Promises and Pressure

Trace changing relations between Native nations and the U.S. government

6-12.US1.48 "Describe relations between American Indians and the United States government following the Civil War, including conflict, treaties, containment, reservation, and assimilation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one treaty promise, circle two Native responses, and number one example each of conflict, reservation containment, and assimilation in the order they appear to trace how relations changed.

The Black Hills and a Broken Promise

1 After the Civil War, the United States pushed farther into the Great Plains. Railroad crews, settlers, and soldiers crossed lands that Native nations used and defended. In 1868, the United States signed the Fort Laramie Treaty with the Lakota and other Native leaders. The treaty recognized a Great Sioux Reservation, including the Black Hills in present-day South Dakota, and promised that settlers would stay out. For Lakota people, the Black Hills held deep spiritual meaning. The agreement was meant to limit clashes, but it also confined the Lakota to a smaller area than the lands they had long used.

2 The promise did not hold. In 1874, a U.S. Army expedition reported gold in the Black Hills. Prospectors entered the reservation, and the government failed to keep them out. When officials tried to buy the Black Hills and Lakota leaders refused, the government ordered Lakota groups living outside the reservation to move onto it. Some resisted, and fighting followed. In 1876, Lakota and Cheyenne fighters defeated U.S. troops at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The United States then sent more soldiers. In 1877, Congress took the Black Hills despite Lakota opposition, breaking the treaty's protection of that land.

3 After the fighting, federal officials pressed more Native families to live on reservations, where government agents controlled supplies and movement. Many communities faced hunger as bison herds vanished and promised food did not always arrive. In 1887, the Dawes Act promoted assimilation by dividing many reservations into individual family plots instead of keeping land under tribal control. Land left over was sold to non-Native settlers, shrinking Native landholdings. Federal officials also sent Native children to boarding schools, often far from home, where they were punished for speaking their languages. Native people resisted these pressures and worked to keep their communities and cultures alive.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Fort Laramie Treaty try to shape relations between the Lakota and the United States, and what later changed those relations?

2. How did relations turn to conflict after Lakota leaders refused to sell the Black Hills? Include a Native response and a U.S. government response.

3. How did life on reservations give the U.S. government more control over Native families?

4. How did the Dawes Act and boarding schools each try to change Native life?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a museum label of 70 to 95 words explaining how relations between the Lakota and the U.S. government changed. Connect one treaty promise, one later conflict, and one assimilation policy, and include one way Native people responded.

ANSWER KEY

Promises and Pressure

GRADES 6-12 · 6-12.US1.48

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one treaty promise, circle two Native responses, and number one example each of conflict, reservation containment, and assimilation in the order they appear to trace how relations changed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Fort Laramie Treaty try to shape relations between the Lakota and the United States, and what later changed those relations?	**The treaty recognized a reservation that included the Black Hills and promised to keep settlers out. Gold drew prospectors into the reservation, and the government failed to stop them.**
2	How did relations turn to conflict after Lakota leaders refused to sell the Black Hills? Include a Native response and a U.S. government response.	**The government ordered Lakota groups outside the reservation to move onto it. Some resisted, and Lakota and Cheyenne fighters defeated U.S. troops at Little Bighorn. The United States sent more soldiers.**
3	How did life on reservations give the U.S. government more control over Native families?	**Federal officials pressed families to live on reservations, where government agents controlled supplies and movement.**
4	How did the Dawes Act and boarding schools each try to change Native life?	**The Dawes Act divided many reservations into individual plots instead of land held under tribal control. Boarding schools separated children from home and punished them for speaking their languages.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty promised that settlers would stay out of the Great Sioux Reservation, which included the Black Hills. After gold was reported there, prospectors entered, and Lakota leaders refused to sell the land. Fighting followed, including the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Congress took the Black Hills in 1877 despite Lakota opposition. Later, the Dawes Act divided many reservations into family plots, weakening tribal control of land. These events show a shift from treaty promises to government control, while Native people resisted.

Accept other passage-supported examples of conflict and Native responses. The museum label should connect the required events rather than simply list them.