

A Nation Removed

Trace the pressures, policies, and consequences behind Cherokee removal.

8.5.H “analyze the reasons for the removal and resettlement of Cherokee Indians during the Jacksonian era, including the Indian Removal Act, Worcester v. Georgia, and the Trail of Tears.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline phrases that explain why removal happened, then number 1 beside the Indian Removal Act, 2 beside Worcester v. Georgia, and 3 beside evidence about resettlement and its human cost.

Pressure, Policy, and Removal

- ① In the 1820s and 1830s, many white settlers, land speculators, and Georgia officials wanted Cherokee land in the Southeast. The land supported farms, and gold was discovered near Dahlonega, Georgia, in 1828. President Andrew Jackson and supporters argued that moving Native nations west of the Mississippi River would open eastern land to white settlement. Cherokee leaders faced pressure because Georgia claimed authority over their territory, even though the Cherokee Nation had its own government, laws, and farms.
- ② Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. It authorized the president to negotiate treaties that exchanged Native land east of the Mississippi River for land in what was then called Indian Territory, mainly present-day Oklahoma. Jackson presented removal as voluntary and protective, saying it could reduce conflict with settlers. In practice, unequal power, state pressure, and the desire for valuable land limited Cherokee choices. The act gave federal policy a legal tool for pursuing removal instead of protecting Cherokee self-government.
- ③ Cherokee leaders challenged Georgia's actions in court. In Worcester v. Georgia (1832), the Supreme Court ruled that Georgia's laws had no force within Cherokee territory because the Cherokee Nation was a distinct political community. The decision supported Cherokee sovereignty, or self-rule, but the federal government did not enforce it. After the Senate approved the disputed Treaty of New Echota, U.S. troops forced most Cherokee people west in 1838 and 1839. Disease, hunger, exposure, and harsh conditions killed about 4,000 people on the Trail of Tears.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What interests made Cherokee land especially desirable to white settlers and Georgia officials?

2 How did the Indian Removal Act help the federal government pursue removal, and why were Cherokee choices limited?

3 What did the Supreme Court decide in Worcester v. Georgia, and why did that decision fail to stop removal?

4 How were most Cherokee people resettled, and what human result did the passage describe?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence explanation of Cherokee removal. Explain how the desire for land, the Indian Removal Act, Worcester v. Georgia, and the forced journey were connected.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline phrases that explain why removal happened, then number 1 beside the Indian Removal Act, 2 beside Worcester v. Georgia, and 3 beside evidence about resettlement and its human cost. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What interests made Cherokee land especially desirable to white settlers and Georgia officials?	The land could support farms, gold had been discovered nearby, and settlers wanted eastern land opened for white settlement.
2	How did the Indian Removal Act help the federal government pursue removal, and why were Cherokee choices limited?	The act authorized treaties to exchange eastern Native land for western land. Unequal power, state pressure, and demand for valuable land limited Cherokee choices.
3	What did the Supreme Court decide in Worcester v. Georgia, and why did that decision fail to stop removal?	The Court ruled that Georgia's laws had no force in Cherokee territory because the Cherokee Nation was a distinct political community. Removal continued because the federal government did not enforce the ruling.
4	How were most Cherokee people resettled, and what human result did the passage describe?	U.S. troops forced most Cherokee people west in 1838 and 1839. About 4,000 people died from disease, hunger, exposure, and harsh conditions on the Trail of Tears.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

White settlers, land speculators, and Georgia officials wanted valuable Cherokee land, creating pressure for removal. The Indian Removal Act gave the federal government a legal way to exchange eastern lands for western territory. Although Worcester v. Georgia supported Cherokee self-rule, the federal government did not enforce the ruling. After troops forced Cherokee people west, disease, hunger, exposure, and harsh conditions caused about 4,000 deaths on the Trail of Tears.

Accept equivalent cause-and-effect explanations supported by the passage. For the open response, students should connect land pressure, federal policy, the unenforced Court ruling, and the harmful consequences of forced resettlement.