

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How should societies settle disputes?

THE STORY BEGINS...

Chief Joseph led the Nez Perce people, who resisted government plans to force them off their land. ▶

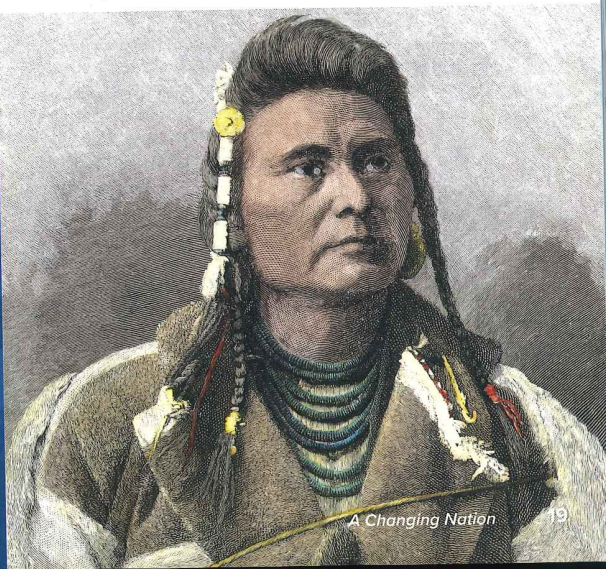
LESSON 3

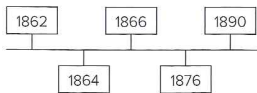
Native Americans

Chief Joseph's heart was heavy. His people had been forced from their homes. Some of the younger Nez Perce had become enraged, reacting to the increasing presence of the white settlers who were taking over lands the Nez Perce depended on to support themselves. These younger Nez Perce had retaliated and killed a group of settlers and now the tribe was fleeing the powerful United States army. One cool autumn day, the Nez Perce found themselves cornered. Chief Joseph decided that the fighting must come to an end. He went to the American general with clear words of surrender:

“I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed . . . The old men are all dead . . . It is cold, and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people—some of them—have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and to see how many of them I can find; maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs, my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.”

—from Chief Joseph's speech of surrender to the U.S. Army, 1877





ANALYZING KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

SEQUENCING As you read about Native Americans during the late 1800s, complete a time line like the one here to record the events that impacted Native Americans.

ANALYZING KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

- SUMMARIZING** What is the main idea of this section? Write a short summary of the details.
- ANALYZING EVENTS** What events lead to increasing tensions between Native Americans and settlers?

LIFE ON THE PLAINS

GUIDING QUESTION *How did federal policy towards Native Americans lead to conflict?*

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 followed the migration of their main source of food—the bison. The bison were mistakenly called buffalo by later settlers.

Despite their differences, the groups of Plains Indians were similar to one another in many ways. Each Plains group lived in extended family networks and had adapted to the various and often harsh environments of the Great Plains. The Plains Indian nations were divided into bands, ranging from a few dozen to several hundred people, who lived in extended family groups. A governing council headed each band, but most members participated in making decisions.

As populations grew in the east, eastern Native American groups were forced west. President Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced the Cherokee from their homes in parts of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and North Carolina to a reservation in what would later become Oklahoma. The forced march and the death and suffering it caused became known as the Trail of Tears.

TREATIES

Early settlers heading to California and Oregon feared they would be attacked by Native Americans, but such encounters were rare at the time. In fact, Native Americans often gave these emigrants gifts of food and helpful information about the land they had to travel through to reach their western destination.

However, as the volume of American settlers moving through their territories increased, Native Americans on the Great Plains grew anxious about how this influx would affect their ways of life. The Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and other Plains Indian groups relied on bison for food, shelter, clothing, tools, and other daily necessities. They feared that the increasing flow of American settlers would disrupt the bison herds.

In 1851, the federal government signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie with eight Native American groups, including the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. Native Americans from these groups agreed to allow settlers peaceful passage through their territory. In exchange, the U.S. government would recognize the traditional territorial claims of the eight groups. Soon after this treaty was signed, the growth of immigration through the Great Plains greatly increased,

driven especially by the growing news of the California Gold Rush. This led to treaty violations by the United States and its settlers. Tensions between settlers and Native Americans grew. The American government also did not protect the bison as it had promised in the treaty, further endangering the livelihood of Plains Indians.

Later agreements, such as the collection of treaties known as the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 and the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, began to relocate more and more Native American groups to specifically defined reservation lands. The federal government often promised to supply Native Americans with goods, equipment, weapons, clothing, and other items in exchange for the land Native Americans gave up, but often did not follow through with these promises. As more settlers, miners, and ranchers flooded the area and more treaties were broken, tensions rose even higher.

✓ CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

- IDENTIFYING CAUSES** How did federal policy towards Native Americans lead to conflict?
- UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT** How did growing westward migration change the Plains Indians' way of life? What might have changed if there had been less westward migration?
- PREDICTING** Given what you have learned so far, what do you think will be the result of the growing tensions between Native Americans and settlers?

CONFLICTS

GUIDING QUESTION *What were the results of conflicts between Native Americans and settlers?*

The growing tensions between Native Americans and settlers eventually led to conflicts. In 1862, settlers in Minnesota clashed with the Dakota people (part of the Sioux). The roots of this conflict lay in treaties that the Dakota had negotiated with the federal government. The Dakota had agreed to give up large tracts of land and move to reservations in return for the promise that the government would provide **annuities** and goods. In the end, they rarely received either. Many Dakota lived in poverty and faced starvation.

Events came to a head when Congress delayed paying annuities in 1862. When local traders refused to provide food on credit to starving Dakota, the Dakota launched 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. When federal troops arrived, others fled the reservation and became exiles from land that bore their name—the Dakota Territory.

RED CLOUD'S WAR

As a result of the Dakota uprising, the army sent patrols into the Northern Great Plains to prevent further trouble among the Sioux groups there. This action did more to stir up hostilities than prevent them, for it brought troops into contact with another branch of the Sioux—the Lakota. The Lakota were nomads who had won control of their hunting grounds from other Native

UNDERSTANDING CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

- ANALYZING TEXT STRUCTURE** How is this section structured, and how does the structure affect your understanding of the content?
- ANALYZING POINT OF VIEW** How do the images in this section help supplement the text in this section?

DETERMINING MEANING

The word **annuity** has the same root as the word *annual*. How does this shared root help you to understand the word *annuity*? What context clues in the paragraph can help you define this word?

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

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



Americans. They had also offered refuge to Native Americans escaping similar clashes in Minnesota. The Lakota were led by Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull.

In December 1866, the U.S. Army built forts along the Bozeman Trail, the path to the Montana gold mines. Crazy Horse resisted the intrusions into Native American territory. He tricked the fort's commander into ordering Captain William Fetterman and about 80 soldiers in pursuit of what they thought was a small raiding party. Hundreds of waiting warriors wiped out the army unit, an event that became known as Fetterman's Massacre. This also marked the start of "Red Cloud's War." The Lakota 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, miners entering the territory in search of silver and gold caused conflict with the Cheyenne and Arapaho who already lived there. As the number of settlers increased in the 1860s, bands of Native Americans began raiding wagon trains and ranches. By the summer of 1864, dozens of homes had been burned, an estimated 200 settlers killed, and travel and trade to the region had come to a standstill. 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.

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 in peace. Initially, the events of Sand Creek were hailed as a victory against a hostile force by Chivington, but later reports revealed the violence of Chivington's attack. Witnesses reported that the Cheyenne were flying a white

flag to signal their intention to negotiate. Those witnesses stated that Chivington ignored the flag and began an attack on the unsuspecting Native Americans.

Fourteen U.S. soldiers died during the struggle, and estimates of the number of Native American warriors, women, and children killed vary from 69 to 600. Many U.S. citizens were horrified and a congressional investigation of the massacre was conducted. The investigation ended without any charges against Chivington for his actions.

A DOOMED PLAN FOR PEACE

As the number of conflicts between settlers and Native Americans grew, 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 the terms of agreement. The Native Americans who did move to reservations faced many of the same conditions that started Red Cloud's War—poverty, despair, and the corrupt practices of American traders.

By the 1870s, many Native Americans had left the reservations in disgust. They preferred hunting bison on the open plains. The bison were rapidly disappearing, however, as professional bison hunters sought hides for markets in the East and other hunters killed for sport. Because bison herds often

MPI/Archive Photos/Getty Images

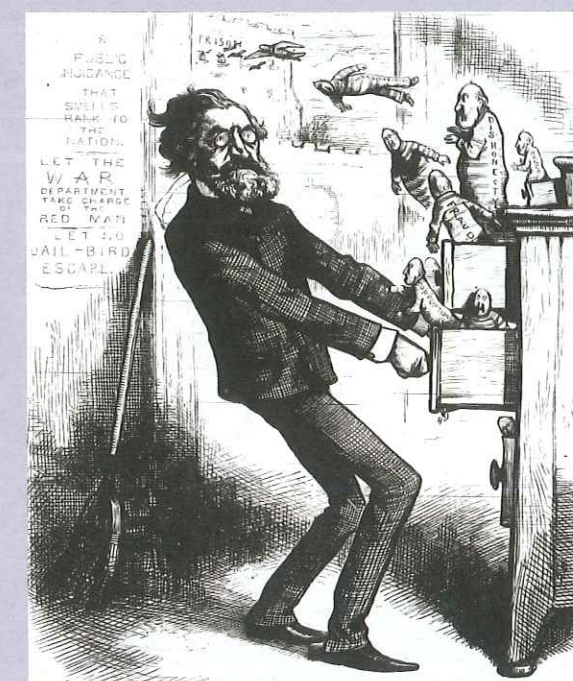
POLITICAL CARTOON

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.

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

INTERPRETING What does the cartoon suggest about the Bureau of Indian Affairs?



North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy

GEOGRAPHIC REASONING

Native Americans fought hard to maintain their land and way of life, but following a series of defeats by the U.S. Army, they agreed to move to reservations in different areas of the country to save their people.

- 1. EXPLORING 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. PATTERNS AND MOVEMENT** From what state to what state did the Nez Perce travel in 1877? Through what other states did they pass?

blocked rail traffic, they were killed and the meat was fed to railroad construction workers. The army, determined to force Native Americans onto reservations, encouraged bison killing. By 1889, very few bison 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 Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer and the Seventh Cavalry to bring the Lakota back to the reservation. Custer underestimated the fighting capabilities of the Lakota and the Cheyenne.

On June 25, 1876, Custer launched an attack on one of the largest groups of Native American warriors ever assembled on the Great Plains. The Native American forces rapidly defeated Custer and over 200 soldiers, killing them all.

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

FLIGHT OF THE NEZ PERCE

The Nez Perce, led by Chief Joseph, refused to be moved to a smaller Idaho reservation in 1877. When U.S. soldiers came to relocate them, the Nez Perce fled, embarking on a journey of more than 1,300 miles. In October 1877, Chief Joseph acknowledged that the struggle was over. He and his followers were exiled to Oklahoma.

TRAGEDY AT WOUNDED KNEE

This period of Native American resistance came to a final, tragic end on Pine Ridge 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 bison 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 federal agents sent police to arrest him. Sitting Bull's supporters tried to stop the arrest, and in the exchange of gunfire that followed, Sitting Bull was killed and a group of Ghost Dancers fled the reservation.

On December 29, 1890, a 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. American Horse, a Lakota, described the battle:

“The women as they were fleeing with their babes on their backs were killed together, shot right through, and the women who were very heavy with child were also killed. All the Indians fled in these three directions, and after most all of them had been killed a cry was made that all those who were not killed or wounded should come forth and they would be safe. Little boys who were not wounded came out of their places of refuge, and as soon as they came in sight a number of soldiers surrounded them. . . .”

—from the Sixtieth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

- 1. CITING TEXT EVIDENCE** What words in the text support the assertion that the incident at Wounded Knee was particularly brutal?
- 2. ANALYZING POINT OF VIEW** What is American Horse's purpose in describing the women who were killed?

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

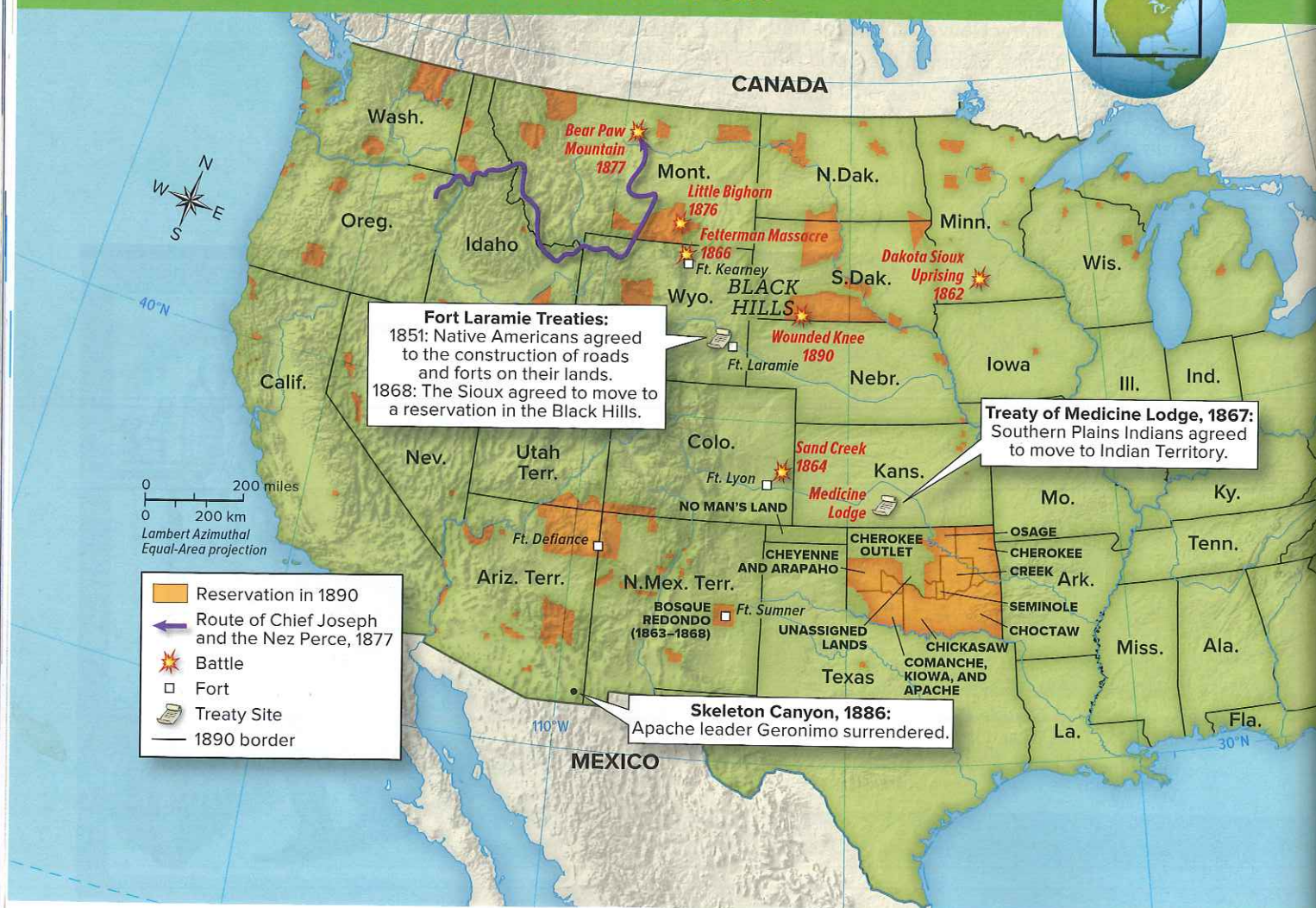
- 1. IDENTIFYING CONNECTIONS** What were the results of conflicts between Native Americans and settlers?
- 2. IDENTIFYING CAUSES** What events led to the Dakota Sioux uprising?
- 3. SUMMARIZING** What proposals did the Indian Peace Commission put forth to deal with the escalating conflicts with Native Americans?

AMERICANIZATION AND THE DAWES ACT

GUIDING QUESTION What were the impacts of policies like Americanization and the Dawes Act?

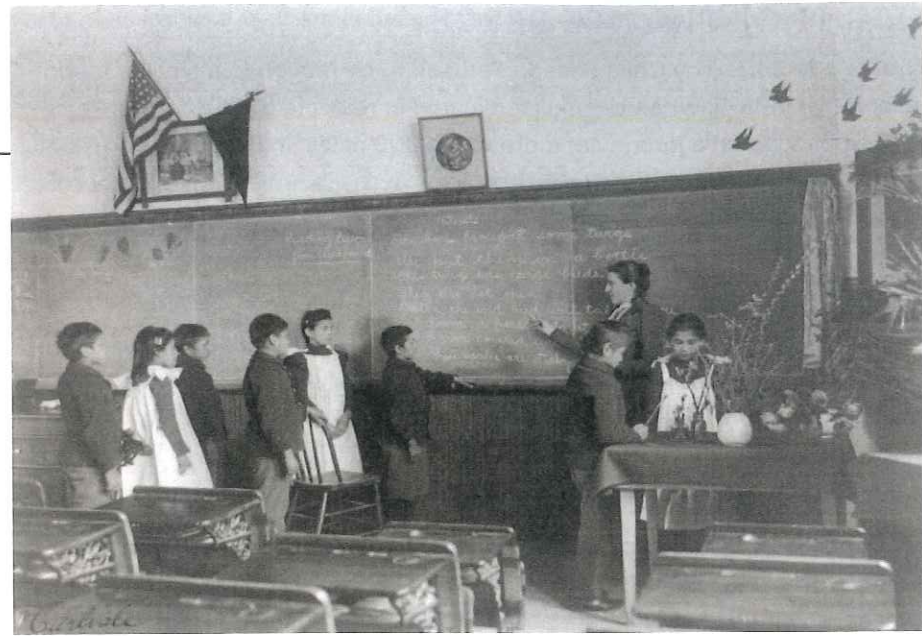
Some Americans had long opposed the mistreatment of Native Americans. In her 1881 book, *A Century of Dishonor*, Helen Hunt Jackson detailed the years of broken promises and injustices. Her descriptions of events such as the Sand Creek Massacre sparked new debates—even in Congress.

NATIVE AMERICAN BATTLES AND RESERVATIONS 1860–1890



TEXT: American Horse. 1891. "Account Given by Indians of the Fight at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota, December 29, 1890," in Sixtieth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior, Vol. 1, 1890-1891. Washington: Government Printing Office.

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania was one of the many boarding schools set up to “Americanize” Native American children.



AMERICANIZATION

Some reformers believed the solution was **Americanization**. They thought that Native Americans should be encouraged to abandon their traditional tribal culture and **assimilate** into American society by learning English, and adopting American culture and values. The goal of these reformers was for Native Americans to become American citizens at the expense of their own cultural heritage.

Beginning in the 1880s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs sponsored the creation of Native American boarding schools, such as the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, that were separate from the reservations. Often, these schools were far from the children's homes. By 1902, some 25 schools had been set up. Officials then pressured or forced parents to send children to these schools. There students were required to take an English name to replace their original one, dress in American-style clothes, cut their hair to match American styles, attend church, learn vocational skills, and speak English. Students could be beaten for using their own languages.

The schools were controversial. They were often underfunded and poorly maintained, and discipline was strict. Some students found the schools repressive, and many cases of abuse were reported.

DAWES ACT

A second Americanization strategy was to encourage Native Americans to abandon the reservation system and become independent landowners. 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.

While some Native Americans succeeded as farmers or ranchers, many had little training or enthusiasm for either pursuit. They often found their

allotments too small to be profitable, so they leased the land to other farmers. Often the land that had been originally set aside for reservations was undesirable as farm land, further complicating the any efforts by Native Americans to become self-sufficient farmers. In addition, some Native American groups had grown attached to their reservations and did not want the shared land to be divided into individual homesteads. As a result of these problems, few Native Americans stayed on their allotments long enough to qualify for citizenship.

Native American culture on the Plains suffered because it had been centered on bison for food, clothing, fuel, and shelter. When the herds were wiped out, there was no way to sustain this traditional way of life. The assimilation policy further harmed these cultures.

Although the Dawes Act failed, American reformers continued to advocate for assimilation. In the early 1900s, reform groups, such as the Friends of the Indians and the Indian Rights Association, pushed for citizenship for all Native Americans, believing it would encourage greater assimilation. Finally, 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.

✓ CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** What were the impacts of policies like Americanization and the Dawes Act?
2. **EXPLAINING CAUSE AND EFFECT** How did the Dawes Act attempt to promote Americanization?
3. **IDENTIFYING EFFECTS** What effect did Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* have?

LESSON 3 REVIEW

Time and Place

1. **UNDERSTANDING CHANGE** How did the conflict between Native Americans and the United States change toward the end of the nineteenth century?

Building History-Social Science Analysis Skills

2. **IDENTIFYING CONNECTIONS** How was the Dakota Sioux uprising similar to the conflict that preceded the Battle of the Little Bighorn?
3. **IDENTIFYING EFFECTS** What change occurred for the Nez Perce people following their surrender in 1877?
4. **DETERMINING CONTEXT** How did the extreme reduction of the bison population affect Plains groups?

Writing About History

5. **NARRATIVE WRITING** Imagine that you are a journalist interviewing a Native American family who has been granted an allotment under the Dawes Act. Write an article describing how the Act has affected their lives.

Collaborating

6. **RESEARCHING FOR INQUIRY** In small groups, research what sort of land the Dawes Act divided up into allotments. What was the quality of the land? How did the characteristics of the land affect the Native Americans trying to farm the allotments?

DETERMINING MEANING

Read the paragraph that contains the word **allotments**. Write a definition of the word *allotment*. Use a dictionary or online reference to check your definition.