

The US Government and Indigenous Peoples before the Trail of Tears, 1770–1839



“Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh” by W. Ridgway (engraver) and John Reuben Chapin (artist), New York, 1878. (New York Public Library Digital Collections)

The US Government and Indigenous Peoples before the Trail of Tears, 1770–1839

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

Erik Bloch has taught English in Connecticut for over twenty years and has served as a master teacher with the Gilder Lehrman Institute for more than ten years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: Five 45-minute class periods

UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. These skills will enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate documents and other resources of historical significance.

The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history. While the lessons and material cover a variety of primary and secondary sources, teachers should encourage students to learn more about the relations between Indigenous peoples, White settlers, and government representatives.

Students will read and view several primary sources—engravings, a report, a speech, and a message to Congress—and two secondary sources—a scholarly essay and panels from a National Park Service exhibition, investigating a sample of communications and miscommunications that preceded the Trail of Tears. The teacher will assess students’ understanding through an essay or presentation.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary and secondary sources using close-reading strategies
- Interpret visual and multimedia materials
- Compare and contrast the claims made in different types of evidence
- Write an essay or give a presentation that uses primary and secondary sources as evidence
- Identify and distinguish between Indigenous peoples (e.g., Chehaws, Shawnees, and Cherokees)
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What strategies did Indigenous peoples and the US government use to communicate with each other?
- How did the US government explain its expansion into land held by Indigenous peoples?
- How did Indigenous peoples respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?

- What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples?
- What was the impact of US expansion on Indigenous peoples?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1.B Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Historical Background: "Native American History: An Overview" by Joseph Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki), PhD
- Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions
- Activity Sheet 2: Visual Analysis of "Major General Rogers" by an unknown artist, ca. 1770–1785, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01450.201.02
- Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh's Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society, images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc050/id/560
- Optional: A projector or other means to display activity sheets
- Activity Sheet 4: Visual Analysis of "Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh" by John Reuben Chapin (artist) and William Ridgway (engraver) in Robert Tomes, *The Battles of America by Sea & Land*, vol. 2: *War of 1812 and Mexican Campaigns* (New York, 1878), p. 18, New York Public Library Digital Collections, [/digitalcollections.nypl.org](https://digitalcollections.nypl.org)
- Activity Sheet 5: Text Analysis of Excerpts from a Report from Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, April 30, 1818, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00782.11.03
- Activity Sheet 6: Text Analysis of President Jackson's Message to Congress "On Indian Removal," December 6, 1830, *100 Milestone Documents*, Our Documents, ourdocuments.gov
- Source 2: National Park Service (NPS) panels from the Trail of Tears exhibition (The Exhibits web page provides links to several different exhibit panels representing the Trail of Tears history at different NPS sites. Some of the links have two different panels. You may access these pdf's on line through the links provided. We have also provided a downloadable pdf packet of all the images here: <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/NPSTrailofTearsExhibitPanels.pdf>)

- o Panel A: “What Is the Trail of Tears?” Laughlin Park, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/What-is-the-Trail-of-Tears-508.pdf>
 - o Panel B: “They Passed This Way,” Mantle Rock Preserve, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/They-Passed-This-Way-508.pdf>
 - o Panel C: “Imagine the Scene,” Berry’s Ferry, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/trte-berry-s-ferry-two-exhibits.pdf> (Scroll down to second panel.)
 - o Panel D: “The Trail Where They Cried,” Cave Spring and the Trail of Tears, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE-Cave-Spring-two-panels-combined.pdf>
 - o Panel E: “A Place to Rest,” Camp Ground Cemetery and the Trail of Tears, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE-Campground-Church-two-panels-combined.pdf> (Scroll down to the second panel.)
 - o Panel F: “The Water Route to Indian Territory,” New Madrid and the Trail of Tears, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/new-madrid-exhibits-2011.pdf> (Scroll down to second panel.)
 - o Panel G: “The End of the Journey” and “Home in the West,” Stilwell and the Trail of Tears, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE_StilwellOK_MrsWebbers_3panels.pdf
 - o Optional: *Trail of Tears*, produced by the National Park Service in collaboration with the Cherokee Nation, directed by Joshua Colover, written by Shane Smith (Aperture Films, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg>
- Activity Sheet 7: The Trail of Tears Note-Taking Guide
 - Activity Sheet 8: Organizing a Speech/Essay/Presentation

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY: AN OVERVIEW

by Joseph Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki)

Rather than seeing Native American history as a part of American history, it may be more logical to see it the other way around. Native American history goes back for countless generations before the arrival of the new settlers and the history of the United States is inextricably linked with that of its Indigenous peoples.

The first European colonies depended on assistance from the original nations here before them. Many things from Native cultures became building blocks for the new American nation. Such foods as corn, beans, and squash, now important parts of American agriculture, were developed by Native American agronomists. American democracy owes a considerable debt to the League of the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois. Their democratic, highly successful confederacy was cited by Benjamin Franklin as a model for the thirteen colonies to follow and the Constitution was influenced by the example of the Iroquois League.

However, Native American nations were not treated as equals. The Europeans who came to North America were members of one Christian faith or another. Native Americans were not Christians. A 1493 papal decree, the “Doctrine of Discovery,” stated that any lands not inhabited by Christians were available to be discovered and claimed. That became one basis for justifying the western expansion of the United States and was cited in the US Supreme Court decision in the 1823 case *Johnson v. MacIntosh*.

In the American South, the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles became known as the “Five Civilized Tribes,” adopting many aspects of European culture, including Christianity. However, it did not prevent the state of Georgia from forcing them off their land onto what became known as the Trail of Tears.

There are two primary approaches the United States has taken toward Native Americans. The first has been to kill them or remove them—sometimes by treaties forcing them to sell or cede land, sometimes by outright military force. The second approach has been to treat Native Americans as children, controlled by a paternalistic federal government.

Beginning in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Native American children were sent to trade schools such as the Carlisle Indian School, founded in 1879. The stated objective was to “kill the Indian and save the man.” All aspects of Indigenous life, including tribal languages, were to be erased by a “civilizing” education that would result in the eventual eradication of all Native American cultures. Indians were to be absorbed into the larger nation as “useful,” second-class citizens serving the White majority. However, despite this new approach, Native Americans were not granted citizenship until 1924, and it is no exaggeration to say that all Native Americans today still suffer from the trauma of the boarding schools, with the last residential school closing in 1973.

Despite the overwhelming odds against them, Native Americans have shown great resilience. Most of the original 500 or more Native nations that were here prior to Columbus still remain in the United States, although their land base and many aspects of their culture have been greatly diminished.

In the twentieth century, especially in the period following World War II, Native Americans began to gain more tribal autonomy. Some of the lands taken from them were restored to tribal control. No longer were their religious practices or their languages forbidden by law. Schools in their communities formerly run by the federal government entered the control of tribal nations. Although things are far from perfect, Native Americans in the twenty-first century are on a much more equal footing with the rest of our nation.

Joseph Bruchac is an Abenaki scholar and poet with a PhD in comparative literature from Union Institute of Ohio. The winner of the 1999 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers’ Circle of the Americas, Bruchac is the author of more than 120 books of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry for adults and children, including The Faithful Hunter: Abenaki Stories (1988), Above the Line: New Poems (2003), and Jim Thorpe: Original All-American (2006).

LESSON 1

Intercultural Communication between Indigenous People and the US Government, 1770–1810

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

OVERVIEW

This lesson explores artifacts suggesting how Indigenous people and representatives of the US government perceived each other, their needs, and their interests. Students will read and view an essay by a leading scholar, an illustration, and a speech transcript. You will assess students' understanding through completed activity sheets, class discussion, and a brief oral or written response to an essential question.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary and secondary sources using close-reading strategies
- Interpret visual materials
- Give a presentation that uses primary and secondary sources as evidence
- Identify Indigenous peoples (e.g., Chehaws, Shawnees, and Cherokees)
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

Erik Bloch has taught English in Connecticut for over twenty years and has served as a master teacher with the Gilder Lehrman Institute for more than ten years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What strategies did Indigenous peoples and the US government use to communicate with each other?
- How did Indigenous peoples (e.g., Shawnees) respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?
- What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples (e.g., Shawnees)?

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Historical Background: “Native American History: An Overview” by Joseph Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki), PhD
- Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions
- Activity Sheet 2: Visual Analysis of “Major General Rogers” by an unknown artist, ca. 1770–1785, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01450.201.02
- Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh’s Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society, images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc050/id/560

PROCEDURE

1. It may be best for students to come into class having read Source 1: Historical Background and having completed Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions. Otherwise, students can complete this work during class time individually or in groups.
2. Have students briefly share out their responses, using each other as resources to fill in any gaps of understanding as you check in. Then briefly review the overall content with the whole class.
3. Distribute Activity Sheet 2: Visual Analysis of “Major General Rogers.” Ask the class to assess the image using the activity sheet. You may choose to have the students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups of three or four. You may first want to model how to identify and analyze a visual detail.
4. Reconvene the whole class and discuss the final questions:
 - a. What does this image suggest about the relationship between colonists and Indigenous peoples?
 - b. Who do you think the creator was? Why?
 - c. What type of documents would help you to investigate the accuracy of this image?
5. Distribute Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh’s Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, 1810. This activity is designed as an annotated read along. Since the text was given as a speech, you may wish to read this aloud or “share read” it with the class. This is done by having the students follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).
6. Give students time after each section to re-read and highlight the text before discussing their responses and moving to the next section.
7. Once the speech has been annotated and discussed, have students answer the Closing Analysis and Synthesis Questions at the end of the handout. These questions may also be assigned as homework.
8. Conclude with an informal class discussion or short piece of reflective writing. You may choose to have the students develop and express (orally or in writing) a viewpoint on one of the lesson’s essential questions.

LESSON 2

A US Military Attack on a Chehaw Village, 1818

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

OVERVIEW

This lesson begins with an exercise revisiting and expanding on what students learned in Lesson 1. To illuminate the brutality that sometimes characterized US military actions against Indigenous peoples, students will read a first-person account of actions undertaken by American troops in a Chehaw village. You will assess students' understanding through completed activity sheets and class discussion.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary and secondary sources using close-reading strategies
- Interpret visual materials
- Compare and contrast the claims made in different types of evidence
- Identify and distinguish between Indigenous peoples (e.g., Chehaws, Shawnees, and Cherokees)
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How did the US government explain its expansion into Chehaw territory?
- What was the impact of US expansion on the Chehaw people?

MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh's Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society, images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc007/id/19/
- Activity Sheet 4: Visual Analysis of "Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh" by John Reuben Chapin (artist) and William Ridgway (engraver) in Robert Tomes, *The Battles of America by Sea & Land, vol. 2: War of 1812 and Mexican Campaigns* (New York, 1878), p. 18, New York Public Library Digital Collections, [/digitalcollections.nypl.org](https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/)
- Activity Sheet 5: Text Analysis of Excerpts from a Report from Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, April 30, 1818, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00782.11.03
- Optional: A projector or other means to display activity sheets

PROCEDURE

1. If given for homework after Lesson 1, take time to review the Closing Analysis and Synthesis Questions on Activity Sheet 3.
2. Display and introduce the Essential Questions for this lesson:
 - o How did the US government explain its expansion into Chehaw territory?

- o What was the impact of US expansion on the Chehaw people?
3. Distribute Activity Sheet 4: Visual Analysis of “Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh.” Explain to students that this image is a secondary source because it was created decades after the event by someone who was not a direct witness.
 - a. Students may work in pairs or individually using the handout as a guide.
 - b. Once the students have completed the activity sheet, reconvene the whole class and discuss different responses and interpretations developed by individual students or pairs. Encourage students to explain the ways in which this image’s claims are or are not supported by the primary source that they read in Lesson 1. The image aimed to depict the exchange between Tecumseh and Harrison.
 4. Distribute Activity Sheet 5: Text Analysis of a Report from Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, 1818. Explain to students that this is an account of an incident between American troops (led by Captain Obediah Wright) and a Chehaw village. Reading this report will make it possible for them to answer the following questions:
 - o What happened between Wright’s men and the Chehaw people? Can you determine the order of events?
 - o How did Glascock (the writer) feel about these events?
 - o How do you feel about these events?
 - o How do these events connect to the Essential Questions?
 - a. Share read the excerpts with the students as described in Lesson 1.
 - b. Transition students to the Summary Organizer on the following page. Explain that the objective is to select “Keywords” from the first section and then use those words to create a summary sentence that demonstrates an understanding of what Glascock was saying.

Guidelines for selecting keywords: Keywords are very important contributors to understanding the text. Without them the selection would not make sense. These words are usually nouns or verbs. Don’t pick “connector” words (*are, is, the, and, so, etc.*). The number of keywords depends on the length of the selection.
 - c. Students will now look at Section A. Analysis of the first selection from the text will be done as a whole-class exercise. They will select 3–5 words that they believe are keywords and underline or highlight them.
 - d. Survey the class to find out what the most popular choices are. After some discussion, the class should decide on five keywords and write them in the Keyword section of the organizer.
 - e. Have students use these keywords to write a sentence that summarizes what Glascock was saying. This should be a whole-class negotiation. You might find that the class decides they don’t need some of the words to make it even more streamlined. This is part of the negotiation process. The final negotiated sentence is copied into the organizer in the Keyword Summary section of the organizer.
 - f. Explain that students will now put their summary sentence into their own words, without using the keywords. Again, this is a class negotiation process.
 - g. Vocabulary: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult. If you choose, you could have students use the back of their organizers to make a note of these words and their meanings.
 - h. The students can complete selections B, C, and D individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
 - i. Once students have completed the keywords activity, they should move on to the Interpreting the Text and Analysis sections. These may be assigned for homework, if time requires.
 - j. You may choose to have the students develop and express (orally or in writing) a viewpoint on one of the lesson’s Essential Questions. They will use visual and textual evidence to support their position.

LESSON 3

US Policy under President Andrew Jackson, 1830

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

OVERVIEW

This lesson explores a key moment in US government policy regarding Indigenous peoples. Students will read President Jackson’s Message to Congress in 1830. You will assess student learning through activity sheets and class discussion.

Students will be able to

- Analyze a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How did the US government explain its expansion into Chehaw, Shawnee, and Cherokee territories?

MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 6: Text Analysis of President Jackson’s Message to Congress “On Indian Removal,” December 6, 1830, *100 Milestone Documents*, Our Documents, ourdocuments.gov

PROCEDURE

1. If Activity Sheet 5 from Lesson 2 was given for homework after Lesson 2, take time to review the Interpreting the Text and Analysis sections.
2. Distribute Activity Sheet 6: Text Analysis of President Jackson’s Message to Congress “On Indian Removal,” 1830. Explain to students that the “General Jackson” to whom Glascock wrote in 1818 (see Lesson 2) became President Jackson and presented this message to Congress twelve years later. The class will be looking at how US policies regarding Indigenous peoples developed under his administration.
3. Introduce the Essential Question for this lesson:
 - o How did the US government explain its expansion into Chehaw, Shawnee, and Cherokee territories?
4. Give students time to work on each section of the handout. Time allotment can vary, depending on whether you choose to have students share read, read silently, or listen as you read aloud. You may also vary the ways in which the students interact and record their work. You may choose to break up the texts and assign smaller sections to individual students or to small groups.
5. The lesson is designed to have students apply the Essential Question to Jackson’s speech. Part IV of the handout provides an organizer for this, but you may also wish to have students discuss their answers in groups or as a class.

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history.

LESSON 4

The Trail of Tears, 1838–1839

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will encounter primary and secondary sources that provide historical context for how the policy of Indian removal impacted Indigenous peoples. Specifically, this lesson explores the Trail of Tears. Students will examine elements from the National Park Service’s Trail of Tears website, interacting with exhibition panels. They will demonstrate their comprehension through the completed activity sheets and class discussion.

Students will be able to

- Analyze secondary sources using close-reading strategies
- Interpret visual and multimedia materials
- Identify and distinguish between Indigenous peoples (e.g., Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles)
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How did the US government explain its expansion into Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole territories?
- How did Indigenous peoples respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?
- What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples?
- What was the impact of US expansion on the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole peoples?

MATERIALS

- Source 2: National Park Service (NPS) panels from the Trail of Tears exhibition (The Exhibits web page provides links to several different exhibit panels representing the Trail of Tears history at different NPS sites. Some of the links have two different panels. You may access these pdf’s on line through the links provided. We have also provided a downloadable pdf packet of all the images here: <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/NPSTrailofTearsExhibitPanels.pdf>
 - o Panel A: “What Is the Trail of Tears?” Laughlin Park, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/What-is-the-Trail-of-Tears-508.pdf>
 - o Panel B: “They Passed This Way,” Mantle Rock Preserve, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/They-Passed-This-Way-508.pdf>

- o Panel C: “Imagine the Scene,” Berry’s Ferry, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/trte-berry-s-ferry-two-exhibits.pdf> (Scroll down to second panel.)
 - o Panel D: “The Trail Where They Cried,” Cave Spring and the Trail of Tears, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE-Cave-Spring-two-panels-combined.pdf>
 - o Panel E: “A Place to Rest,” Camp Ground Cemetery and the Trail of Tears, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE-Campground-Church-two-panels-combined.pdf> (Scroll down to the second panel.)
 - o Panel F: “The Water Route to Indian Territory,” New Madrid and the Trail of Tears, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/new-madrid-exhibits-2011.pdf> (Scroll down to second panel.)
 - o Panel G: “The End of the Journey” and “Home in the West,” Stilwell and the Trail of Tears, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, National Park Service, n.d., https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/upload/TRTE_StilwellOK_MrsWebbers_3panels.pdf
 - o Optional: *Trail of Tears*, produced by the National Park Service in collaboration with the Cherokee Nation, directed by Joshua Colover, written by Shane Smith (Aperture Films, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg>
- Activity Sheet 7: The Trail of Tears Note-Taking Guide

PROCEDURE

1. Remind students that the Indian Removal Act that Jackson discussed in Lesson 3 led to the displacement of many thousands of Indigenous people. Their forced journey from their homelands to their newly allotted territories in Oklahoma became known as the Trail of Tears.
2. Introduce the Essential Questions:
 - o How did the US government explain its expansion into Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole territories?
 - o How did Indigenous peoples respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?
 - o What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples?
 - o What was the impact of US expansion on the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole peoples?
3. Optional: You may have the students view the National Park Service’s film *The Trail of Tears* ([youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg)) at home or in class to provide context for this lesson.
4. Distribute the packet with Panels A through G, or post large images of these materials around the classroom as part of a gallery walk.
5. Distribute Activity Sheet 7: The Trail of Tears Note-Taking Guide. Explain to students that they are to closely examine at least four separate exhibit panels, using the handout to guide them. Instruct them to be prepared to record their findings, including at least two specific quotations. You may want to model these tasks using one of the panels. Emphasize strategies for close examination of visual materials as well as note-taking.
6. Allow students time to work through the activity and explore the panels. They may work independently or in groups. You should check in with students (or groups) as they explore the exhibit panels.
7. Allow the whole class time to debrief and share findings. Focus on which panels were most striking or compelling.

LESSON 5

The US Government and Indigenous Peoples before the Trail of Tears, 1770–1839

BY ERIK BLOCH (created 2021, revised 2024)

OVERVIEW

This lesson invites students to review material from Lessons 1–4, drawing connections between cultural history, US government policy, and the forced migration of Indigenous peoples. You will assess student learning that is demonstrated through an essay.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary and secondary sources using close-reading strategies
- Interpret visual and multimedia materials
- Compare and contrast the claims made in different types of evidence
- Write an essay or give a presentation that uses primary and secondary sources as evidence
- Identify and distinguish between Indigenous peoples (e.g., Chehaws, Shawnees, and Cherokees)
- Understand the cultural context of a historical event (e.g., the Trail of Tears)

Erik Bloch has taught English in Connecticut for over twenty years and has served as a master teacher with the Gilder Lehrman Institute for more than ten years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period, or a homework assignment

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. The unit explores several moments when Indigenous people and government representatives sought to communicate with each other and about each other. The five lessons in this unit provide a small window onto a much broader and more complex topic in cultural history.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What strategies did Indigenous people and the US government use to communicate with each other?
- How did the US government explain its expansion into land held by Indigenous peoples?
- How did Indigenous peoples respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?
- What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples?
- What was the impact of US expansion on Indigenous peoples?

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Historical Background: “Native American History: An Overview” by Joseph Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki), PhD
- Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions
- Activity Sheet 2: Visual Analysis of “Major General Rogers” by an unknown artist, ca. 1770–1785, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01450.201.02
- Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh’s Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society, images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc050/id/560

- Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh’s Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society, images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc007/id/19/
- Activity Sheet 4: Visual Analysis of “Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh” by John Reuben Chapin (artist) and William Ridgway (engraver) in Robert Tomes, *The Battles of America by Sea & Land*, vol. 2: *War of 1812 and Mexican Campaigns* (New York, 1878), p. 18, New York Public Library Digital Collections, [/digitalcollections.nypl.org](https://digitalcollections.nypl.org)
- Activity Sheet 5: Text Analysis of Excerpts from a Report from Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, April 30, 1818, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00782.11.03
- Activity Sheet 6: Text Analysis of President Jackson’s Message to Congress “On Indian Removal,” December 6, 1830, *100 Milestone Documents*, Our Documents, ourdocuments.gov
- Source 2: National Park Service (NPS) panels from the Trail of Tears exhibition (The Exhibits web page provides links to several different exhibit panels representing the Trail of Tears history at different NPS sites. Some of the links have two different panels. You may access these pdf’s on line through the links provided. We have also provided a downloadable pdf packet of all the images here: <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/NPSTrailofTearsExhibitPanels.pdf>)
- Activity Sheet 7: The Trail of Tears Note-Taking Guide
- Activity Sheet 8: Organizing a Speech/Essay/Presentation

PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to take out all of the sources and activity sheets that they used for Lessons 1–4.
2. Review the Essential Questions with students. You might encourage the class to discuss which pieces of evidence might be most useful for addressing each question.
3. You may offer students the option to develop a speech, essay, or presentation. You can distribute Activity Sheet 8: Organizing a Speech/Essay/Presentation. Ask students to commit to a particular Essential Question, answer the question, and provide at least three quotations that they will use. The quotations should come from three different sources.
4. You might wish to review students’ plans for their speech/essay/presentation, or you can ask them to immediately begin writing.

Source 1: Historical Background

Native American History: An Overview

by Joseph Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki)

Rather than seeing Native American history as a part of American history, it may be more logical to see it the other way around. Native American history goes back for countless generations before the arrival of the new settlers and the history of the United States is inextricably linked with that of its Indigenous peoples.

The first European colonies depended on assistance from the original nations here before them. Many things from Native cultures became building blocks for the new American nation. Such foods as corn, beans, and squash, now important parts of American agriculture, were developed by Native American agronomists. American democracy owes a considerable debt to the League of the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois. Their democratic, highly successful confederacy was cited by Benjamin Franklin as a model for the thirteen colonies to follow and the Constitution was influenced by the example of the Iroquois League.

However, Native American nations were not treated as equals. The Europeans who came to North America were members of one Christian faith or another. Native Americans were not Christians. A 1493 papal decree, the “Doctrine of Discovery,” stated that any lands not inhabited by Christians were available to be discovered and claimed. That became one basis for justifying the western expansion of the United States and was cited in the US Supreme Court decision in the 1823 case *Johnson v. MacIntosh*.

In the American South, the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles became known as the “Five Civilized Tribes,” adopting many aspects of European culture, including Christianity. However, it did not prevent the state of Georgia from forcing them off their land onto what became known as the Trail of Tears.

There are two primary approaches the United States has taken toward Native Americans. The first has been to kill them or remove them—sometimes by treaties forcing them to sell or cede land, sometimes by outright military force. The second approach has been to treat Native Americans as children, controlled by a paternalistic federal government.

Beginning in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Native American children were sent to trade schools such as the Carlisle Indian School, founded in 1879. The stated objective was to “kill the Indian and save the man.” All aspects of Indigenous life, including tribal languages, were to be erased by a “civilizing” education that would result in the eventual eradication of all Native American cultures. Indians were to be absorbed into the larger nation as “useful,” second-class citizens serving the White majority. However, despite this new approach, Native Americans were not granted citizenship until 1924, and it is no exaggeration to say that all Native Americans today still suffer from the trauma of the boarding schools, with the last residential school closing in 1973.

Despite the overwhelming odds against them, Native Americans have shown great resilience. Most of the original 500 or more Native nations that were here prior to Columbus still remain in the United States, although their land base and many aspects of their culture have been greatly diminished.

In the twentieth century, especially in the period following World War II, Native Americans began to gain more tribal autonomy. Some of the lands taken from them were restored to tribal control. No longer were their religious practices or their languages forbidden by law. Schools in their communities formerly run by the federal government entered the control of tribal nations. Although things are far from perfect, Native Americans in the twenty-first century are on a much more equal footing with the rest of our nation.

Joseph Bruchac is an Abenaki scholar and poet with a PhD in comparative literature from Union Institute of Ohio. The winner of the 1999 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers’ Circle of the Americas, Bruchac is the author of more than 120 books of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry for adults and children, including The Faithful Hunter: Abenaki Stories (1988), Bowman’s Story: A Journey to Myself (1997), and Jim Thorpe: Original All-American (2006).

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Activity Sheet 2: Visual Analysis of “Major General Roberts,” ca. 1770–1785

This engraving depicts a colonial officer, Major General Robert Rogers, and an unnamed American Indian. Look closely at the engraving and answer the questions on the next page.



“Major General Rogers,” ca. 1770–1785 (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01450.201.02)

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Critical Thinking Questions

1. What do you notice about the ways the two individuals are dressed? Consider the objects they are carrying or wearing.
2. What do you notice about the way the two men are positioned? Does this affect how you see their relationship?
3. What do you notice about their facial expressions?
4. What are the two men doing? How do you think they feel about one another? How can you tell?
5. Making inferences: What does this image suggest about the relationship between colonists and Indigenous people? Who do you think the creator was? Why?

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Activity Sheet 3: Text Analysis of Tecumseh’s Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, 1810

The following is a transcript of speech by Shawnee leader Tecumseh during a meeting with the governor of Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, in 1810. Tecumseh led a confederation of Indigenous tribes.

Annotated Read Along #1

Tecumseh used certain words to create metaphors to describe the relationship between his people and European colonizers. Highlight these metaphors.

Brother, I wish you to listen to me well. I wish to reply to you more explicitly – as I think you do not clearly understand what I before said to you I shall explain it again. When we were first discovered it was by the French, who told us that they would adopt us as their children and gave us presents, without asking any thing in return but our considering them as our fathers. Since we have changed our fathers we find it different.

Brother. This is the manner that the treaty was made by us with the French. They gave us many presents & treated us well, they asked us for a small piece of country to live on which they were not to leave and continue to treat us as their children. . . .

The next father we found was the British who told us that they would now be our fathers and treat us in the same manner as our former fathers the French. . . .

Brother. We were very glad to hear the British promise to treat us [as] our fathers the French had done, they began to treat us in the same way, but at last they changed their good treatment by raising the Tomahawk against the Americans & put it into our hands, by which we have suffered the loss of a great many of our young men. . . .

[W]e then found new fathers in the Americans who told us they would treat us well, not like the British who gave us but a small piece of Pork every day.

Analysis Question

Where do you notice some shifts or changes in the way Tecumseh described the relationship between his people and the colonists? Go back and underline at least one section in the passage above that demonstrates a shift or change. Then paraphrase the passage here:

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Annotated Read Along #2

In each paragraph of this section of Tecumseh's address, highlight at least one example of Tecumseh using either strong evidence or making a convincing argument.

I want now to remind you of the promises of the white people.

You recollect that the time the Delawares lived near the white people (Americans) & satisfied with the promises of friendship & remained in security, yet one of their Towns was surprised & the men, women & children murdered.

The same promises were given to the Shawnees. Flags were given to them & were told by the Americans that they were now the children of the Americans. These flags will be as security for you; if the white people intend to do you harm, hold up your flags & no harm will be done you. This was at length practised & the consequence was that the person bearing the flag was murdered with others in their village. How, my Brother after this conduct can you blame me for placing little confidence in the promises of our fathers the Americans?

Brother. Since the peace was made you have killed some of the Shawnees, Winebagoes, Delawares & Miamies and you have taken our lands from us, and I do not see how we can remain at peace with you if you continue to do so. . . . You have promised us assistance but I do not see that you have given us any.

You try to force the red people to do some injury. It is you that is pushing them on to do mischief. You endeavour to make distinctions. You wish to prevent the Indians to do as we wish them to unite & let them consider their land as the common property of the whole. You take tribes aside & advise them not to come into this measure and until our design is accomplished we do not wish to accept of your invitation to go & visit the President.

The reason I tell you this is – you want by your distinctions of Indian tribes in allotting to each a particular track of land to make them to war with each other. You never see an Indian come and endeavour make the white people do so – You are continually driving the red people when at last you will drive them into the great Lake where they can't eathor stand or work.

Brother. You ought to know what you are doing with the Indians. Perhaps it is by direction of the President to make those distinctions. It is a very bad thing and we do not like it.

Annotated Read Along #3

Highlight areas where Tecumseh uses his own knowledge of European culture or American society in order to critique them.

Brother, I wish you would take pity on all the red people and do what I have requested. If you will not give up the land & do cross the boundary of your present settlement it will be very hard & produce great troubles among us. How can we have confidence in the white people when Jesus Christ came upon the earth you kill'd and nail'd him on a cross, you thought he was dead but you were mistaken. You have Shakers among you. And you laugh and make light of their worship. Every thing I have said to you is the truth, the great spirit has inspired me & I speak nothing but the truth to you. . . .

Source: A transcript of Tecumseh's Speech to Gov. William Henry Harrison, August 20, 1810, Indiana Historical Society.

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Closing Analysis Question

Which words do you see used most often throughout these passages? Focus on one and discuss a possible reason for its repeated use in Tecumseh's speech. Answer in 2 to 4 sentences.

Synthesis Question

How does Tecumseh's description of his people's relationship with colonial forces compare to the way this relationship is depicted in imagery such as the engraving "Major General Rogers"? Answer in 2 to 4 sentences, using at least one specific quotation from the speech.

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Activity Sheet 4: Visual Analysis of “Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh”

Examine the engraving below. It depicts the meeting between Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison in 1810 that we looked at in the previous lesson. However, the engraving was created decades after the meeting took place. Pay close attention to the ways in which the individuals in the painting are portrayed.



“Genl. Harrison & Tecumseh” by John Reuben Chapin (artist) and William Ridgway (engraver), New York, 1878. (New York Public Library Digital Collections)

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Critical Thinking Questions

<p>How are Tecumseh and his people depicted?</p> <p>How are they positioned?</p> <p>What are they doing?</p> <p>How do their faces look?</p> <p>What are they wearing and holding?</p> <p>What effect do these details have?</p>	<p>My thoughts:</p>
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<p>How are Harrison and his people depicted?</p> <p>How are they positioned?</p> <p>What are they doing?</p> <p>How do their faces look?</p> <p>What are they wearing and holding?</p> <p>What effect do these details have?</p>	<p>My thoughts:</p>
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How do you think the creator of this image felt about Tecumseh and Harrison? What details support your view?

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Critical Thinking Question

One of the places where this image can be found is the National Park Service website. On it, the website includes this caption:

This print depicts Tecumseh meeting with William Henry Harrison. . . . Tecumseh biographer John Sugden describes this depiction as “extremely inaccurate,” particularly the clothing of the Native Americans.

Respond: Why might this be important information to include in the caption, and how does it impact your understanding of this event?

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Activity Sheet 5: Text Analysis of a Report from Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, 1818

The following is an excerpt from a report sent by Brigadier General Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, who was a general at the time, and not yet president. The report describes an incident that took place between US troops led by Capt. Obediah Wright and the inhabitants of a Chehaw village.

Read Glascock's account and try to determine the following:

1. What happened between Wright's men and the Chehaws? Can you determine the order of events?
2. How does Glascock (the writer) feel about these events?
3. How do *you* feel about these events?

Excerpts from Glascock's report

It appears that after [Captain Wright] assumed the Command of that place he obtained the Certificates of several men on the frontier that the Chehaw Indians were engaged in a skirmish on the big bend, he immediately sent or went to the Governor and obtained orders to destroy the Towns of [Philemme] and [Oponce]. . . . He ordered Capt Bothwell to furnish him with 25 or 30 men to accompany him. Having been authorised to do so by the Governor, the order was complied with. Capt Bothwell . . . disapproved the plan and informed Capt Wright that there could be no doubt of the friendship of the Indians in that quarter. [Captain Wright and his men], [full of] mock patriotism, crossed the River that Night and pushed for the Town. When arriving near there, an Indian was discovered grazing some Cattle. He was made a prisoner. The Indian immediately proposed to go with the Interpreter and bring any of the Chiefs for the Captain to talk with. It was not attended to. An advance was ordered. The Cavalry rushed forward and commenced the massacre. Even after the firing and murder commenced, Major Howard, an old Chief, came out from his House with a white flag in front of the line. It was not respected. An order for a general fire was given, and nearly 400 guns were fired at him before one took effect. He fell and was Bayoneted. His son was also killed. These are the circumstances relative to the transaction. Seven men were killed, one woman and two Children. Since then three of my command who were left at Fort Scott obtained a furlough and on their way to this place one of them was shot in endeavoring to get a Canoe across the Flint River. I have sent on an express to the Officer commanding Fort Scott apprising him of the affair and one to Adj. Porter to place him on his guard. On my arrival opposite Chehaw I sent a runner to get some of them in. I succeeded in doing so. [The Chehaw] are all at a loss to know the cause of this displeasure of the white People.

I have the honor to be very Respectfully Yours,

Thos Glascock, Brig Genl G M

Source: Thomas Glascock to Andrew Jackson, April 30, 1818 (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC00782.11.03)

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Summary Organizer

A. Original Text

It appears that after [Captain Wright] assumed the Command of that place he obtained the Certificates of several men on the frontier that the Chehaw Indians were engaged in a skirmish on the big bend, he immediately sent or went to the Governor and obtained orders to destroy the Towns of [Philemme] and [Oponce]. . . . He ordered Capt Bothwell to furnish him with 25 or 30 men to accompany him. Having been authorised to do so by the Governor, the order was complied with.

Keywords (Choose 3–5)

Keyword Summary

In Your Own Words

B. Original Text

Capt Bothwell . . . disapproved the plan and informed Capt Wright that there could be no doubt of the friendship of the Indians in that quarter. [Captain Wright and his men], [full of] mock patriotism, crossed the River that Night and pushed for the Town. When arriving near there, an Indian was discovered grazing some Cattle. He was made a prisoner. The Indian immediately proposed to go with the Interpreter and bring any of the Chiefs for the Captain to talk with. It was not attended to.

Keywords (Choose 3–5)

Keyword Summary

In Your Own Words

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C. Original Text

An advance was ordered. The Cavalry rushed forward and commenced the massacre. Even after the firing and murder commenced, Major Howard, an old Chief, came out from his House with a white flag in front of the line. It was not respected. An order for a general fire was given, and nearly 400 guns were fired at him before one took effect. He fell and was Bayoneted. His son was also killed.

Keywords (Choose 3–5)

Keyword Summary

In Your Own Words

D. Original Text

These are the circumstances relative to the transaction. Seven men were killed, one woman and two Children. Since then three of my command who were left at Fort Scott obtained a furlough and on their way to this place one of them was shot in endeavoring to get a Canoe across the Flint River. I have sent on an express to the Officer commanding Fort Scott apprising him of the affair and one to Adj. Porter to place him on his guard. On my arrival opposite Chehaw I sent a runner to get some of them in. I succeeded in doing so. [The Chehaw] are all at a loss to know the cause of this displeasure of the white People.

Keywords (Choose 3–5)

Keyword Summary

In Your Own Words

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Interpreting the Text

How did Glascock feel about the events he was reporting?

Keywords Revisited: Go back through your notes. Then, in the space below, record five to six keywords from the report that show whether Glascock approved of what happened between US forces and the Chehaws.

Analysis

Find where your keywords came from in the report and complete the outline below.

Based on the evidence found in his report, it is clear that Brigadier General Glascock felt _____ about the events that took place between Captain Wright and the Chehaws. We can tell he felt this way cause he stated the following:

Quote A:

Quote B:

Quote C:

Critical Thinking Question

Based on what you have read, how do *you* feel about these events, and why?

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Part II. Text Analysis

Read the excerpts from Jackson’s speech, and then respond to the Guiding Questions.

Excerpts from Jackson’s Message to Congress	Guiding Questions
<p>It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty 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 advantages.</p>	<p>How did Jackson describe the recent events regarding US–Indian relations? What words show this?</p>
<p>The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters.</p>	<p>What is one reason Jackson wants a “speedy removal” of Indigenous people?</p>
<p>By opening the whole territory . . . it will incalculably strengthen the southwestern frontier and render the adjacent States strong enough to repel future invasions without remote aid. It will relieve the whole State[s] of Mississippi and . . . Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power.</p>	<p>What is the meaning behind one of the words in bold, and why might Jackson have used it in this speech?</p>
<p>It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.</p>	<p>According to Jackson, how might the Indigenous people benefit in the future?</p> <p>How do the words in bold characterize Jackson’s view of Indigenous people in comparison to White Americans?</p>

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Part III. Examining Argument

Summarize Jackson's stated reasons for supporting the "speedy" removal of Indian people from their homelands.

Excerpts from Jackson's Message to Congress	Summarize / Paraphrase
<p>What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns, and prosperous farms embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute, occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with all the blessings of liberty, civilization and religion?</p>	
<p>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 to the westward, and we now propose to acquire the countries occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to land where their existence may be prolonged and perhaps made perpetual.</p>	
<p>Can it be cruel in this Government when, by events which it cannot 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. . . . And is it supposed that the wandering savage has a stronger attachment to his home than the settled, civilized Christian? Is it more afflicting to him to leave the graves of his fathers than it is to our brothers and children?</p>	

Source: "President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress 'On Indian Removal' (1830)," 100 Milestone Documents, Our Documents, ourdocuments.gov.

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Part IV. Essential Questions

Considering what you've learned from this document, complete the response activity below to answer the following question:

How did the US government explain its expansion into Chehaw, Shawnee, and Cherokee territories?

Your response:

Provide two separate examples from the text that support your response.

Example 1:

Example 2:

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Activity Sheet 7: The Trail of Tears Exhibition: Note-taking Guide

You must examine at least four of exhibit panels from the National Park Service Trail of Tears National History Trail website here:

- Panel A: “What Is the Trail of Tears?”
- Panel B: “They Passed This Way”
- Panel C: “Imagine the Scene”
- Panel D: “The Trail Where They Cried”
- Image E: “A Place to Rest”
- Image F: “Water Route to Indian Territory”
- Image G: “The End of the Journey” and “Home in the West” (2 panels)

For each exhibit panel you choose, record your findings in the table.

Title of Exhibit Panel	Noteworthy Image or Piece of Information	Noteworthy Quotation

NAME PERIOD DATE

Out of all the exhibit panels you examined, which one was the most compelling? What made it so compelling?

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Activity Sheet 8: Organizing a Speech/Essay/Presentation

Address one of the following Essential Questions in a speech, essay, or multimedia presentation:

- What strategies did Indigenous peoples and the US government use to communicate with each other?
- How did the US government explain its expansion into land held by Indigenous peoples?
- How did Indigenous peoples respond to US government and military expansion into their territories?
- What promises did the US government make to Indigenous peoples?
- What was the impact of US expansion on Indigenous peoples?

To prepare your response, record the following before you start to write:

I will provide an answer to this essential question:

My answer to this question is

To support my claim, I will use evidence (primary and secondary sources) that includes the following quotations or descriptions of images:

1.

2.

3.