Land and Liberty

Migration, resistance, and community in present-day Oklahoma

OKH.C.3.3 "Analyze the influence of the idea of Manifest Destiny on migrations into present-day Oklahoma. Explain opportunities provided by the Homestead Act of 1862 and its impact on mass migration to the region. Analyze the goals, strategies..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ideas or policies that encouraged migration, and circle two ways Tribal nations defended their rights. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside one cause-and-effect link in each paragraph.

Who Saw Opportunity in Oklahoma?

1. In the late nineteenth century, many Americans accepted Manifest Destiny, the belief that U.S. expansion westward was natural and justified. That idea made migration into present-day Oklahoma seem like progress to newcomers, but it ignored Native nations' rights to their lands. The Homestead Act of 1862 offered eligible settlers a path to claim 160 acres by living on and improving the land for five years. It did not immediately open Indian Territory to homesteading. After federal officials opened the Unassigned Lands in 1889, the chance to claim land under homestead rules helped draw large crowds of settlers.

2. David Payne and the Boomers argued that the Unassigned Lands, land not assigned to a particular tribal nation after earlier federal land transfers, should be opened to non-Native settlers. From 1879 to 1884, Payne led groups into the area before legal settlement was allowed. Federal troops removed them, but their repeated entries and public speeches kept pressure on Congress to open the land. These actions heightened tensions with Native nations, whose land and treaty rights faced growing threats. Tribal leaders held intertribal councils to coordinate opposition, lobbied federal officials, and brought court challenges to defend their rights as settlers and federal policies pressed further into Indian Territory.

3. Migration did not have one purpose. After the 1889 opening, Black settlers seeking land and safety helped establish all-Black towns such as Langston, founded in 1890, and Boley, founded in 1903. Residents built businesses, schools, and churches and elected local leaders. Owning land and running town affairs offered economic opportunity and a measure of political independence at a time when discrimination limited those choices elsewhere. Yet these towns could not end racism or shield residents from every unfair state policy. Their history shows that some newcomers sought freedom from discrimination while Native nations still faced the loss of land and control.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Manifest Destiny and homestead rules each encourage migration? What limit applied to homesteading before 1889?

2. How did Payne's tactics advance the Boomers' goal while increasing tensions?

3. Why might Tribal leaders use councils, lobbying, and court challenges in response to the pressure described in paragraph 2?

4. How did all-Black towns offer both economic and political opportunities, and what could they not guarantee?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 95 word museum label comparing what Boomers and Tribal nations wanted from the Unassigned Lands. Explain one way federal policy changed migration, then connect all-Black towns to both an opportunity and a limit.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ideas or policies that encouraged migration, and circle two ways Tribal nations defended their rights. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside one cause-and-effect link in each paragraph. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Manifest Destiny and homestead rules each encourage migration? What limit applied to homesteading before 1889?	**Manifest Destiny framed westward settlement as justified. Homestead rules offered eligible settlers a path to claim land, but the act did not immediately open Indian Territory to homesteading.**
2	How did Payne's tactics advance the Boomers' goal while increasing tensions?	**Payne led entries into the Unassigned Lands and used speeches to press for an opening. The entries occurred before settlement was legal, and Native nations faced growing threats to land and treaty rights.**
3	Why might Tribal leaders use councils, lobbying, and court challenges in response to the pressure described in paragraph 2?	**Councils helped leaders coordinate opposition, lobbying let them press federal officials, and court challenges offered a way to defend land and treaty rights.**
4	How did all-Black towns offer both economic and political opportunities, and what could they not guarantee?	**Residents could own land, build businesses, and elect local leaders. The towns could not end racism or protect residents from every unfair state policy.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

To some Boomers, the Unassigned Lands represented a chance to gain farms, and Payne's repeated entries pushed officials to open them. Tribal nations saw a threat to land and treaty rights, so leaders organized councils, lobbied, and challenged policies in court. Federal homestead rules then helped bring more settlers after the 1889 opening. Black settlers also sought opportunity in towns such as Langston, where residents could own businesses and elect leaders. These choices offered some independence, but the towns could not erase racism or restore Native control over land.

Accept accurate comparisons that distinguish settlers' opportunities from Tribal nations' efforts to defend land and rights. Responses should not suggest that the Homestead Act opened Indian Territory in 1862 or that all-Black towns ended discrimination.