Land, Freedom, Belonging

Read how the 1866 treaties changed Native nations.

OKH.C.3.1.B "Explain conditions of the Reconstruction Treaties of 1866 (e.g., land cessions, the abolition of slavery, and the required Tribal enrollment of the Freedman)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the land conditions, circle the rule about slavery, and number the Creek and Cherokee Freedmen citizenship terms 1 and 2. Use your marks to explain how the treaties changed land, freedom, and membership.

What Changed in 1866?

1 In 1866, families in the Creek Nation faced a new set of rules. The Civil War had ended, and the United States negotiated Reconstruction treaties with the Creek and other Native nations that had made wartime agreements with the Confederacy. Federal officials held strong leverage during these talks, but each nation signed its own treaty with different terms. The treaties did more than settle wartime relations. They changed who controlled land, ended slavery within the nations, and addressed the place of people formerly enslaved by tribal citizens. Those people and their descendants are often called Freedmen.

2 Land was one condition of the treaties. The Creek treaty required the nation to cede the western half of its territory in present-day Oklahoma to the United States. That land was later used to relocate other Native peoples. The Cherokee treaty also required land transfers, including the sale of Cherokee land in Kansas. These terms reduced tribal control over territory, even though the nations had lived and governed on these lands. A second condition concerned slavery: both treaties declared slavery abolished within the nations. Former enslavers could no longer legally claim people as property under tribal law.

3 Ending slavery did not, by itself, decide who belonged to a nation. The 1866 treaties also addressed Freedmen's status. The Creek treaty required the nation to recognize qualifying people of African descent as citizens with the rights of other Creek citizens. The Cherokee treaty gave qualifying Freedmen and their descendants the rights of native Cherokees. Tribal enrollment on official rolls documented membership under these terms, though later disputes over enrollment continued. Together, these conditions linked federal demands to land, freedom, and citizenship. They changed the daily lives of Native families and Freedmen families in different ways.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Creek treaty's land condition change the nation's control over its territory?

2. What land condition did the Cherokee treaty include, and how could it affect Cherokee control of land?

3. What did the treaties require concerning slavery, and what legal claim did that end?

4. Why was ending slavery alone not enough to settle Freedmen's status? Explain how the Creek and Cherokee treaty terms addressed membership.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 65- to 85-word museum label titled “A Treaty Changes a Community.” Make a claim about who gained or lost power, then connect one nation's land condition, the abolition of slavery, and a Freedmen citizenship term to support it.

ANSWER KEY

Land, Freedom, Belonging

HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.3.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the land conditions, circle the rule about slavery, and number the Creek and Cherokee Freedmen citizenship terms 1 and 2. Use your marks to explain how the treaties changed land, freedom, and membership. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Creek treaty's land condition change the nation's control over its territory?	**The Creek Nation had to cede the western half of its territory to the United States, reducing its control over that land.**
2	What land condition did the Cherokee treaty include, and how could it affect Cherokee control of land?	**It included the sale of Cherokee land in Kansas, reducing the nation's control over that territory.**
3	What did the treaties require concerning slavery, and what legal claim did that end?	**Both treaties abolished slavery within the nations, ending former enslavers' legal claim to people as property.**
4	Why was ending slavery alone not enough to settle Freedmen's status? Explain how the Creek and Cherokee treaty terms addressed membership.	**Freedom did not automatically determine citizenship. The Creek treaty required citizenship rights for qualifying people of African descent, while the Cherokee treaty granted qualifying Freedmen and their descendants the rights of native Cherokees. Tribal rolls documented membership.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Treaty Changes a Community. The 1866 treaties changed who held power over land and who had rights within a nation. The Creek Nation had to cede the western half of its territory, reducing its control over land. Its treaty also ended slavery, so former enslavers could no longer legally own people. Freedom alone did not settle membership, however. The treaty required the Creek Nation to recognize qualifying people of African descent as citizens with rights, and tribal rolls documented that membership.

Accept accurate explanations using either nation's treaty where the prompt allows a choice. Students should distinguish the abolition of slavery from treaty terms granting eligible Freedmen citizenship rights.