the ghosts of the departed. Their ashes are here, and we have been left to protect them. Our warriors are nearly all gone to the far country west; but here are our dead. Shall we go too, and give their bones to the wolves? ... Every warrior that you see here was opposed to the Treaty. If the dead could have been counted, it could never have been made...Their tears came in the rain drops, and their voices in the wailing winds, but the pale faced knew it not, and our land was taken away.

Native American Voices – Speckled Snake (Creek)

When he first came over the wide waters, he was but a little man, and wore a red coat...The Muscogees gave the white man land, and kindled him a fire, that he might warm himself...But when the white man had warmed himself before the Indian's fire, and filled himself with their hominy, he became very large. With a step he bestrode the mountains, and his feet covered the plains and the valleys. His hands grasped the eastern and the western sea...Then he became our Great Father. He loved his red children, and he said, "Get a little further, least I tread on thee." With one foot he pushed the red man over the Oconee, and with the other he trampled down the graves of his fathers, and the forests [where] he had so long hunted the deer. But our Great Father still loved his red children, and he soon made them another talk. He said, "Get a little further; you are too near me." But there were some bad men among the Muscogees then, as there are now. They lingered around the graves of their ancestors, till they were crushed beneath the heavy tread of our Great Father...Yet he continued to love his red children; and when he found them too slow in moving, he sent his great guns before him to sweep his path.

Brothers! I have listened to a great many talks from our great father. But they always began and ended in this – "Get a little further; you are too near me."

Gen. Winfield Scott's Address to the Cherokee Nation - May 10, 1838

Cherokees! The President of the United States has sent me with a powerful army, to cause you, in obedience to the treaty of 1835 [the Treaty of New Echota], to join that part of your people who have already established in prosperity on the other side of the Mississippi. Unhappily, the two years which were allowed for the purpose, you have suffered to pass away without following, and without making any preparation to follow; and now, or by the time that this solemn address shall reach your distant settlements, the emigration must be commenced in haste, but I hope without disorder. I have no power, by granting a farther delay, to correct the error that you have committed. The full moon of May is already on the wane; and before another shall have passed away, every Cherokee man, woman and child in those states must be in motion to join their brethren in the far West.

My friends! This is no sudden determination on the part of the President, whom you and I must now obey. By the treaty, the emigration was to have been completed on or before the 23rd of this month; and the President has constantly kept you warned, during the two years allowed, through all his officers and agents in this country, that the treaty would be enforced.

I am come to carry out that determination. My troops already occupy many positions in the country that you are to abandon, and thousands and thousands are approaching from every quarter, to render resistance and escape alike hopeless. All those troops, regular and militia, are your friends. Receive them and confide in them as such. Obey them when they tell you that you can remain no longer in this country. Soldiers are as kind-hearted as brave, and the desire of every one of us is to execute our painful duty in mercy. We are commanded by the President to act towards you in that spirit, and much is also the wish of the whole people of America.

Chiefs, head-men and warriors! Will you then, by resistance, compel us to resort to arms? God forbid! Or will you, by flight, seek to hid yourselves in mountains and forests, and thus oblige us to hunt you down? Remember that, in pursuit, it may be impossible to avoid conflicts. The blood of the white man or the blood of the red man may be spilt, and, if spilt, however accidentally, it may be impossible for the discreet and humane among you, or among us, to prevent a general war and carnage. Think of this, my Cherokee brethren! I am an old warrior, and have been present at many a scene of slaughter, but spare me, I beseech you, the horror of witnessing the destruction of the Cherokees.

Do not, I invite you, even wait for the close approach of the troops; but make such preparations for emigration as you can and hasten to this place, to Ross's Landing or to Gunter's Landing, where you all will be received in kindness by officers selected for the purpose. You will find food for all and clothing for the destitute at either of those places, and thence at your ease and in comfort be transported to your new homes, according to the terms of the treaty.

This is the address of a warrior to warriors. May his entreaties be kindly received and may the God of both prosper the Americans and Cherokees and preserve them long in peace and friendship with each other!

Native American Voices, Unknown Cherokee

...news come that Cherokee will have to leave and go to new land...soon big prison pens is built and all Cherokees what won't get up and leave is put in pens...Seven thousand soldier men with cannons and muskets guard the Cherokees...Long time we travel on way to new land. People feel bad...Women cry and make sad wails. Children cry and many men cry, and all look sad like when friends die, but they say nothing and just put heads down and keep on go toward west. Many days pass and people die very much...People sometimes say I look like I never smile...but no man has laugh after he's marched over long trail...most of time I am keep thinking of Old Nation and wonder how big mountain now looks in springtime, and how the boys and young men used to swim in big river...and then there come before picture of march...and then my heart feel heavy and sad. Maybe someday we will understand why Cherokees had to suffer...

Native American Voices, John Ross (Cherokee)

But I am still in the midst of efforts to prevail on the United States Government to turn aside, as far as may now be possible, the ruin they are bringing upon my native Country; yes, Gentlemen, the ruin – and for what? Have we done any wrong? We are not charged with any. We have a Country which others covet. This is the only offense we have every yet been charged with.

...We have been made to drink of the bitter cup of humiliation; treated like dogs; our lives, our liberties, the sport of the Whiteman; our country and the graves of our Fathers torn from us, in cruel succession until...we find ourselves fugitives, vagrants, and strangers in our own country...

Native American Voices – Chinnebey (Creek)

...our...reason for sending this petition is the one which troubles our minds the most... We can not think of our aged people and children taking so long a journey in the heat of summer, without weeping – we feel certain that should we remove in this season of the year, many of those we love, as the white man loves his parents, and children, would fall to the hands of death, and the bones be left far from the bones of their brethren. Sir, will you not pity us! O, pity us, relieve us from our troubles and let us go free in the cool season of the year to the west; and the Great Spirit will reward you for your kindness, to those whom all white men abuse.

Primary Source 11

John Burnett's Story of the Trail of Tears

Written by a private who served during the Cherokee removal in 1890

Children: This is my birthday, December 11, 1890, I am eighty years old today... Often spending weeks at a time in the solitary wilderness with no companions but my rifle, hunting knife,...

On these long hunting trips I met and became acquainted with many of the Cherokee Indians, hunting with them by day and sleeping around their camp fires by night. I learned to speak their language, and they taught me the arts of trailing and building traps and snares...

The removal of Cherokee Indians from their life long homes in the year of 1838 found me a young man in the prime of life and a Private soldier in the American Army...(I) witnessed the execution of the most brutal order in the History of American Warfare. I saw the helpless Cherokees arrested and dragged from their homes, and driven at the bayonet point... I saw them loaded like cattle or sheep into six hundred and forty-five wagons and started toward the west.

One can never forget the sadness and solemnity of that morning... Many of these helpless people did not have blankets and many of them had been driven from home barefooted.

On the morning of November the 17th we encountered a terrific sleet and snow storm with freezing temperatures and from that day until we reached the end of the fateful journey on March the 26th, 1839, the sufferings of the Cherokees were awful. The trail of the exiles was a trail of death. They had to sleep in the wagons and on the ground without fire. And I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die in one night of pneumonia due to ill treatment, cold, and exposure. Among this number was the beautiful Christian wife of Chief John Ross. This noble hearted woman died a martyr to childhood, giving her only blanket for the protection of a sick child. She rode thinly clad through a blinding sleet and snow storm, developed pneumonia and died in the still hours of a bleak winter night, with her head resting on Lieutenant Greggs saddle blanket...

The long painful journey to the west ended March 26th, 1839, with four-thousand silent graves reaching from the foothills of the Smoky Mountains to what is known as Indian territory in the West. And covetousness on the part of the white race was the cause of all that the Cherokees had to suffer....

Chief Junaluska was personally acquainted with President Andrew Jackson...Chief John Ross sent Junaluska as an envoy to plead with President Jackson for protection for his people, but Jackson's manner was cold and indifferent toward the rugged son of the forest who had saved his life... The doom of the Cherokee was sealed.

Washington, D.C., had decreed that they must be driven West and their lands given to the white man,...

However, murder is murder whether committed by the villain skulking in the dark or by uniformed men stepping to the strains of martial music....

Tales and Trails of Betrayal: America's Indian Removal Policies Culminating Activity

Choose one of the following options to complete:

- **Trail of Tears Diary**

Assume the persona of a Cherokee who is forced to travel the Trail of Tears and write a three entry diary regarding your experiences:

- Entry One – Explain who you are and what life is like before you leave; detail how you are feeling regarding the rumors of Indian removal
- Entry Two – Share details during removal (i.e. struggles during the trip, being held in stockades, experiences of yourself and others throughout the Trail of Tears, etc.)
- Entry Three – Details your impressions when you arrive in the western territory assigned to your tribe

Be as detailed as possible. Include the emotions you experience throughout, the encounters you have, the sights you see, etc.

- **Letter to President Jackson**

Assume the persona of an American living in the 1830s who is against Indian removal, or assume the persona of a Cherokee living in Georgia who does not want to leave his/her home. Write a letter to President Andrew Jackson in this character, explaining why the Cherokee Indians should not have to move to Oklahoma. Your letter should be at least five paragraphs long, with an introductory paragraph to capture Jackson's attention, three detail paragraphs that note three different persuasive arguments as to why Indian removal is wrong/should not take place, and a concluding paragraph stating exactly what you want to have happen.

- **Speech Before Congress**

Imagine that you are a member of Congress in 1830. Today is the day that Congress will vote on whether or not to pass the Indian Removal Act. Prepare a persuasive speech that you give to your fellow representatives in which you attempt to convince them to not pass the Act. Your speech should be approximately one page long and 1-2 minutes when spoken.

- **Partner Dialogue**

With a partner, you will write a two-person dialogue. One of you will take on the perspective of **Andrew Jackson** and the other will portray either **Junaluska** or **Tsali**. Based on the opposing perspectives of these men, construct a realistic dialogue that they could have likely shared.

Consider: What might they discuss when face to face? What might they want from one another? What would they ask each other and how would they respond and react to such requests? What might each man say to try and convince the other of his beliefs?

Your dialogue should be approximately one page long and two or more minutes when spoken. Be prepared to perform your dialogue in front of your classmates.