Allies, Then Divided

Comparing views on Cherokee removal

8.C.8.3.F "Evaluate differing perspectives among Native and American leaders regarding removal policies, including the views of Cherokee leaders such as John Ross and Major Ridge..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each named person. Underline a phrase that shows what each person believed about removal or Cherokee rights, so you can compare their views.

Different Answers to Removal

1. In 1814, Cherokee warriors fought beside U.S. forces during the Creek War, part of the War of 1812. John Ross served as an officer with Cherokee troops, and Major Ridge also fought alongside American forces. Years later, the United States pressed the Cherokee Nation to leave its homeland in the Southeast for land west of the Mississippi River. Federal officials said removal would open land for American settlers and reduce conflict. For Cherokee families, the policy threatened farms, communities, and their right to govern themselves.

2. Ross argued that earlier treaties protected Cherokee land and self-government. He urged the nation to resist removal through petitions and the courts, backed by many Cherokee citizens. Ridge once opposed removal too, but he came to believe U.S. pressure could not be stopped. He argued that negotiating a treaty might secure land and aid in the West rather than leave the Cherokee with nothing. Ridge signed the 1835 Treaty of New Echota without the approval of Ross or the Cherokee majority. Their opposing choices deepened divisions within the nation.

3. Opposition also came from Americans. Congressman Davy Crockett voted against the Indian Removal Act of 1830 because he considered forcing Native peoples from their homes unjust. Christian missionaries, including Samuel Worcester, challenged Georgia's attempts to control Cherokee territory and defended Cherokee rights. Worcester's case reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in 1832 that Georgia's laws had no force in Cherokee territory. Even with such opposition, federal officials enforced the removal treaty. In 1838, soldiers forced thousands of Cherokee people west, a journey remembered as the Trail of Tears.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Ross and Ridge's shared wartime experience contrast with their later positions on removal?

2. Why did Ross and Ridge choose different ways to respond to removal pressure?

3. How was Crockett's opposition to removal similar to Worcester's actions, and how was it different?

4. How did federal officials' position differ from Ross's, and what happened despite his opposition?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence museum label explaining how Ross and Ridge's shared wartime service contrasts with their later responses to removal. Compare one of their positions with Crockett's or Worcester's, then explain how the disagreement affected the Cherokee Nation.

ANSWER KEY

Allies, Then Divided

GRADE 8 · 8.C.8.3.F

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each named person. Underline a phrase that shows what each person believed about removal or Cherokee rights, so you can compare their views. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Ross and Ridge's shared wartime experience contrast with their later positions on removal?	**Both served alongside U.S. forces during the Creek War. Later, Ross resisted removal, while Ridge supported negotiating a removal treaty.**
2	Why did Ross and Ridge choose different ways to respond to removal pressure?	**Ross believed treaties protected Cherokee land, so he used petitions and the courts. Ridge believed removal could not be stopped and hoped a treaty would secure land and aid in the West.**
3	How was Crockett's opposition to removal similar to Worcester's actions, and how was it different?	**Both opposed actions that harmed Cherokee rights. Crockett voted against the removal law because he thought forced removal was unjust, while Worcester challenged Georgia's control of Cherokee territory.**
4	How did federal officials' position differ from Ross's, and what happened despite his opposition?	**Federal officials pressed for removal to open land to settlers and reduce conflict, while Ross argued for keeping Cherokee land under earlier treaties. Officials enforced the treaty, and soldiers forced Cherokee people west.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

John Ross and Major Ridge both served alongside U.S. forces during the Creek War. Years later, Ross fought removal through petitions and the courts because treaties protected Cherokee land. Ridge believed removal could not be stopped and signed a treaty to seek land and aid in the West. Like Ross, Davy Crockett opposed forcing Native people from their homes, though Crockett argued it was unjust. Ross and Ridge's opposing choices divided the Cherokee Nation as federal officials pushed removal forward.

Accept comparisons that accurately distinguish Ridge's treaty strategy from Ross's resistance. Do not treat Ridge's decision to sign as the position of the Cherokee majority.