

networks

There's More Online!

BIOGRAPHY Chief Joseph

BIOGRAPHY Helen Hunt Jackson

BIOGRAPHY Sitting Bull

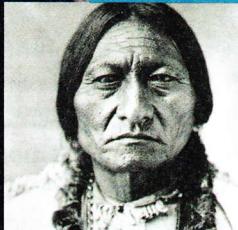
CHART/GRAF Major Native American Treaties

GRAPHIC NOVEL The Importance of the Buffalo

INFOGRAPHIC Uses of the Buffalo

VIDEO Native Americans

INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ



LESSON 3

Native Americans

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • *Why would people take on the challenges of life in the West?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

As miners, ranchers, and farmers entered Native American lands on the Great Plains, clashes grew more common. Conflicts continued as the government tried to force Native Americans onto reservations and pressured them to assimilate into the culture of the United States.

Struggles of the Plains Indians

GUIDING QUESTION How did westward migration change the Plains Indians' way of life?

For centuries the Great Plains were home to many groups of Native Americans. Some lived in farming and hunting communities, but many were **nomads** who roamed the land following their main source of food—the buffalo. The Plains Indian nations were divided into bands, ranging from a few dozen to several hundred people, who lived in extended family groups and respected nature.

The settlers who migrated to the Plains deprived these Native Americans of their hunting grounds, broke treaties that guaranteed them land, and often forced them to **relocate**. Native Americans resisted by attacking settlers' property and occasionally going to war with them.

The Dakota Sioux Uprising

In 1862 the Dakota people (part of the Sioux) had a conflict with the settlers in Minnesota. The Sioux had agreed to live on a reservation in exchange for **annuities** that frequently never reached them. At the time, many Dakota lived in poverty and faced starvation. When local traders refused to provide food on credit, the Dakota protested by launching a rebellion that killed hundreds of settlers.

A military tribunal sentenced more than 300 Dakota to death after the uprising. After reviewing the evidence, however, President Lincoln reduced the number condemned to death to 38. Others fled the reservation when federal troops arrived and became exiles in a region that bore their name—the Dakota Territory.

Reading HELPDESK



Academic Vocabulary

- relocate
- ensure
- approximately

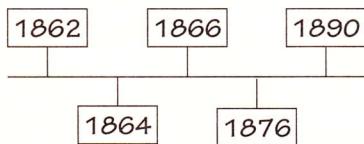
Content Vocabulary

- nomad
- assimilate
- annuity
- allotment

TAKING NOTES:

Key Ideas and Details

Sequencing As you read about Native Americans during the late 1800s, complete a timeline like the one below to record the clashes between Native Americans and the U.S. government and the results of each.





Native Americans are attacked by U.S. troops at Sand Creek.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Making Inferences Why do you think obtaining peace between Native Americans and settlers was so difficult?

nomad a person who continually moves from place to place, usually in search of food

relocate to move to a new place

annuity money paid by contract at regular intervals

ensure to guarantee or make certain

Red Cloud's War

The Dakota Territory was home to another group of Sioux, the Lakota, nomads who had won control of their hunting grounds from other Native Americans. Their chiefs were Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull. In December 1866, the U.S. Army was building forts along the Bozeman Trail, the path to the Montana gold mines. Crazy Horse tricked the fort's commander into sending Captain William Fetterman and about 80 soldiers out to pursue what they thought was a small raiding party.

Hundreds of waiting warriors wiped out the unit, an event that became known as Fetterman's Massacre, marking the start of "Red Cloud's War." The Sioux continued to resist any military presence in the region, and in 1868 the army abandoned its posts along the trail.

Sand Creek Massacre

In Colorado, tensions began to rise in the 1860s between miners entering the territory in search of silver and gold and the Cheyenne and Arapaho who already lived there. As the number of settlers increased, bands of Native Americans began raiding wagon trains and ranches. By the summer of 1864, dozens of homes had been burned and an estimated 200 settlers killed. The governor persuaded the Native Americans to surrender at Fort Lyon, where he promised food and protection. Those who failed to report would be subject to attack.

Although a number of Native Americans surrendered, many others did not. In November 1864, Chief Black Kettle brought several hundred Cheyenne to the fort to negotiate a peace deal. Fort Lyon's commander, Major Scott Anthony, allowed the chief to make camp at nearby Sand Creek while he awaited orders. Shortly afterward, Colonel John Chivington of the Colorado Volunteers attacked Black Kettle's camp, even though the Cheyenne were there to negotiate.

What actually happened at Sand Creek is unclear. Some witnesses stated that Black Kettle had been flying both an American flag and a white flag of truce, which Chivington ignored. Others reported that the American troops fired on the unsuspecting Native Americans and then brutally murdered hundreds of women and children. Still others described a savage battle in which both sides fought ferociously for two days. Few soldiers died, but the number of Native Americans reported killed varied from 69 to 600. The truth of what happened at Sand Creek is still debated.

A Doomed Plan for Peace

As conflicts escalated with Native Americans, Congress took action. In 1867 Congress formed an Indian Peace Commission, which proposed creating two large reservations on the Plains, one for the Sioux and another for Native Americans of the southern Plains. Federal agents would run the reservations, and the army would deal with any groups that refused to report or remain there.

The Indian Peace Commission's plan was doomed to failure. Although negotiators pressured Native American leaders into signing treaties, they could not **ensure** that those leaders or their followers would abide by them. Nor could anyone prevent settlers from violating their terms. The Native Americans who did move to reservations faced many of the same conditions that drove the Dakota Sioux to violence—poverty, despair, and the corrupt practices of American traders.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Explaining How did the arrival of new settlers affect the Plains Indians?

The Last Native American Wars

GUIDING QUESTION Were Native Americans justified in leaving the reservations and refusing further relocation by the government?

By the 1870s, many Native Americans on the southern Plains had left the reservations in disgust. They preferred hunting buffalo on the open plains. The buffalo were rapidly disappearing, however. Professional buffalo hunters had invaded the area, seeking hides for markets in the East. Other hunters killed for sport, leaving carcasses to rot. When herds of buffalo blocked rail traffic, the railroad companies killed them and fed the meat to workers. The army, determined to force Native Americans onto reservations, encouraged buffalo killing. By 1889, very few buffalo remained.

Battle of the Little Bighorn

In 1876 prospectors overran the Lakota Sioux reservation in the Dakota Territory to mine gold in the Black Hills. The Lakota saw no reason to abide by a treaty that settlers were violating, so many left the reservation to hunt near the Bighorn Mountains in southeastern Montana. The government responded by sending an expedition accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer and the Seventh Cavalry. Custer underestimated the fighting capabilities of the Lakota and the Cheyenne. On June 25, 1876, ignoring orders, and acting on his own initiative, he launched a three-pronged attack in broad daylight on one of the largest groups of Native American warriors ever assembled on the Great Plains.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Native Americans fought hard to maintain their land and way of life, but over time, they agreed to move to reservations in different areas of the country to save their people.

- 1 PLACES AND REGIONS** In what region of the United States did a majority of battles occur between the settlers and the Native Americans during this time period?

- 2 HUMAN SYSTEMS** From what state to what state did the Nez Perce travel in 1877? Through what other states did they pass?



BIOGRAPHY



George Custer (1839–1876)

George Custer graduated at the bottom of his West Point class, but through heroism during the Civil War, he became a general at age 23. The Cheyenne called him "Yellow Hair" because he wore his curly blond hair to his shoulders. President Grant removed Custer from his post for testifying about corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but he was soon reinstated—a decision that cost him his life and those of his troops.

Critical Thinking

Drawing Conclusions Why do you think Custer was removed from his command for testifying against the Bureau of Indian Affairs?

The Native American forces first repulsed a cavalry charge from the south. Then they turned on Custer and his more than 200 soldiers, killing them all. One Lakota recalled the scene later: "[T]he soldiers were piled one on top of another, dead, and here and there an Indian among the soldiers."

Newspaper accounts portraying Custer as a victim of a massacre produced a public outcry in the East, and the army stepped up its campaign against Native Americans on the Plains. Sitting Bull fled with his followers to Canada, but the other Lakota were forced to return to the reservation and give up the Black Hills.

Flight of the Nez Perce

Farther west, the Nez Perce people, led by Chief Joseph, refused to be moved to a smaller reservation in Idaho in 1877. When the army came to relocate them, they fled their homes and embarked on a journey of more than 1,300 miles. Finally, in October 1877, Chief Joseph acknowledged that the struggle was over:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Our chiefs are killed. . . . The little children are freezing to death. My people . . . have no blankets, no food. . . . Hear me, my chiefs; I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.”

—from his speech of surrender to the U.S. Army, 1877

Chief Joseph and his followers were then exiled to Oklahoma.

Tragedy at Wounded Knee

Native American resistance came to a final, tragic end on the Lakota Sioux reservation in 1890. Defying government orders, the Lakota continued to perform the Ghost Dance, a ritual that celebrated a hoped-for day of reckoning when settlers would disappear, the buffalo would return, and Native Americans would be reunited with their dead ancestors.

Federal authorities had banned the ceremony, fearing it would lead to violence. They blamed the latest defiance on Sitting Bull, who had returned from Canada, and sent police to arrest the chief. Sitting Bull's supporters tried to stop the arrest. In the exchange of gunfire that followed, Sitting Bull was killed.

POLITICAL CARTOONS

This cartoon from 1878 shows Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz investigating the Indian "bureau."

1 Analyzing According to the cartoon, why was the Bureau of Indian Affairs unable to help Native Americans?

2 Making Inferences Why do you think Schurz did not want the War Department to regain control of Indian affairs?

CARL SCHURZ INVESTIGATING THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS



Due to a cumbersome system of handling the administration of Indian laws, the agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) had many opportunities for personal enrichment and an invitation for large-scale corruption. Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz attempted to cleanse the BIA of corruption and prevent the War Department from regaining management of Indian affairs.

A group of Ghost Dancers then fled the reservation, and the army went after them. On December 29, 1890, a deadly battle ensued at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota, taking the lives of 25 U.S. soldiers and **approximately** 200 Lakota men, women, and children.

approximately an estimate of a figure that is close to the actual figure

The Dawes Act

Some Americans had long opposed the mistreatment of Native Americans. In her 1881 book *A Century of Dishonor*, Helen Hunt Jackson detailed the years of broken promises and injustices. Her descriptions of events such as the Sand Creek Massacre sparked new debate on the issue. Some Americans believed the solution was to encourage Native Americans to **assimilate** into American society as landowners and citizens.

In 1887 Congress passed the Dawes Act, which altered the reservation system by dividing reservation land into **allotments** for farming or ranching. Under the act, 160 acres were allotted to each head of household, 80 acres to each single adult, and 40 acres to each child. Any land remaining after allotments would be sold to American settlers, with the proceeds going into a trust for Native Americans. Citizenship would be granted to Native Americans who stayed on their allotments for 25 years.

The Dawes Act failed to achieve its goals. Some Native Americans succeeded as farmers or ranchers, but many had little training or enthusiasm for either pursuit. Like homesteaders, they often found their allotments too small to be profitable, so they leased them. In addition, some Native American groups had grown attached to their reservations and hated to see them transformed into homesteads to be shared with settlers. Few stayed long enough to qualify for citizenship.

In the end, the assimilation policy proved a dismal failure. No legislation could provide a satisfactory solution to the Native American issue, because there was no entirely satisfactory solution to be had. Native Americans on the Plains were doomed because they were dependent on buffalo for food, clothing, fuel, and shelter. When the herds were wiped out, they had no way to sustain their way of life. Few adopted the lifestyles of American settlers in place of their traditional cultures.

In 1924 Congress passed the Citizenship Act, granting all Native Americans citizenship. In 1934 the Indian Reorganization Act reversed the Dawes Act's policy of assimilation. It restored some reservation lands, gave Native Americans control over those lands, and permitted them to elect their own governments.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Cause and Effect What effect did Helen Hunt Jackson's book *A Century of Dishonor* have?

LESSON 3 REVIEW



Reviewing Vocabulary

- 1. Making Connections** What is an annuity? What was the connection between annuities and the Dakota Sioux Uprising of 1862?

Using Your Notes

- 2. Making Generalizations** Review the notes that you completed throughout the lesson to write a generalization about the result of the battles between Native Americans and the United States government.

Answering the Guiding Questions

- 3. Summarizing** How did westward migration change the Plains Indians' way of life?
- 4. Defending** Were Native Americans justified in leaving the reservations and refusing further relocation by the government?

Writing About History

- 5. NARRATIVE** Assume the role of a Plains Indian who has been granted an allotment under the Dawes Act. Write a journal entry describing how you feel and how the change has affected your life.