

The Natural Face of North America

The Maximilian-Bodmer Expedition, 1832-1834



Many Trails of Tears

Grade

- 6-8

Subjects

- American History, Social Studies, Art

Key Message

A variety of political, economic, legal, military, and social policies were used by Europeans and Americans to remove and relocate American Indians and to destroy their cultures. U.S. policies regarding American Indians were the result of major national debate. Many of these policies had a devastating effect on established American Indian governing principles and systems. Other policies sought to strengthen and restore tribal self-government.

There were many Trails of Tears. The Indian Removal Act was issued in 1830. This law forced several Native American tribes from their ancestral homelands to regions further west. The Choctaw Trail of Tears was one of the first removals that President Andrew Jackson enacted. The first removal treaty after this act was the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek signed on Sept. 27, 1830, between the US government and the Choctaw Tribe. This treaty traded 11 million acres of Choctaw land in Mississippi for 15 million acres in Indian Territory. The result of this treaty forced the Choctaw people to walk from the region of the Alabama/Mississippi border across Arkansas and Louisiana into Southern Oklahoma. Some chose not to leave and were offered citizenship, but this came at the price of racism, assimilation and losing their Native identity. Compare this with Standing Bear and the forced removal of the Ponca people from Northern Nebraska to Oklahoma. This split the Ponca Tribe into two distinct peoples. When Standing Bear tried to travel back to the Niobrara to bury his son, he was held prisoner at Fort Omaha. He sued General Crook and won the status of “habeas corpus” resulting in his release and right to live in his ancestral homeland along the Niobrara River in Nebraska. However, he was expected to give up his status as a Tribal member and was required to fully assimilate into life as any other American farmer.

Today, there are legal and economic efforts to encroach upon Native land and reservations that were designated to be under Tribal governments, which are sovereign nations. Pipelines, Federal US laws, the Military, and agricultural/ecological endeavors by the US Government threaten Native sovereignty and the well-being of the land and People.

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Pedagogical Approach

This lesson is designed on the Inquiry Design Model (IDM) mirroring the modules found in Native Knowledge 360 curriculum resources. The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) implements the C3 Inquiry Arc and the C3 Framework Dimension Standards into a student-centered, inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning. These lessons align with the Native Knowledge 360 approach to IDM by avoiding prescribing step-by-step instructions, but providing key elements that honor and support teacher expertise. An inquiry approach is used that outlines supporting questions, featured sources, and performance tasks necessary for students to construct arguments that pertain to the compelling question.

Overarching Standards & Essential Understandings

The content and themes in this module are influenced by the National Council for the Social Studies National Curriculum for Social Studies (NCSS), specifically in the ten themes of social studies and the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) framework for Essential Understandings and Concepts.

NCSS Theme(s)	
NMAI Essential Understanding	American Indians devised and have always lived under a variety of complex systems of government. Tribal governments faced rapid and devastating change as a result of European colonization and the development of the United States. Tribes today still govern their own affairs and maintain a government-to-government relationship with the United States and other governments.
NMAI Concepts	• A variety of political, economic, legal, military, and social policies were used by Europeans and Americans to remove and relocate American Indians and to destroy their cultures. U.S. policies regarding American Indians were the result of major national debate. Many of these policies had a devastating effect on established American Indian governing principles and systems. Other policies sought to strengthen and restore tribal self-government. • A variety of historical policy periods have had a major impact on American Indian people's abilities to self-govern. These include: Colonization Period, since 1492 Treaty Period, 1789–1871 Removal Period, 1834–1871

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	Allotment/Assimilation Period, 1887–1934 Tribal Reorganization, 1934–1958 Termination, 1953–1988 Self-Determination, 1975–present
C3 Dimension Standards	Other Content Standards
D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts. D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity. D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created. D2.His.13.6-8. Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose. D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.	Common Core: RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts. RH.6-8.3 Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered). RH. 6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally). 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).

IDM Outline

Compelling Question	Are the Trails of Tears still happening?
Staging the Question	Have you ever been homesick? What does it feel like when you come back home? Imagine being asked to make a deal to leave your home for a new one. What would make it a fair deal to you? Look through the collection of Bodmer drawings of Native Americans. How many have peace medals? What other similarities do you see among these people?

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Supporting Question One		Supporting Question Two	
Why did the Choctaw leaders oppose meeting the president?		What happened to the Choctaw people after the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek?	
Formative Performance Task		Formative Performance Task	
Make a pro/con list of signing the treaty from the perspective of the Choctaw.		Look at the image and describe the way Bodmer represented him. What did he convey, and why?	
Featured Work(s) from the Collection		Featured Work(s) from the Collection	
1986.49.241 Schudegácheh, Ponca Chief with Medal with image of President Madison commemorating the 1817 treaty with the US Govt.		1986.49.332 Billie, Choctaw Man (Journals), 30 November, 1832 Addenda, (pg 1055)	
Summative Performance Task	Compare and contrast the two portraits to consider the effects of US policy on Native Tribes		
Contemporary Connection	Understand: US Policies still affect Native American groups today.		
	Assess: Compare Indian Removal Act treaties to current US policies (immigration, education)		
Taking Informed Action	Read about eminent domain. Find an example of eminent domain being declared in the last 10 years. Write a letter that would support or reject a proposed eminent domain decision.		

1986.49.241 Schudegácheh, Ponca Chief



1986.49.332 Billie, Choctaw Man



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Staging the Question Lesson Procedures

Anticipatory Set

Anticipatory sets are activities aligned with student learning objectives that set the stage for immediate learning opportunities. Also called hooks, bridges and attention grabbers, these activities engage students' prior knowledge and interest at the very beginning of a class period.

Students could be told to leave all their things on their desks and go outside or to another room. Set them up feeling the angst of being in a different, unfamiliar place without their things.

Instruction, Guided Practice, and Formative Assessment

This part of the lesson plan includes what direct teaching will occur as well as how students will become involved in practicing new learning through guided practice.

Present the images from the Bodmer collection mentioned above. Ask students to compare/contrast the way the two men are depicted.

Refer to the following resources:

Discuss Treaties and “Friendship Medals”

This video displays the same medal that the Ponca leader Schuh-De-Gá-Che wears in image [1986.49.241](#).

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/season/20/omaha-ne/appraisals/1809-silver-james-madison-indian-peace-medal--201503A14/>

Check for Understanding

These methods the teacher will use about the student's current level of knowledge and understanding.

Ask students to discuss how having the medal may have made Schuh-De-Gá-Che feel. How does the image support their idea?

Refer to Maximilian's journal discussing Schuh-De-Gá-Che here: [11 May 1833](#)

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Supporting Questions Lesson Procedures

Instruction, Guided Practice, and Formative Assessment

Video about the Jumping Rabbit Creek Treaty

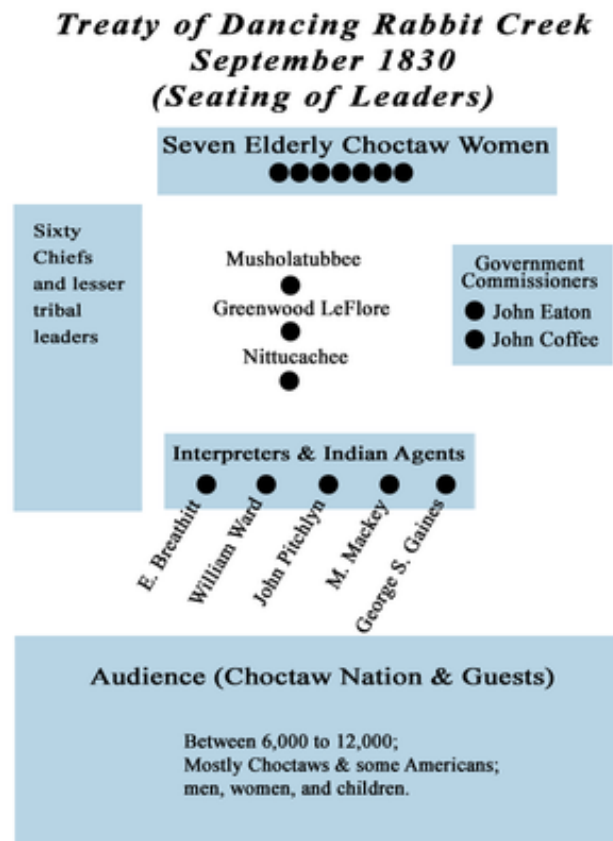
<https://www.chickasaw.tv/videos/two-treaties-one-message-move-west>

PDF of the Jumping Rabbit Creek Treaty

<https://www.choctawnation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/1830treaty-of-dancing-rabbit-creek.pdf>

Image of the Seating Chart at the Treaty Meeting

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a3/Choctaw_Dancing_Rabbit_Seating.png



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Discuss [1986.49.332 Billie, Choctaw Man](#)

Analyze the image and explain how Bodmer chose to represent Billie. What stylistic choices did he make to show his emotions? While this is an image of one man, it's representing a larger group of people, and a larger theme.

How did the results of the Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty affect the Choctaw people?

Check for Understanding

Students create a timeline of the events from the Indian Removal Act to 1833 when these paintings were done.

Local Connection for Nebraska: The Ponca Trail of Tears

Schuh-De-Gá-Che may have had interactions with Standing Bear, as Standing Bear was born in 1829, shortly before Bodmer and Maximilian came through the region. The Ponca were forcibly removed from Northern Nebraska along the Niobrara River. The Fort Laramie Treaty ceded their lands to the Isanti (Santee Sioux/Dakota) which forced the Ponca people south to Oklahoma. Well-known images of Standing Bear depict him wearing two peace medals.

(<https://indianaffairs.state.ne.us/nebraska-virtual-capitol-tour-chief-standing-bear/>)

When Standing Bear revisited Nebraska with an entourage to bury his son in his ancestral homelands, his party had to stay with the Umoñhoñ tribe lest he be arrested. It was illegal to leave their newly-established home in Oklahoma and return to the Niobrara region. Eventually, Standing Bear and his group were arrested and imprisoned at Fort Omaha. He had support to sue the US government and won his right of "habeas corpus" which declared legal rights for Native men. While he was freed and allowed to live in Northern Nebraska, the result was unfortunate in that he was required to give up his Ponca citizenship and fully assimilate into the settler way of life.

Contemporary Application:

Compare Indian Removal Act treaties to current US policies (immigration, education, water rights, ceremonial land and National Parks)

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Read about eminent domain. Find an example of eminent domain being declared in the last 10 years. (Dakota Access Pipeline and Standing Rock, Keystone XL and the Southern Ponca, interstate highways dividing communities, damming rivers, mining and mineral rights) Write a letter that would support or reject the proposed eminent domain.