HISTORY FRAME

Participants/Key Players:	When:	Where:
Lt. Col. Custer and the 7th Cavalry (U.S. Army and Black Kettle's band of Cheyenne	Nov. 27, 1968, at dawn	Banks of the Washita River in Indian Territory, near what today is Cheyenne, OK

Causes/Conflicts:

- White setters expand into Cheyenne territory.
- U.S. reservation policy required traditionally nomaid peoples to live in small, designated tracts of land.
- United States broke treaties when they failed to provide food and supplies to tribes.
- Some Cheyenne and members of other tribes left the established reservation boundaries for hunting and, in some cases, to raid white settlements.
- The winter campaign was intended to force the Cheyenne and other tribes to move to their reservations.

Summary:

In an effort to surprise the Cheyenne, Custer and his troops split into four groups, surrounded the camp, and charged in at dawn. Caught off guard, the Cheyenne put up very little resistance, and within minutes, the U.S. Army had control of the camp and secured a victory. Once the fighting was done, Custer ordered that the camp be burned, including lodgings, food, and supplies. Additionally, he ordered the herd of Cheyenne horses to be slaughtered.

Effects/Resolution:

- This massacre was considered a victory for Custer and the U.S. Army.
- Cheyenne men, women, and children were killed, including peace chief Black Kettle.
- The Cheyenne lost their homes, food supply, horses, and other supplies.
- This loss helped to "persuade" the Cheyenne to move to their reservation.

Significance:

The Washita Massacre is significant because it was part of the larger winter campaign that forced tribes, including the Cheyenne, to move to reservations, thus opening up more land for white settlement. Being forced to move to reservations, tribes like the Cheyenne had their land taken and their cultures and sovereignty attacked and weakened.

THE WASHITA MASSACRE

K20 LEARN