

Lesson Plan: The Trail of Tears

Grade: 8th

Subject: Social Studies

Time required: 2 class periods

Author: Ethan Holden, Teaching With Primary Sources—MTSU

OVERVIEW

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears are two of the darkest moments in our nation's history. As the United States grew in population and size so too did the vision of what all the nation should be and what lands it should encompass. Unfortunately for American Indians like the Cherokee, they were not a part of this national vision. They were forced from their homes by dubious treaties to occupy lands west of the Mississippi River. The journey was difficult, supplies were scarce, and many died of disease or exposure on their westward trip. Due to the difficulty of the journey and the loss of life it became known as the Trail of Tears. American Indian land and homes left behind were immediately auctioned off and occupied by white settlers. Even that land would not be enough to satisfy the growing United States, and by 1907 many of the lands promised American Indians were back in government hands.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL

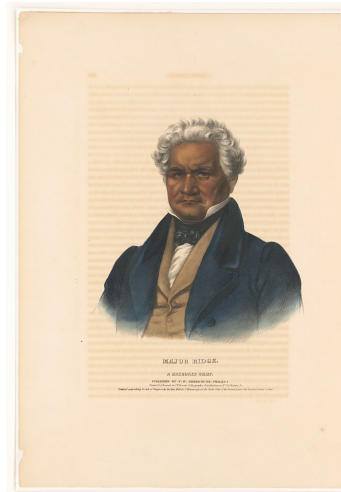
Students will understand the background of the Trail of Tears, the different views of the Indian Removal Act, and how the Trail of Tears affected the American Indians who participated in it.

OBJECTIVES

- The student will recognize the Indian Removal Act.
- The student will explain the Trail of Tears.
- The student will analyze primary sources to determine the effect of the Trail of Tears upon the American Indians who participated.
- The student will write a journal entry in which he/she takes on the role of a participating party during the Trail of Tears.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION

How did the Trail of Tears affect the people that participated in it?



[Major Ridge, a Cherokee chief / printed & coloured at I.T. Bowen's Lithographic Establishment No. 94 Walnut St. \[1838\]](#)

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Social Studies:

- U.S. 4.18 Analyze the impact of Andrew Jackson's presidency, including: the Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, and preservation of the union.
- U.S. 5.38 Analyze the impact of Andrew Jackson's presidency on the American Indian population of Tennessee, including: the Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, Treaty of Echota, and John Ross.
- U.S. 8.47 Describe the impact of the Indian Removal Act and the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the U.S. government, including the significance of Worcester v. Georgia and the Trail of Tears.
- TN.23 Describe the impact of the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears on Tennessee

English/Language Arts:

- Key Ideas and Details 11-12.RL.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing and synthesizing relevant textual evidence from multiple sources.
- Writing: Text Types and Protocol 11-12.W.TTP.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to analyze and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection and organization of content.

Resources

- [Andrew Jackson as The Great Father](#)
- [Major Ridge, a Cherokee chief / printed & coloured at I.T. Bowen's Lithographic Establishment No. 94 Walnut St.](#)
- [Map of the former territorial limits of the Cherokee "Nation of" Indians ; Map showing the territory originally assigned Cherokee "Nation of" Indians.](#)
- [Map showing the lands assigned to emigrant Indians west of Arkansas and Missouri.](#)
- [Orders No. \[25\] Head Quarters, Eastern Division Cherokee Agency, Ten. May 17, 1838. \[n. p. 1838\].](#)
- [The Americans in their moral, social, and political relations. By Francis J. Grund](#)
- [The Madisonian., June 05, 1838, Image 2](#)
- [The Trail of Tears](#)
- [The voice of freedom. volume, December 21, 1839, Image 4](#)
- [Unus Americanus ex Virginia. Aetat 23](#)
- [Vermont telegraph., April 04, 1838, Page 111, Image 3](#)
- [Wi-Jun-Jon - The Pigeon's Egg Head Going to Washington : Returning to his home / / Catlin del.](#)

Materials

- [PowerPoint: "Without A Sign": The Trail of Tears](#)
- [Primary Source Packet](#) (Laminated)
- [H.I.P.P.O. Worksheet](#)
- ["Student Teachers" Roster Sheet](#)
- [Journal Entry Rubric](#)
- [Map Analysis Worksheet](#)

EVALUATION

Total possible points: 200

Bell ringers (2) & Exit ticket: 10 points

H.I.P.P.O. Worksheets: 50 points

Group Participation: 10 points

Individual Notes: 30 points

Journal entry: Up to 100 points

DAY 1	
For the Teacher: Background Knowledge	Because the first part of this lesson plan will be primarily lecture based, background knowledge will be important for you as a teacher. Follow these links to become more acquainted with Trial of Tears content knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail of Tears (History Channel) • Indian Removal (PBS) • Amy M. Kostine, Jeremiah Evart's Petition Campaign Against Indian Removal
Step 1 PowerPoint Slide #2	Pull up "The Trail of Tears" PowerPoint . Introduce the bell-ringer: "Describe what you know about the Trail of Tears in 3-5 complete sentences."
Step 2	After giving the students a few minutes to answer the bell-ringer, ask them to share their answers. If the student gives an answer that you know to be wrong, ask them why they think it is true.
Step 3 PowerPoint Slide # 3	Introduce the investigative question: How did the Trail of Tears impact those that participated in it?

Step 4 PowerPoint Slides #4-11	<p>Begin the lecture with the “Trail of Tears” PowerPoint presentation. There are several key pictures in the PowerPoint that you can stop and have some class discussion on. Those slides and suggested discussion questions are as follows:</p> <p>Slide 5: Wi-Jun-Jon - The Pigeon's Egg Head Going to Washington : Returning to his home / / Catlin del. This picture shows the departure of an American Indian to Washington D.C. and his return home. When he left he had on traditional clothing and when he returns he is dressed in U.S. military garb. What point do you think the artist is trying to make? Why might American Indians adopt Euro-American clothing? In fact, what does it mean to be an American? Is there a standard American look? Language? Culture? Should everyone be forced to conform to this image? Why or why not?</p> <p>Slide 7: Andrew Jackson as The Great Father. This is a drawing of Andrew Jackson sitting in a chair holding the American Indians like “children.” Depending on how far you have gotten into your standards you can ask some of the following questions: What point do you think the author is trying to get across? Why would Andrew Jackson want to remove the American Indians if he had adopted an American Indian child? In what circumstances should the government have the power to seize lands? What would you do if someone tried to remove you from your property?</p> <p>Slides 11 & 12: Map of the former territorial limits of the Cherokee “Nation of” Indians, Map showing the lands assigned to emigrant Indians west of Arkansas and Missouri. These two maps are excellent for examining both the removal of Cherokee and where the various tribes ended up west of the Mississippi. You can show your students the maps during class by following the links embedded in the image of the PowerPoint or you can assign the maps to be analyzed by the students using our Teacher’s Guide: Analyzing Maps.</p>
Step 5	<p>For an exit ticket, have the students complete a 3-2-1 activity. They are to write the following on an index card or piece of notebook paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 things you learned • 2 things you found interesting • 1 thing you still have a question about <p>Students will turn in bell-ringer and exit ticket at the end of class.</p>
Day 2	
Step 1 PowerPoint Slide #12	Pull up “The Trail of Tears” PowerPoint . Introduce the bell-ringer: “Imagine that you are a member of Congress in 1830. Do you pass the Indian Removal Act? Why or why not?”
Step 2	After the students have had time to complete the bell-ringer, initiate a class discussion. This is also the perfect time to address some of the questions and misconceptions that the students had from yesterday as evident in their 3-2-1 exit tickets.
Step 3 PowerPoint Slide # 13	Divide your students up into 8 groups. Put groups 1-4 on one side of the classroom and groups 5-8 on the other side of the classroom. This is important because of the student rotation. You will leave PowerPoint slide # 14 up for the duration of the class. This will help you and the students during the group work.
Step 4	Once your students are in their groups, have the groups appoint a Team Leader. The Team Leader will then assign the other students in the group the roles of Ambassador, Provisioner, and Reader/Interpreter. Alternatively, you can preselect the groups beforehand using the “Student Teachers” Rosster Sheet at the end of this lesson or fill it in with the student selections.

Step 5	<p>The group roles are as follows:</p> <p>Team Leader: The Team Leader will be responsible for keeping the group on task and for the completion of the analysis worksheets.</p> <p>Ambassador: The Ambassador will travel to other groups and tell them about what his group learned. The Ambassador will then take notes about what the group that he is visiting learned.</p> <p>Provisioner: The Provisioner will be responsible for turning in all student work and materials to the teacher.</p> <p>Researcher/Interpreter: The Researcher/Interpreter will read the sources aloud and identify any terms the group is unfamiliar with. The Researcher/Interpreter is also responsible for getting the desks back in order.</p>
Step 6	<p>Hand out the Primary Sources using the “Student Teachers” Roster Sheet as a guide. Each group gets two analysis worksheets.</p> <p>Groups 1 & 5: Primary Source 1</p> <p>Groups 2 & 6: Primary Source 2</p> <p>Groups 3 & 7: Primary Source 3</p> <p>Groups 4 & 8: Primary Source 4</p>
Step 7	<p>The group project will go as follows. The groups will complete their H.I.P.P.O. worksheets together. Once the groups have finished their own source, the teacher will initiate the rotations. The Ambassador for each group will rotate to another group. For example, Group 1’s Ambassador will go to Group 2 and Group 5’s Ambassador will go to Group 6. A more in-depth rotation example can be found in the PowerPoint presentation. The Ambassador will teach the group she is visiting about her group’s primary source. The group she is visiting will take notes on what the Ambassador is saying. Once the Ambassador’s presentation is complete, the group she is visiting will then teaching the Ambassador about its primary source. The Ambassador will also take notes. The teacher will then initiate the rotation and the process will be completed until the Ambassador comes back to her own group.</p>
Step 8	<p>Once the rotations are complete, have the students put their desks back in their places.</p>
Step 9	<p>If time permits, have each Team Leader talk about what his group learned today.</p>
Step 10	<p>Have the students complete the following assignment:</p> <p>Write a journal entry as either a Cherokee, U.S. soldier, or white settler during the process of Indian removal. Describe how you feel about the Indian Removal Act, including some of the following talking points: How does the Act affect you? How do you stand to gain or lose from this act? What are some of your personal hardships that you have to face? What is our outlook on how this is going to work out? Are you for or against the Indian Removal Act?</p> <p>You can choose the length, format, or questions according to your needs. A sample rubric is included at the end of this lesson to make the grading process easier.</p>

EXTENSION

To extend the lesson, there are several projects that you can add. These projects are excellent for stimulating student creativity and providing reinforcement opportunities. Here is one example:

- Though the Cherokee are the most recognizable tribe in regards to the Trail of Tears, they were by no means the only American Indians to be removed from their homes. Have your students research the Seminoles and their experience with the Trail of Tears. Then have your students compare the Seminoles’ experience with the Cherokee experience. How were the Seminole different from the Cherokee? In what ways did the United States force them to leave their lands?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Journal Entry Rubric

Requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy	Paper does not make any citations or references to the sources.	Paper makes one citation or reference to the sources.	Paper makes two citations or references to the sources.	Paper makes three citations or references to the sources.	Paper makes four or more citations or references to the sources.
On Topic	Paper is not on topic, or written about another topic entirely.	Paper frequently departs from the topic subject matter.	Paper stays on topic some of the time.	Paper stays on topic most of the time.	Paper stays on topic all of the time and their journal entry shows their particular interest group was affected by the Trail of Tears.
Formatting	More than 7 formatting errors or the paper is handwritten.	There are 7 formatting errors present.	There are 6 formatting errors present.	There are 4-5 formatting errors present.	There are fewer than 4 formatting errors present.
Spelling and Grammar	More than 7 spelling/grammar mistakes present.	There are 7 spelling/grammatical errors present.	There are 6 spelling/grammatical errors present.	There are 4-5 spelling/grammatical errors present.	There are fewer than 4 spelling/grammatical errors present.
Possible Points: 20 / 20			Comments:		
Total Points: ____ / 20					
Grade: _____					

“STUDENT TEACHERS” ROSTER SHEET



TEACHING
with PRIMARY
SOURCES

Period/Block: _____

Date: _____

In this exercise, the students and their respective groups will be responsible for breaking down primary sources and teaching each other about what they have learned. This sheet will help you plan for the group work and keep track of the different roles/moving parts of this group exercise.

GROUP ROSTER LIST

Group 1: Primary Source Set 1

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 2: Primary Source Set 2

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 3: Primary Source Set 3

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 4: Primary Source Set 4

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 5: Primary Source Set 1

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 6: Primary Source Set 2

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 7: Primary Source Set 3

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____

Group 8: Primary Source Set 4

Team Leader: _____

Ambassador: _____

Provisioner: _____

Interpreter(s): _____
