Who Claimed the Land?

Federal policy and the opening of Tribal lands in Indian Territory

OKH.C.3.4.B "Describe the intent and effects of the Indian Appropriations Act and methods (e.g., land runs, lotteries) used for the forced redistribution of Tribal lands, such as the Unassigned Lands and the Cherokee Outlet."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline what federal officials intended, circle each method used to give settlers access to land, and number two effects on Tribal nations. Use your marks to trace how a policy became a change on the ground.

From Federal Policy to Land Claims

1. In 1889, Congress passed an Indian Appropriations Act that helped turn Tribal land in Indian Territory into land for non-Native settlement. The act authorized the president to open the Unassigned Lands to homesteaders and called for negotiations over additional Tribal lands. "Unassigned" did not mean unused or free of Native claims. These lands had been part of Indian Territory, where federal treaties and policies had confined many Tribal nations. Federal leaders wanted farms and towns for incoming settlers. Their policy put pressure on Tribal control of land and helped transform Indian Territory into an area governed increasingly for settlers.

2. On April 22, 1889, a signal sent thousands of settlers racing into the Unassigned Lands to claim plots. This land run turned a federal decision to open land into a rapid scramble for individual farms and town sites. Many hopeful settlers found no claim; some who started early, called "Sooners," gained an unfair advantage. Farther north, the Cherokee Nation held title to the Cherokee Outlet, a long tract that connected its lands to western hunting grounds. Federal negotiators pressed for its sale. Congress approved an agreement, and a second major land run opened the Outlet in 1893.

3. Land runs were not the only method. In 1901, federal officials used lotteries to assign claims on lands taken from the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Wichita, and Caddo peoples. Lottery winners received a chance to claim homesteads instead of racing to a stake. Both systems organized access for settlers after federal actions shifted land away from Tribal control. For the Cherokee Nation, the Outlet sale brought payment but also the loss of a large area it had controlled. Across Indian Territory, forced redistribution reduced Tribal landholdings, drew more settlers, and advanced federal plans to replace collective Tribal authority with individual property claims.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What did federal leaders want to accomplish, and how did the 1889 act help them pursue that goal?

2. How did the 1889 land run carry out the decision to open the Unassigned Lands, and what happened to some settlers who joined it?

3. How was the Cherokee Outlet opened to settlers, and what was one effect on the Cherokee Nation?

4. How did the 1901 lotteries differ from land runs, and what effect did both methods have on Tribal control?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a museum label of 70 to 95 words explaining how federal policy and two different methods moved Tribal land into settlers' hands. Include the 1889 act, the Unassigned Lands, the Cherokee Outlet, the 1901 lottery, and one effect on a Tribal nation.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.3.4.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline what federal officials intended, circle each method used to give settlers access to land, and number two effects on Tribal nations. Use your marks to trace how a policy became a change on the ground. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did federal leaders want to accomplish, and how did the 1889 act help them pursue that goal?	**They wanted farms and towns for incoming settlers. The act authorized opening the Unassigned Lands to homesteaders and called for negotiations over additional Tribal lands.**
2	How did the 1889 land run carry out the decision to open the Unassigned Lands, and what happened to some settlers who joined it?	**Settlers raced to claim plots for farms and town sites. Many found no claim, while some who started early gained an unfair advantage.**
3	How was the Cherokee Outlet opened to settlers, and what was one effect on the Cherokee Nation?	**After federal negotiators pressed for a sale and Congress approved an agreement, a land run opened the Outlet in 1893. The Cherokee Nation received payment but lost control of the tract.**
4	How did the 1901 lotteries differ from land runs, and what effect did both methods have on Tribal control?	**Lottery winners received a chance to claim homesteads instead of racing for plots. Both methods gave settlers access to land after federal actions shifted it away from Tribal control.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The 1889 Indian Appropriations Act allowed the president to open the Unassigned Lands and called for negotiations over other Tribal lands. Settlers raced for homesteads there in 1889. After negotiations and congressional approval of a sale, another land run opened the Cherokee Outlet in 1893. The Cherokee Nation received payment but lost control of that large tract. Elsewhere in Indian Territory, a 1901 lottery assigned chances to claim land rather than making settlers race. These methods gave settlers access to land as federal policy reduced Tribal control.

Accept labels that connect federal policy to land runs and lotteries while distinguishing where and when each method was used. Responses should not suggest that the 1901 lotteries opened either the Unassigned Lands or the Cherokee Outlet.