



THE INDIAN REMOVAL ACT AND THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Surprise Me

Chapters Two and Three discuss US policies toward Native Americans in the late 1700s and early 1800s. What two or three facts about these policies did you find the most surprising? Write a few sentences about each fact. Why did you find each fact surprising?





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Say What?

Studying US history can mean learning a lot of new vocabulary. Find five words in this book you've never heard before. Use a dictionary to find out what they mean. Then write the meanings in your own words, and use each word in a new sentence.





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Take a Stand

Native Americans had lived on their homelands for many generations before the Indian Removal Act passed. When white settlers arrived, they took Native people's lands. The result was a loss of Native American culture and way of life. The Senate formally apologized to Native Americans in 2009. Do you think more needs to be done to address the government's mistreatment of Native Americans?





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Another View

This book talks about the long-term effects of the Indian Removal Act. As you know, every source is different. Ask an adult to help you find another source about this topic. Write a short essay comparing and contrasting the new source's point of view with that of this book's authors. What is the point of view of each source? How are they similar and why? How are they different and why?





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You Are There

This book discusses the disagreements among the Cherokee people about the Treaty of New Echota. Imagine you were present during the signing of this treaty. Write a letter home about the experience. How did white government officials treat the Cherokee?





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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What events led up to the Indian Removal Act? How did these events contribute to the passing of the act?
- How did white Americans try to “civilize” Native Americans in the late 1700s? What do you think is the legacy of this civilization plan?





- Why did some Native Americans choose to sign treaties that took away their lands? How did treaty disagreements lead to divisions within some tribes or nations?
- How did Native Americans rebuild their communities after the Trail of Tears? How did they adapt to life in Indian Territory?
- What is the legacy of the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears? How do you think this history could be taught in schools and communities today?

