



>> Two Ogala chiefs, American Horse (left) and Red Cloud (right) led the resistance against the government's plans to build a road through Sioux hunting grounds.

Interactive Flipped Video

>> Objectives

Compare the ways Native Americans and white settlers viewed and used the land.

Describe the conflicts between white settlers and Indians.

Analyze the impact of the Indian Wars.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the government's Americanization and reservation policies towards American Indians.

>> Key Terms

reservations
Sand Creek
Massacre
Sitting Bull
Battle of the Little
Big Horn
Chief Joseph
Wounded Knee
assimilated
Dawes General
Allotment Act

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In 1787, the Constitution granted so power for regulating trade with the Native Americans to the federal government. This began the long, strained relationship between the federal government and Native Americans. During the 1830s, the federal government forced Native Americans from the east to resettle west of the Mississippi River and promised them the land there forever. In the 1840s through the 1860s, pressure from white settlers weakened the promise. The conflicts between settlers and Native Americans continued during and the Civil War. The interaction changed both cultures, but irrevocably damaged Native American cultures.

American Indians Under Pressure

Cultures Forced to Adapt

By the end of the Civil War, most Native Americans—about of them—lived in the region west of the Mississippi River re as “The Great American Desert.” Although they were lumped in the minds of most Americans as “Indians,” Native Americans embraced many different belief systems, languages, and way

Cultural Similarities and Differences Geography influence cultural diversity of Native Americans. In the Pacific Northwest, Klamaths, Chinooks, and Shastas benefited from abundant of fish and forest animals. Farther south, smaller bands of gatherers struggled to exist on diets of small game, insects, acorns, and roots. In the arid lands of New Mexico and Arizona, Pueblos irrigated the land to grow corn, beans, and squash. They built adobe homes high in the cliffs to protect themselves from neighbors. The more mobile Navajos lived in homes made of hogan that could be moved easily.

The most numerous and nomadic Native Americans were Plains Indians, including the Sioux, Blackfeet, Crows, Cheyenne, and Comanches. Some of these groups included Indians from the

Appalachians, who had blended into the Plains Indian groups. The Plains Indians were expert horsemen and hunters. The millions of buffalo that roamed the Plains provided a rich source for lodging, clothing, food, and tools.

Indian cultures shared a common thread—they saw themselves as part of nature and respected the natural world. Many white people valued and respected nature, too. However, many also viewed the land as a resource that could be used to produce wealth. These differing views sowed the seeds of conflict.

American Settlers Move West In the early 1800s, the government carried out a policy of moving Native Americans out of the way of white settlers.

President Jackson moved the Cherokees off their land in Georgia and onto the Great Plains. To white settlers, Native Americans were welcome to what they called the Great American Desert as they thought it was uninhabitable. To limit conflict, an 1834 law regulated trade relations with Indians and strictly limited the access of white people to this Indian Territory. New European-American settlement generally paused at the eastern rim of the territory and resumed in the Far West.

By the 1850s, however, federal policy toward Native Americans was again challenged: gold and silver had

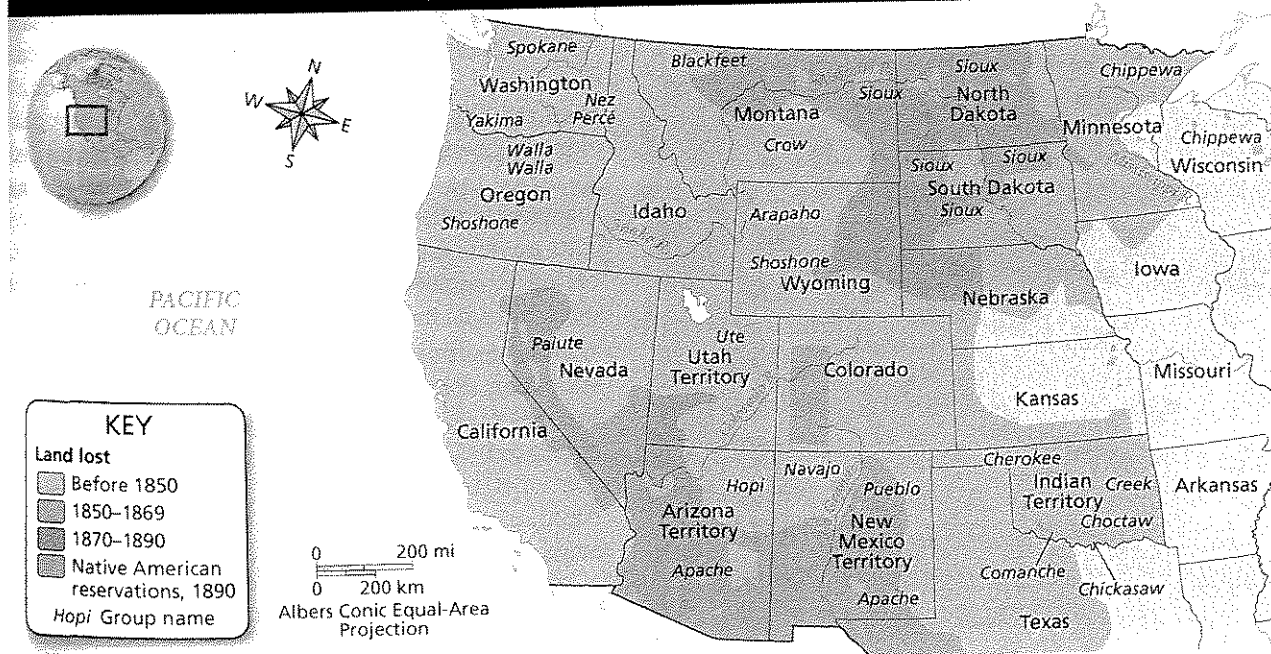
been discovered in Indian Territory as well as settled regions farther west. Americans also wanted a railroad that crossed the continent. In 1851, therefore, the federal government began to restrict Indians to smaller areas. By the late 1860s, many Indian peoples had been placed on **reservations**, specific areas set aside by the government for the Indians' use. This change in their demographic patterns, a direct result of being forced to migrate to reservations, made their previous ways of life difficult if not impossible to sustain. Indians often faced poverty and the loss of their traditional ways of life on reservations.

Two more developments also threatened Native American civilizations: White settlers introduced diseases to which Indians had no immunity, and the vitally important buffalo herds were destroyed. In the 1870s, hunters would kill hundreds of buffaloes in a single day for their hides. They skinned the animals and left the meat to rot. In addition, trainloads of tourists arrived to kill buffaloes purely for sport. They left both the meat and the valuable hides behind.

2 IDENTIFY SUPPORTING DETAILS How were Native American cultures threatened in the 1800s?

answer

Native American Land Loss, 1850–1890



>> The U.S. government relocated many Native American groups following the Civil War. **Analyze Maps** Describe the process of how Native Americans lost their land.

Settlers and Native Americans Collide

The rapid industrial development and economic expansion that followed the Civil War set Native Americans and white settlers on a path to conflict. Advances in communication and transportation that supported industrial growth also reinforced white Americans' faith in manifest destiny. Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, encouraged the poor to move west.

If you strike off into the broad, free West, and make yourself a farm from Uncle Sam's generous domain, you will crowd nobody, starve nobody, and neither you nor your children need evermore beg.

—New York Tribune, February 3, 1867

Greeley, and many others, ignored the fact that Native Americans inhabited half of the area of the United States. Indians often fought to retain or regain whatever they could.



>> The Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians gathered at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. Many women and children died in the massacre.

Conflict Throughout the Plains In 1862, while Civil War raged in the East, a group of Sioux Indians resisted threats to their land rights by attacking European-American settlements in eastern Minnesota. In several attacks, the Sioux killed more than 1,000 settlers, including many women and children. In response, the government waged a full-scale war against the Sioux, who then were pushed west into the Dakotas.

The Sioux rebellion sparked a series of attacks on settlements and stagecoach lines as other Plains Indians also saw their way of life slipping away. In 1864, a battle took its toll, raising the level of distrust on both sides. In the fall of 1864, a band of Colorado militia under commanding officer John Chivington attacked a camp of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians at Fort Lyons at Sand Creek. The fort's commander gave the Cheyenne leader permission to stay there temporarily. Chivington's troops opened fire, killing between 150 to 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho men, women, and children.

The incident became known as the **Sand Creek Massacre**. It spawned another round of warfare as Plains Indians joined forces to repel white settlers.

Once the Civil War ended, regiments of Union troops—both white and African American—were sent to the West to bring peace to the plains. Recruitment posters for volunteer cavalry promised that soldiers could claim any "horses or other plunder" taken from the Indians. The federal government asserted that more troops were needed to maintain order.

Efforts to Promote Peace Fail As the Plains Indians renewed their efforts to hold onto what they had, the federal government announced plans to build a railroad through Sioux hunting grounds to connect gold-mining towns in Montana. Hostilities intensified. In 1866, the legendary warrior Red Cloud and his followers led Captain William Fetterman and his troops into an ambush, killing them all. The human cost of the struggle drew a public outcry and called the government's Indian policy into question.

As reformers and humanitarians promoted education for Indians, European-American settlers sought strict controls over them. The government appointed United States Indian Peace Commissioner. He concluded that lasting peace would come only if Native Americans settled on farms and reservations and adapted to the white way of life.

In an effort to pacify the Sioux, the government offered the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. The government agreed not to build the road through Sioux territory and to abandon three forts. The treaty included the Black Hills in the Sioux reservation, and it also promised

Native American Wars, 1860-1890



Analyze Maps What do the locations of the clashes between Native Americans and the U.S. government suggest about westward expansion?

Interactive Map

cool and other communal buildings. The Sioux and other Indians who signed the treaty agreed to live on reservation under federal supervision with support from the federal government.

This type of promise of government support to Native Americans was part of many agreements between the government and Native American groups who were going onto reservations in various parts of the West.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, established in 1824, handled affairs between Native Americans and the government. The agency appointed an agent who was responsible for distributing land and adequate supplies to anyone willing to farm as well as for maintaining peaceful relations between a reservation and its neighbors.

The government's plans and policies for peace did not always work out, however. Most Native Americans were disappointed with the reservations on which they were living and little trust that government would keep promises.

Unfortunately, in the United States, many Indian agents were unscrupulous and stole funds and resources that were supposed to be distributed to the Indians.

Even the most well-meaning agents often lacked support from the federal government or the military to enforce the terms of the treaties that were beneficial to Native Americans. Not unexpectedly, some Indians refused to live under such conditions.

CHECK UNDERSTANDING Why did tensions exist between settlers and Native Americans?

answer

The Indian Wars Conclude

The conditions facing Native Americans had all the ingredients for tragedy. Indians were confined to isolated areas, which were regularly ravaged by poverty and disease. The government, intentionally or not, failed to live up to many of the promises made to various groups of Native Americans. Frustration,



These Navajo Indians were forced to relocate from the lands they knew and relegated to the Bosque Redondo reservation in present-day Arizona and eastern New Mexico.



The Plains Indians fought the Red River War to protect their tradition of buffalo hunting. Here, braves leave camp to hunt buffalo.

particularly among young warriors, turned to violence. Guns replaced treaties as the government defeated Native Americans who were openly rebelling.

The Long Walk In 1863 the government sent the famous frontiersman Kit Carson to subdue the Navajos, who were fighting to protect their southwestern homeland. After Carson's forces destroyed their homes, crops, and livestock, about two thirds of the 12,000 Navajos surrendered in 1864. Carson then sent them on a 300-mile forced march, known as the Long Walk, to a reservation in what is now eastern New Mexico.

The poor soil on the small reservation was not suited to the kinds of agriculture the Navajos practiced. In addition, they were forced to live alongside their Apache enemies. Finally, after four years of death, disease, and starvation, the government relented. The surviving Navajos were allowed to return to a new reservation in their homeland.

The Great Plains Indian Surrender The Red River War, a series of major and minor incidents, led to the final defeat of the powerful southern Plains Indians including the Kiowas and Comanches. It marked the end of the southern buffalo herds and the opening of the western panhandle of Texas to white settlement. At the heart of the matter was the failure of the United States government to abide by and enforce the terms of the 1867 Treaty of Medicine Lodge. White buffalo hunters were not kept off Indian hunting grounds, food and supplies from the government were not delivered, and white lawlessness was not punished. Hostilities began with an attack by Indians on a group of Texans near the Red River in June 1874. Hostilities ended a year later, after the last Comanche holdouts surrendered to U.S. troops.

Gold Rush and Indian War It was the lure of gold that led to the defeat of the Indians on the northern Plains. The Black Hills Gold Rush of 1875 drew prospectors onto Sioux hunting grounds in the Dakotas and neighboring Montana. Some of this area was supposed to be protected by the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. When the Sioux, led by chiefs Crazy Horse and **Sitting Bull**, assembled to drive them out, the U.S. Army sent its own troops against the Native Americans.

In June 1876, a colonel named George Custer rushed ahead of the other columns of the U.S. army and arrived a day ahead of the main force. Near Little Bighorn River, in present-day Montana, Custer and his force of about 250 men unexpectedly came upon a group of at least 2,000 Indians. Crazy Horse

the charge at what became known as the **Battle of the Little Big Horn**, killing Custer and all of his men.

Cries for revenge motivated army forces to track down the Indians. Sitting Bull and a small group of followers escaped to Canada. Crazy Horse and his followers surrendered, beaten by weather and starvation. By then, their will and the means to wage major resistance had been crushed.

The Fighting Concludes Further West Farther west, in Idaho, another powerful drama played out. In 1877, the federal government decided to move the Nez Percés to a smaller reservation to make room for white settlers. Many of the Nez Percés were Christians and had settled down and become successful horse and cattle breeders. They had a great deal to lose.

Trying to evade U.S. troops who had come to enforce their relocation, the Nez Percés's leader **Chief Joseph** led a group of refugees on a trek of more than 1,300 miles to Canada. Stopped just short of the border, Chief Joseph surrendered with deeply felt words: "I will fight no more forever." Banished with his group to a barren reservation in Oklahoma, he later traveled twice to Washington, D.C., to unsuccessfully appeal for his people's return to their homeland.

Indian Resistance Comes to an End With the loss of many leaders and the destruction of their economy, Native Americans' ability to resist diminished.

In response, many Indians welcomed a religious revival based on the Ghost Dance. Practitioners preached that the ritual would banish white settlers and restore the buffalo to the Plains. As the popularity of the movement spread, government officials became concerned about where it might lead.

In 1890, in an effort to curtail these activities, the government ordered the arrest of Sitting Bull. In the confrontation, he and several others were killed. In response, a group of Sioux left their reservation, hoping to hide out in the Badlands region. Troops then set out after the group of Indians as they fled. The cavalry finally caught up with them at Wounded Knee, in present-day South Dakota. Having been partially disarmed by U.S. troops, the Sioux were badly outgunned in the fight that followed. In the end, more than 100 men, women, and children died. The end of the Ghost Dance War at **Wounded Knee** also marked the end of major Indian resistance to white expansion and large-scale resistance to the Indian policies of the United States government.



>> Sitting Bull was a famed fighter and Hunkpapa war chief. By the late 1860s, his reputation was so great that the Lakota Sioux chose him as the first-ever chief of all seven Lakota tribes.

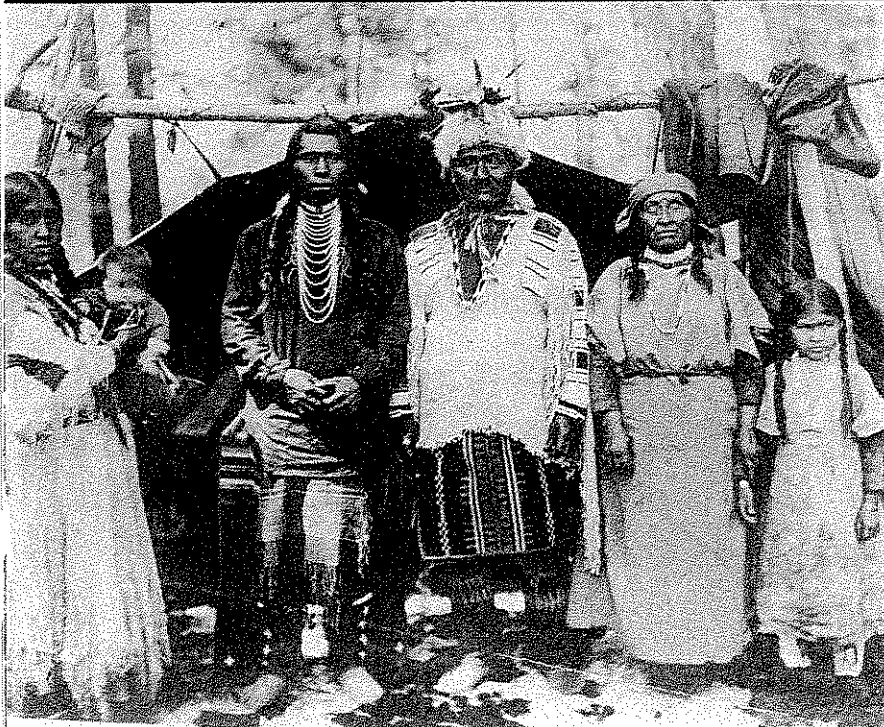


>> A group portrait of a Sioux group by the Cheyenne River. Nearly all these men were killed in the battle at Wounded Knee.

2 LIST What conflicts ended major Indian resistance?

“There is not among these three hundred bands of Indians one which has not suffered cruelly at the hands either of the Government or of white settlers. The poorer, the more insignificant, the more helpless the band, the more certain the cruelty and outrage to which they have been subjected It makes little difference where one opens the record of the history of the Indians; every page and every year has its dark stain

—Helen Hunt Jackson, 1881



A Native American family poses unhappily at the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon, visual evidence of the discontent created by the policy of relocating Indians to reservations.

The Government Encourages Assimilation

The reservation policy was a failure. Making Indians live in confined areas as wards of the government was costly in human and economic terms. Policy makers hoped that as the buffalo became extinct, Indians would become farmers and be **assimilated** into national life by adopting the culture and civilization of whites.

Critics Disagree with Indian Policies

A few outspoken critics defended the Indians' way of life. In *A Century of Dishonor*, Helen Hunt Jackson decried the government's treatment of Native Americans. Susette La Flesche, the granddaughter of a French trader and an Omaha Indian woman, also used her writing and lecturing talents to fight for recognition of the Indians and Indian rights in the courts. Born on the Omaha reservation in Nebraska, she studied in the East and returned to the reservation to teach.

The Americanization Movement

In 1871, Congress had passed a law stating that "no Indian nation or tribe within the United States would be recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty." Indians were now to be dealt with as individuals. One reason for this change was to weaken Native Americans' tribal cultures.


Reformers believed that Indians had to give up tribal loyalties and behaviors before they could adopt mainstream American values and assimilate into American society. The Americanization movement aimed at Native Americans was also aimed at new immigrants from other countries.

One way reformers thought assimilation and Americanization could be accomplished was with the passage of the **Dawes General Allotment Act** (sometimes known as the Dawes Severalty Act) by Congress in 1887, which encouraged Indians to become private

property owners and farmers. The Dawes Act ended the reservations' tribal landholding system. Each Indian family was allotted, or assigned, 160-acres of the tribe's reservation to own as a farmstead. The size of these allotments was based on the eastern experience of how much land was needed to support a family. In the arid West, however, the allotment was often not big enough.

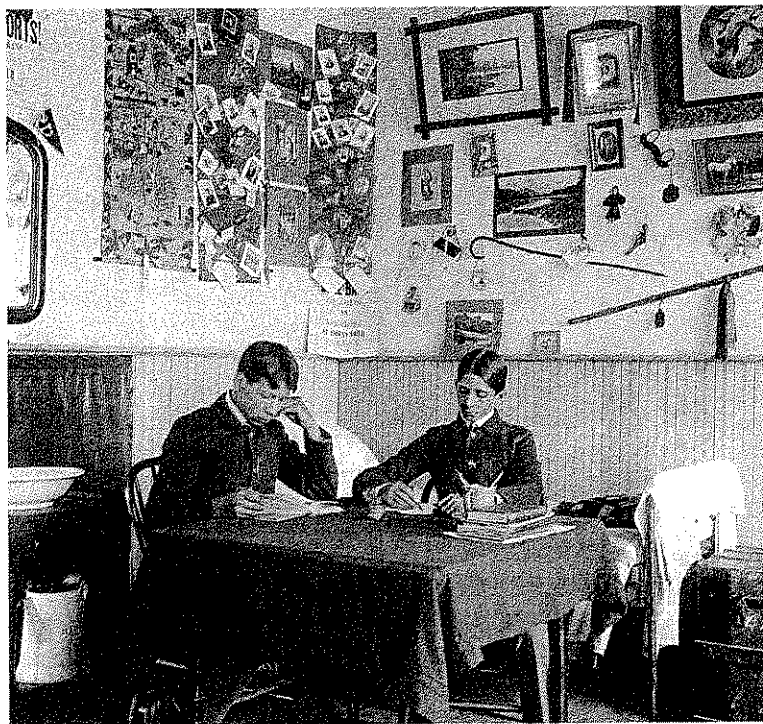
To protect Indian landowners from unscrupulous land speculators, the Dawes Act specified that the land could not be sold or transferred from its original family for 25 years. Congress hoped that by the end of that time, younger Indians would embrace the values of farming and individual land ownership.

Traditional tribal feasts, dances, and even funeral practices were outlawed, and Native American religions were discouraged. To further speed assimilation, missionaries and other reformers established boarding schools, to which Indian parents were pressured to send their children. There Indian children were to learn and live by the rules, dress, customs, and culture of white America. Ultimately, the struggle to retain their homelands, freedom, and culture proved tragic. Although many Indian peoples faced these challenges with courage and determination, tens of thousands died in war or on poverty-stricken reservations. Only a small number were left to carry on their legacy.

2 IDENTIFY MAIN IDEAS What was the main idea of the Americanization movement, and how did the Dawes Act promote that idea? 

ASSESSMENT

1. **Summarize** the reasons Native American culture was irrevocably changed by the end of the 1800s.
2. **Compare and Contrast** how white settlers and Native Americans viewed nature.



>> As their old way of life was taken from them, many Native Americans were forced to assimilate into contemporary American life.



Interactive Timeline

3. **Support a Point of View with Evidence**
Determine why Chief Piapot asserted that the European-led government "keep[s] only half" of the promises made to Native Americans.
4. **Compare and Contrast** the relocations and outcomes for the Navajo and Nez Percés.
5. **Hypothesize** What lasting effects did the removal to reservations have on the various Native American tribes, including the efforts of the U.S. government to abolish their practices and beliefs?