Homelands Along Rivers

Trace the locations and changing homelands of four Native nations in Alabama.

SS24.AS.6 "Identify the locations of the major Native American tribes of Alabama during the colonial period into the nineteenth century. 6a Compare and contrast the major Native American tribes in Alabama of the colonial period and nineteenth century."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the Alabama location of each nation, circle river names used as location clues, and number two statements that show how control of homelands changed in the nineteenth century.

A Journey Across Alabama

1. Imagine traveling across Alabama around 1800, when rivers served as routes between Native towns and farms. In the northwest, near the Tennessee River and the Mississippi border, you would enter lands claimed by the Chickasaw. Farther east along the Tennessee River, in northeastern Alabama, Cherokee communities occupied valleys and nearby mountains. These were distinct nations, not two names for the same people. Their territories did not follow today's county lines, and Native families also moved, traded, and lived beyond any simple boundary. Describing a homeland on a present-day map is an approximation, not a fence around every village.

2. Travel south toward the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, and you would find towns of the Muscogee, often called the Creek in colonial records. Their towns formed a confederacy rather than one centrally run village. Creek homelands extended through eastern and central Alabama and into Georgia. In western Alabama, the Choctaw had communities and claims near the Mississippi border and the Tombigbee River. Both Creek and Choctaw communities farmed and used river routes, but their main Alabama homelands lay in different areas. The Choctaw were a separate nation from the Chickasaw to their north.

3. These locations changed during the nineteenth century. After the Creek War, the 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson forced the Creek to surrender vast lands, including much of central and southern Alabama. During the 1830s, federal removal policies and land cessions pushed most Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Cherokee people from their southeastern homelands to lands west of the Mississippi River. Removal was not a single trip shared by all four nations: treaties, dates, routes, and experiences differed. Some Native people remained in Alabama or returned later. Their descendants and communities are part of the state's history today.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Compare the Chickasaw and Cherokee locations along or near the Tennessee River. Which part of Alabama was associated with each nation?

2. How did the main Alabama homelands of the Creek and Choctaw differ? Name a river associated with each.

3. Which two nations had homelands near the Mississippi border, and how did their Alabama locations differ?

4. What happened to the four nations' southeastern homelands during the 1830s? What detail prevents you from saying every Native person left Alabama?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence note for a museum exhibit about a journey across Alabama around 1800. Start in the northwest, travel to the northeast, turn south through central Alabama, and finish in the west; identify the nation at each stop, compare two stops, and explain how the picture of these homelands changed in the nineteenth century.

ANSWER KEY

Homelands Along Rivers

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the Alabama location of each nation, circle river names used as location clues, and number two statements that show how control of homelands changed in the nineteenth century. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare the Chickasaw and Cherokee locations along or near the Tennessee River. Which part of Alabama was associated with each nation?	**The Chickasaw claimed land in northwestern Alabama near the Tennessee River; Cherokee communities occupied northeastern Alabama along the river and in nearby mountains.**
2	How did the main Alabama homelands of the Creek and Choctaw differ? Name a river associated with each.	**Creek homelands were mainly in eastern and central Alabama near the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers. Choctaw communities and claims were in western Alabama near the Tombigbee River.**
3	Which two nations had homelands near the Mississippi border, and how did their Alabama locations differ?	**The Chickasaw claimed land in northwestern Alabama near the border. The Choctaw had communities and claims in western Alabama near the border.**
4	What happened to the four nations' southeastern homelands during the 1830s? What detail prevents you from saying every Native person left Alabama?	**Land cessions and federal removal policies pushed most people of all four nations west of the Mississippi River. Some Native people remained in Alabama or returned later.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My route begins in northwestern Alabama, where the Chickasaw claimed land near the Tennessee River. Heading east along that river, I reach Cherokee homelands in northeastern Alabama. Turning south, I pass Creek towns near the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers. I then travel west toward Choctaw communities near the Tombigbee River. Unlike the Cherokee homeland in the northeast, the Choctaw homeland lay in the west, and nineteenth-century land cessions and removals displaced most people of all four nations from their southeastern homelands.

Accept accurate comparisons that use northwest, northeast, central or eastern, and west to locate the nations. Students should describe removal as affecting most people, not every Native person.