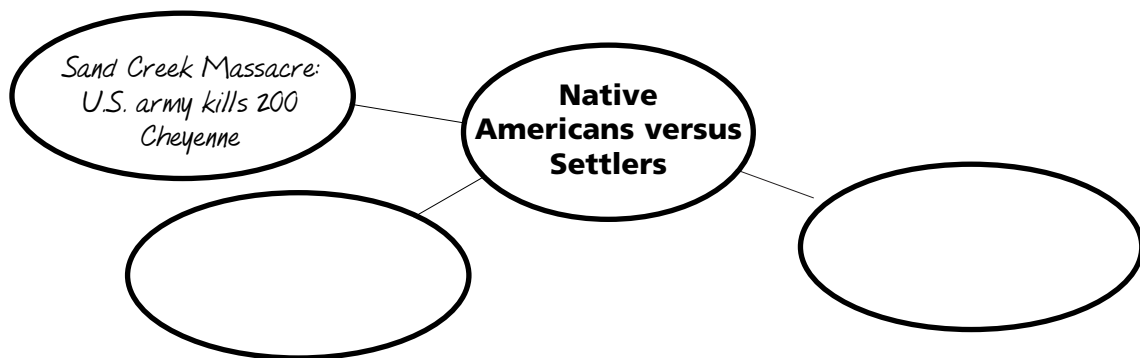


Cultures Clash on the Prairie

AS YOU READ

Use this diagram to take notes about the battles between Native Americans and settlers.



The Culture of the Plains Indians; Settlers Push Westward

How did the Plains Indians live?

Native Americans lived on the **Great Plains**, the grasslands in the west-central portion of the United States. They followed a way of life that centered on the horse and buffalo. The horse allowed them to hunt more easily and to travel farther. The buffalo provided food, clothing, shelter, and other important items.

The Indians of the Great Plains lived in small extended family groups. The men hunted for food. The women helped butcher the *game* and prepare the buffalo hides that the men brought back to

camp. Children learned the skills they would need as adults.

After the Civil War, thousands of white settlers moved to the Great Plains. Some travelled there searching for gold. Others wanted to own land. They argued that because Native Americans had not settled down to “improve” the land, white settlers could *stake* their claim.

1. What were the responsibilities of the different members of Indian families?

Please answer in a paragraph on a separate piece of paper.

The Government Restricts Native Americans; Bloody Battles Continue

Why did Indians and settlers fight each other?

Along the Great Plains, Native Americans and white settlers often clashed—mainly over land and resources. One of the more tragic clashes occurred in 1864. The army was on the side of the settlers. The Cheyenne, living in an area of the Colorado Territory known as Sand Creek, had attacked settlers. In response, the army attacked and killed about 200 Cheyenne in an incident known as the Sand Creek Massacre.

In the **Treaty of Fort Laramie**, most Sioux agreed to live on a *reservation*. But **Sitting Bull**, an important Sioux leader, never signed the treaty. In 1876, he defeated army troops led by **George A. Custer**, at the Little Bighorn River. The Sioux won decisively, killing Custer and all his soldiers. The army recovered, however. Within months it defeated the Sioux.

2. What were the reasons for the clashes between the U.S. government and the Sioux?

Please answer in a paragraph on a separate piece of paper.

The Government Supports Assimilation; The Battle of Wounded Knee

Why did assimilation fail?

To deal with the Native American problem, the U.S. government adopted a plan of **assimilation**. In this plan, Native Americans would give up their beliefs and culture and become part of white culture.

To push assimilation, Congress passed the **Dawes Act** in 1887. The act broke up reservations and gave some of the land to each Native American family for farming. The plan, however, failed. Native Americans were cheated out of the best land. As a result, they had little success farming. Worse yet, by 1900, whites had killed nearly all the buffalo. Native Americans depended on the buffalo for their food, clothing, and shelter.

The Sioux adopted a *ritual* called the Ghost Dance which they hoped would bring the buffalo back. This made the Army nervous. In 1890 they rounded up a group of Sioux including Sitting Bull. When they tried to take the Sioux's weapons a fight broke out. Army troops killed 300 unarmed Sioux in the **Battle of Wounded Knee**.

3. What were two reasons why assimilation failed?

Please answer in a paragraph on a separate piece of paper.

Cattle Becomes Big Business; A Day in the Life of a Cowboy; The End of the Open Range

What caused the cattle business to grow?

Cattle ranching became a big business after the Civil War. Ranchers raised **longhorns**, a sturdy breed first brought to the Americas by the Spanish. American cowboys learned from *vaqueros*, the first cowboys who worked on Spanish ranches in Mexico.

Growing cities spurred the demand for beef. Cattle ranchers drove their cattle over the **Chisholm Trail** from San Antonio, Texas, to Kansas where they were shipped by rail to Chicago.

Between 1866 and 1885, about 55,000 cowboys worked the plains. About 12 percent of these cowboys were Mexican. About 25 percent were African American.

A cowboy's life was difficult. Cowboys worked between 10 and 14 hours a day in all kinds of weather. They worked hard all spring and summer. In the winter, they lived off their savings or went from ranch to ranch and looked for odd jobs. In the spring, cowboys rounded up their cattle and headed them out on the **long drive**. This was the journey from the plains to the shipping yards in Abilene, Kansas. The days of the open range and cattle drive did not last long. Bad weather in the 1880s wiped out many ranchers. Others started using barbed wire to fence in their ranches.

4. What two factors helped the cattle business to grow?

Please answer in a paragraph on a separate piece of paper.