

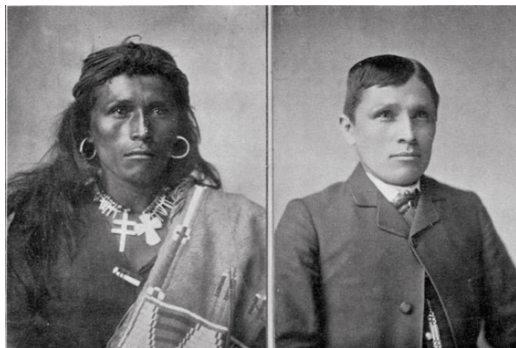
Instructions:

Read the background to each historical event. Then, either follow the link or look at the attached primary source. Read the sources carefully and then answer the questions that follow in as much detail as possible.

The Dawes Act:

The Dawes Act of 1887, or the General Allotment Act, was a major law that changed the lives of Native Americans in the U.S. Authored by Senator Henry Dawes, it aimed to assimilate Native Americans into American society by dividing their communal lands into individual allotments. Each Native American family head got a piece of land to farm, encouraging them to adopt a more American lifestyle. One method of accomplishing this was through the use of boarding schools that taught Indian children how to act and dress in the way that white Americans wanted them to. However, this plan didn't work well. Many got land that wasn't good for farming, and they struggled with new farming methods that were different from their traditional ways. Also, when land was passed down, it was often split among many heirs, making the plots too small to use effectively. Over time, this law led to Native Americans losing a lot of their land, which hurt their cultural and social structures.

Source 1 - Dawes Act Before/After:



1. How do the two outfits in the images show what the Dawes Act wanted for Native Americans?

The outfits show that he was assimilating (joining the western culture of the white Americans)

2. What differences do you see in the person's clothing and look from the left image to the right image?

Hair, Jewelry, Shirt

3. Why did the Dawes Act encourage Native Americans to dress like the person in the right image?

It encouraged them by giving land

4. How might the person in the pictures feel about wearing the two different types of clothing?

He might feel like he is being forced to abandon his culture.

Source 2 - The "Long Hair" Letter:

<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/reservations-resistance-and-the-indian-reorganization-act-1900-1940/sources/1748>

1. How does the "long hair" letter reflect the broader goals of the Dawes Act in terms of assimilating Native Americans into American culture?

It attacks their culture

2. Why might the government have believed that changing the physical appearance of Native Americans was important under policies like the Dawes Act?

Changing their appearance changes their culture

3. What similarities can you find between the policies suggested in the letter and the objectives of the Dawes Act regarding land allotments and the breaking up of tribal lands?

They both want to destroy Native American culture

4. Considering the letter's goals, what impact do you think these policies had on the cultural identity and community structure of Native American peoples?

It hurt the cultures of Native Americans

Sitting Bull:

Sitting Bull, born around 1831, was a respected leader of the Hunkpapa Lakota Sioux tribe, renowned for his courage and wisdom. He emerged as a powerful figure in the resistance against United States government policies aimed at Native American peoples. Notably, Sitting Bull played a crucial role in the events leading up to the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876. This battle was a significant part of the Great Sioux War and saw the combined forces of the Lakota, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes go up against the 7th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army. Under the leadership of Sitting Bull, along with commanders like Crazy Horse, the Native American forces achieved a resounding victory, defeating the cavalry led by Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. The battle, often referred to as Custer's Last Stand, became emblematic of Native American resistance and Sitting Bull's status as a steadfast defender of his people's way of life. His leadership during this period made him a legendary figure in the history of the American West.

Source - New York Herald Interview with Sitting Bull, 1877

(from

https://www.astonisher.com/archives/museum/sitting_bull_little_big_horn.html)

"This big fight, then, extended through three hours?"

"Through most of the going forward of the sun."

"Where was the Long Hair [General Custer] the most of the time?"

"I have talked with my people; I cannot find one who saw the Long Hair until just before he died. He did not wear his long hair as he used to wear it. His hair was like yours," said Sitting Bull, playfully touching my forehead with his

taper fingers. "It was short, but it was of the color of the grass when the frost comes."

"Did you hear from your people how he died? Did he die on horseback?"

"No. None of them died on horseback."

"All were dismounted?"

"Yes."

"And Custer, the Long Hair?"

"Well, I have understood that there were a great many brave men in that fight, and that from time to time, while it was going on, they were shot down like pigs. They could not help themselves. One by one the officers fell. I believe the Long Hair rode across once from this place down here (meaning the place where Tom Custer's and Smith's companies were killed) to this place up here (indicating the spot on the map where Custer fell), but I am not sure about this. Any way it was said that up there where the last fight took place, where the last stand was made, the Long Hair stood like a sheaf of corn with all the ears fallen around him."

"Not wounded?"

"No."

"How many stood by him?"

"A few."

"When did he [Col. George A. Custer] fall?"

"He killed a man when he fell. He laughed."

"You mean he cried out."

"No, he laughed; he had fired his last shot."

1. What does Sitting Bull's description of the battle's duration suggest about how intense or fierce the fighting was?

2. Sitting Bull mentioned that he spoke with his people about the battle. What does this tell us about the way Native American communities shared information and remembered significant events?

3. The interview suggests that Custer and his men were trapped in their final moments. What does this indicate about the strategy and fighting capabilities of Sitting Bull's forces during the Battle of Little Bighorn?

4. What does the image of Custer laughing as he fell suggest about his character or the final moments of the battle, according to Sitting Bull's understanding?

Navajo Code Talkers:

The Navajo Code Talkers played a crucial role in World War II as members of the United States Marine Corps. Recruited from the Navajo Nation, these Native American soldiers developed a secret military code based on their native language, Navajo. This code was used to send confidential communications on the battlefield. It was incredibly effective because the Navajo language was unwritten and extremely difficult for non-speakers to learn, making the code virtually unbreakable by enemy forces. The Code Talkers participated in several key battles in the Pacific theater, significantly aiding American military efforts. Their unique contribution not only demonstrated the strategic value of their cultural heritage but also helped shift perspectives on Native American languages and skills. Despite their important role, the Code Talkers' work remained classified for many years after the war, and they only received widespread recognition much later.

Source 1 - Picture of the Navajo Code Talkers



1. What equipment are the Navajo Code Talkers using in this image, and how might it have been important for their role in the war?
2. Based on what you see, what do you think are the main responsibilities of a Code Talker during a military operation?
3. How does the image show the teamwork between the Code Talkers, and why would this be vital for their success?
4. What can you infer from the image about the conditions under which the Code Talkers had to work while sending coded messages?

The American Indian Movement (AIM)

The American Indian Movement (AIM) is an advocacy group founded in 1968 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, by Native American activists. AIM was established in response to systemic issues of poverty, discrimination, and police brutality against Native Americans. It sought to address the sovereignty and rights of Native American peoples, aiming to revitalize their

culture and traditions that had been suppressed by U.S. government policies and societal discrimination. AIM's activism included protests, legal actions, and educational initiatives. Perhaps most famously, AIM organized the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, a 71-day standoff with federal authorities that highlighted treaty rights and the federal government's relationship with Native American tribes. The movement brought national attention to the struggles of Native American communities, advocating for treaty rights, the return of tribal lands, and the upholding of sovereign rights. Despite facing criticism and internal challenges, AIM significantly impacted the civil rights era for Native Americans and continues to inspire activism and cultural pride among Indigenous peoples.

Source - Mourning Indians Dump Sand on Plymouth Rock

<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/11/27/archives/mourning-indians-dump-sand-on-plymouth-rock.html>

1. Who was Gary Oakes and what did he express about Plymouth Rock's significance to American Indian history?
2. What was the purpose of gathering around the statue of Massasoit for the American Indians mentioned in the article?
3. How did the American Indian Movement, led by Russell Means, use the Thanksgiving Day event to convey their message?
4. What actions did the demonstrators take to symbolize their reclaiming of rights, and how did the local non-Indian residents respond to these actions?