

INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

Guiding Questions	Notes	Source
Prior to the Indian Removal Act: Were Native Americans being removed from their ancestral lands prior to the Indian Removal Act? Why were tribes being removed?	As the United States expanded west, Native American tribes forced to give up their lands. This began as early as 1802 and 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase and continued for the next 90 years. There were various reasons for removal of Native Americans—fertile land was needed by settlers, gold was discovered, and states wanted land for various purposes.	Oklahoma Historical Society U.S. Office of the Historian
The Indian Removal Act of 1830: What was the purpose of the Indian Removal Act of 1830? What were Jackson’s reasons for supporting the Indian Removal Act?	The purpose of the Indian Removal Act was to have the federal government negotiate treaties that would remove tribes from the southeastern states and relocate them in Indian Territory. Jackson said that Indian removal would replace “savage hunters” with civilized settlers. States could then advance more rapidly in wealth and power without the Native American tribes.	U.S. Office of the Historian Jackson’s message to Congress December 1830
Response: How did various tribal leaders respond to removal?	There were different responses to removal by different tribal leaders. Elias Boudinot, a Cherokee leader, at first opposed the removal of Cherokees but felt like it was safer in the end to remove them rather than fight the government. Congressman Edward Everett opposed the removal of tribes on moral grounds. He argued that the American people will look back with regret. John Ross, another Cherokee leader, said that the government treated the tribes like dogs and that their lands had been torn apart from them.	Jackson’s message to Congress U.S. Office of the Historian
Additional Facts: Add any interesting or surprising facts found during your research.	Answers will vary. Jackson describes Native Americans as “savages” and that white settlers were civilized and Christian. Tribes sometimes gave up small parts of their lands trying to appease the white settlers not to take more. During Jackson’s presidency there were over 70 removal treaties signed.	Jackson’s message to Congress U.S. Office of the Historian

CHEROKEE NATION AND THE SUPREME COURT

Guiding Questions	Notes	Source
Cherokee Response to Removal: How did the Cherokee tribe protect itself to prevent removal from their homelands?	Any of these answers are acceptable. Cherokees sold small amounts of land to settlers in the hope of keeping larger tracts of land. Tribes stopped selling land to the federal government. The tribe adopted white settler customs of farming, creating towns, etc. in the hope that the US government would see them as “civilized.” Cherokees developed their own constitution, language, alphabet, and government to try to remain a sovereign nation or be seen as “civilized.” The Cherokees also appealed to the courts to keep their land.	PBS: Indian Removal
Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia (1831) How did Thomas Jefferson view Native American tribes? How did James Monroe view Native American tribes?	The Cherokee Nation wanted to stop Georgia from enacting laws that impacted Cherokee people or sought to take away their lands by the state. The Cherokees believed themselves to be an independent nation with its own constitution and government. The Supreme Court ruled that the Cherokees were not an independent or foreign nation but that the tribe depended on the federal government for protection and support. Therefore, Georgia could make laws that Cherokees must follow.	Digital History: Cherokee Nation v. Georgia
Worcester vs. Georgia (1832) How did Andrew Jackson view Native American tribes? What outcome did Jackson and the federal government hope to achieve with Native Americans?	The Supreme Court reversed its ruling from the earlier Supreme Court decision and said that Georgia could not enforce laws against the Cherokee people on their land or other people like Worcester, a missionary, who was living on Cherokee land. Only the federal government, because of their earlier treaties, could enforce laws that affected the Cherokees or others, like Worcester, living on Cherokee land.	Digital History: Worcester V. Georgia Oyez website Worcester V. Georgia
Additional Facts: Add any interesting or surprising facts found during your research.	Answers will vary. It was interesting that in one year the Supreme Court gave two different opinions on which laws Cherokee tribes had to follow—the state or the federal government. Jackson ignored the courts and removed tribes or negotiated treaties for removal even before the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Some tribes fought the government, some negotiated treaties, and a small handful of tribal members went voluntarily to Indian Territory. Many tribes tried to adopt the ways of white settlers to avoid removal from their homes.	PBS: Indian Removal Digital History websites

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND NATIVE AMERICANS

Guiding Questions	Notes	Source
Treaties with the Federal Government: What were the goals of the federal government in signing treaties with Native American tribes?	Beginning in the early 1800s, Native American tribes were removed from their homelands, long before the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Through treaties or through war with tribes, the federal government sought to remove tribes from land that western settlers wanted. For example, Jackson fought an uprising by the Creeks in 1814 in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend and forced them to surrender land.	U.S. Office of the Historian Oklahoma Historical Society
Jefferson & Monroe Presidencies: How did Thomas Jefferson view Native American tribes? How did James Monroe view Native American tribes?	Jefferson wished to keep Native Americans as allies to the US and to make treaties with them to acquire land. Jefferson saw tribes as sovereign nations, but he also wanted Native Americans to be “civilized,” to adopt the ways of white settlers by farming and leaving their nomadic lives. Monroe favored removal of the tribes to unsettled territory because he believed they could not become part of the “masses.” Monroe believed if the tribes remained where white settlers wanted to live, they would eventually be exterminated.	Monticello website Digital History
Jackson Presidency: How did Andrew Jackson view Native American tribes? What outcome did Jackson and the federal government hope to achieve with Native Americans?	Jackson did not believe tribes were sovereign nations and should be subject to the laws of the state. He saw some tribes becoming “civilized,” but felt that if they remained in the lands desired by white settlers, they would be destroyed. He intended either by force or through treaties to remove all tribes to west of the Mississippi River.	Digital History, Andrew Jackson
Additional Facts: Add any interesting or surprising facts found during your research.	Answers will vary. Under Jackson’s Indian Removal Act, more than 70 treaties for removal were achieved. Many tribal leaders, such as the Seminole leaders Osceola and Tecumseh resisted and fought removal. Many tribes tried to sell off small amounts of land hoping to appease the states and settlers into not wanting more. All tribes over a period of 90–100 years experienced their own Trail of Tears.	US Office of Historian Oklahoma Historical Society

NATIVE TRIBES

Guiding Questions	Notes	Source of Information
Prior to Removal: Where were the native tribes' ancestral homes? What was their lifestyle there?	The Chickasaws' ancestral homes were in Mississippi, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Chickasaws lived in villages and were a matriarchal society. They traded in deerskins but eventually turned to farming and cattle ranching. They had great warriors with fighting skills to defend themselves against other tribes. The Seminoles were mainly located in Florida. They were cattlemen who had large herds of cattle. One early Seminole leader was even called Cowkeeper. The Cherokees began in the Appalachian Mountains but by the 1800s, had settled in Tennessee and Georgia. They lived in villages with a central tribal house for ceremonies and were a matriarchal society, run by women. They hunted game and planted crops. Most Creeks lived in either Alabama or Georgia, but some were scattered in Florida and South Carolina. The Creeks lived in small towns. Each town had a council house, ball playground, and were either peace (white) towns or war (red) towns. One man acted as the leader or "meko," and a Council of Elders was appointed. Over time, many towns merged. The lifestyle was deerskin trading but eventually changed to farming.	Oklahoma Historical Society Mississippi Historical Society Muscogee Creek Nation website New World Encyclopedia
Removal and Relocation: How and when were tribes removed from their homeland? What was it like on the Trail of Tear to Oklahoma territory? Where were Chickasaws eventually relocated in Oklahoma?	The Chickasaws were one of the last tribes to be removed from the southeastern states (1837). They negotiated a settlement so they could move voluntarily to Indian territory and leave in favorable weather. This saved many lives on the trail of tears. Chickasaws were relocated to the southern central part of Indian territory and for a time, shared the land with the Choctaws. Of all the tribes, the Seminoles fought battles against removal. Some were relocated to Indian Territory between 1836-1839 on their own Trail of Tears. The Treaty of Payne's Landing began the forced removal. It took 20 years to remove the Seminoles and almost 15 million dollars. The Seminoles shared land in Indian Territory with the Creeks. Over time, their land holdings in Indian Territory became	New Georgia Encyclopedia Scott's address to the Cherokees

Guiding Questions	Notes	Source of Information
	smaller as more tribes were relocated. The Seminoles were settled in the central region of Indian Territory. Between 1838 to 1839, the last of the Cherokees were forcibly removed from their lands in Georgia. Settlers wanted Cherokee land for planting cotton and gold had been discovered. About a quarter of the tribe died on the Trail of Tears and were marched by the federal government under General Winifred Scott. Scott's address to the nation was to say that Cherokees would be forcibly removed if they did not go peacefully. Through a series of treaties, the Creeks were removed to Indian territory approximately from 1827 with the last 20,000 leaving in 1837. Many Creeks died on the Trail of Tears. The last group was herded into concentration camps and given one blanket per family. For years, their bleached bones could be seen on the trail. Creeks were relocated in central Indian territory.	
Response: How did the native tribes and their leaders respond to removal and relocation?	The Chickasaws went voluntarily to the west. Jackson encouraged leaders to move their people and thought of himself as the great white father. However, the Chickasaws did not fare well in the new territory. They settled near Choctaw villages, were fearful of warring tribes, and had trouble reestablishing their tribal identity at first in Indian territory. The Seminoles fought three wars (1817-1858) to try to keep their land from being taken from them. Some remained in hiding in the Everglades and eluded removal. Perhaps of all the tribes, the Seminoles were the most consistent in fighting back. Leaders such as Osceola, Micanopy, Jumper, and Alligator engaged in guerilla warfare to defeat the government troops. As Georgia tried to take more rights and from the Cherokees, the Cherokees went to the Supreme Court in two cases (1831, 1832). In Worcester v. Georgia, the Supreme Court sided with the Cherokees, but Andrew Jackson would not enforce the ruling and continued to pressure the Cherokees to relocate. Chief John Ross said, "we have been treated like dogs."	New Georgia Encyclopedia Chief John Ross Responses to Removal Oklahoma Historical Society Digital History

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	In his second inaugural address, Jackson said that moving Native Americans to Indian territory could be away from settlers and their decay to be free to pursue their own ways of life. This would allow states to expand in power and wealth. The Treaty of Indian Springs (1825) was an illegal treaty by William McIntosh that ceded lands to federal government. Creeks tried to get the land back, but it was never given back. Pushmataha, a Choctaw Chief, wished for peace with the settlers rather than war, as other tribes were contemplating. He told his people that the wealth and power of the government and settlers would result in slaughter of the tribe if they resisted. Pushmataha did not trust the government but felt that for the safety of his tribe, they must relocate. Jackson told the tribe that they would not have the protection of the federal government and would be subject to Mississippi state law. The state would immediately take all their lands without payment.	
Additional Facts: Add any interesting or surprising facts found during your research.	Answers will vary. The Chickasaws were one of the first tribes to build schools, banks, and buildings in Indian Territory. At different times, the Chickasaws were allies with the Choctaws and at war with them. Their languages and lifestyles were similar. The Cherokees were one of the largest tribes. The tribe made many advancements. They had their own written alphabet, constitution. The Cherokees considered themselves as a sovereign nation living within the United States. “Creeks” were actually a merging of many tribes in southeastern states that lived along creeks (small waterways). The Creeks were slave owners, and when they were removed to Indian Territory, they also took their slaves. Creeks fought early battles against the federal government to keep their land but were defeated.	Cherokee Nation New Georgia Encyclopedia Oklahoma Historical Society