Rivers and Removal

How trade and federal policy reshaped Indian Territory

OKH.C.2 "Evaluate the major political and economic events that transformed the land and its people from early contact through Indian Removal and its aftermath..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle two U.S. actions or policies that changed the region. Underline one consequence for Tribal nations of each, then give each action and its consequence the same number.

A Region Transformed

1. At the Three Forks, where the Grand and Verdigris rivers meet the Arkansas, boats and trails made a trading post useful. Chouteau's Trading Post operated in this region in the early 1800s, exchanging manufactured goods for furs with American Indian traders. River travel carried goods toward distant markets, while trails linked the post to nearby communities. Trade brought new supplies and business, but it also strengthened U.S. economic ties to land already used and claimed by Tribal nations. A trading center could therefore connect people while helping outsiders extend their influence across the region.

2. As white settlers sought southeastern land, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. It authorized the president to arrange land exchanges with eastern Tribes and fund their move west of the Mississippi River. Federal and state pressure made these agreements far from free choices. Cherokee leaders resisted in different ways: Principal Chief John Ross fought removal, while Elias Boudinot later signed the disputed Treaty of New Echota. Missionary Samuel Worcester supported Cherokee sovereignty in a Supreme Court case. In Worcester v. Georgia (1832), the Court ruled that Georgia law had no force in Cherokee territory. The ruling did not stop the federal government from carrying out Cherokee removal.

3. In the 1830s, the U.S. government forced the Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole toward Indian Territory, in what is now Oklahoma. Some traveled by river; others walked long distances. Disease, hunger, and exposure killed many. Fort Gibson and Fort Towson served federal goals: troops monitored movement and tried to keep peace as relocated Tribes arrived, supporting removal and westward expansion. Yet Indian Territory was not empty. Relocated nations had to negotiate land and resources with nations already there, including the Osage. These encounters sometimes led to cooperation and sometimes to conflict, reshaping Tribal relationships and communities.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did rivers and trails help the trading post grow U.S. economic influence in the region?

2. What did the Indian Removal Act authorize, and why were the resulting agreements not necessarily free choices?

3. How did Cherokee responses to removal differ, and what limit did the Supreme Court ruling reveal?

4. How did the forts serve federal goals, and how did removal change relationships among Tribal nations?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five- or six-sentence museum label arguing whether trade networks, federal policy, or military posts most changed Indian Territory. Use at least two details from the passage, explain an effect on relocated nations and an effect on nations already there, and acknowledge one other cause.

ANSWER KEY

Rivers and Removal

HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle two U.S. actions or policies that changed the region. Underline one consequence for Tribal nations of each, then give each action and its consequence the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did rivers and trails help the trading post grow U.S. economic influence in the region?	**Rivers carried goods to distant markets, and trails connected the post to nearby communities. This trade strengthened U.S. economic ties to Tribal lands.**
2	What did the Indian Removal Act authorize, and why were the resulting agreements not necessarily free choices?	**It authorized the president to arrange land exchanges with eastern Tribes and fund moves west of the Mississippi. Federal and state pressure limited Tribes' freedom to choose.**
3	How did Cherokee responses to removal differ, and what limit did the Supreme Court ruling reveal?	**John Ross opposed removal, while Elias Boudinot signed the disputed Treaty of New Echota. Although the Court ruled that Georgia law had no force in Cherokee territory, the ruling did not stop federal removal.**
4	How did the forts serve federal goals, and how did removal change relationships among Tribal nations?	**Troops monitored movement and tried to keep peace, supporting removal and westward expansion. Relocated nations negotiated land and resources with nations already there, leading to cooperation or conflict.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Federal removal policy changed Indian Territory most because it brought southeastern Tribal nations into a region where other nations already lived. The 1830 Indian Removal Act authorized land exchanges and funded moves west of the Mississippi, but federal and state pressure limited Tribes' choices. People forced from their homelands faced hunger, disease, and exposure on the journey. Nations already in Indian Territory, including the Osage, had to negotiate land and resources with newcomers, sometimes facing conflict. Trading posts also expanded U.S. influence, but federal removal policy transformed where entire communities lived.

Accept any well-supported choice in Part 3 if it explains effects on both relocated and already-present nations and acknowledges another cause. For Question 3, students may also cite Samuel Worcester's support for Cherokee sovereignty.