



# Ethnic Studies Lesson 2C: Native American Removal

**TOPIC:**

NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

**GRADE LEVELS:**

11-12

**TIME:**

1½ HOURS

## California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Themes, Values, and Principles Alignment

*Themes:*

2. History and Movement
3. Systems of Power

*Values and Principles:*

1. Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
4. Critique empire building in history and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, and other forms of power and oppression.
5. Challenge racist, bigoted, discriminatory, and imperialist/colonial beliefs and practices on multiple levels.

## California English and Social Science Standards Alignment

*English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):*

**Reading—Informational Text (RI.11-12)**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

(RI.11-12.4)

**Writing—(W.11-12)**

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. (W.11-12.1)

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.11-12.4)

*Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):*

**History-Social Science Content Standards—(Grades 9-12)**

Analyze the relationships among the American Indian nations, the United States, and other world nations, including but not limited to treaties, agreements, and diplomacy. (History-Social Science Content Standard 8.5)

Understand the economic, social, and political effects of the Indian Removal Act and other federal policies on American Indian nations. (History-Social Science Content Standard 8.8)

Understand the effects of the westward movement on American Indian nations, including the Trail of Tears, the establishment of reservations, and assimilation policies. (History-Social Science Content Standard 8.8)

## Lesson Purpose

---

Students will explore the timeline of Indian removal and articulate ways that Native Americans were impacted and responded.

## Essential Questions

---

*What were the events leading up to Indian removal, and how were Native American tribes impacted?*

*How has life changed for American Indians in the United States over the last 350 years?*

## Materials

---

[PBS: History in a Nutshell, The Trail of Tears \(12 minutes, 41 seconds\), August 26, 2022](#)

[National Museum of the American Indian, Native Knowledge 360, How Did Six Different Native Nations Try to Avoid Removal?](#)

[Worksheet](#)

[Department of the Interior: Map of Federally Recognized American Indian Reservations](#)

[KWL Chart](#)

## Vocabulary

---

American Indian removal

Trail of Tears

Andrew Jackson

treaties

## Lesson Steps

---

### Step 1:

- Ask students if they have ever studied or heard about the Native American Removal Act of 1830. Refresh their understanding of events leading up to the act, including a map (example [HERE](#)) of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 and what lands were considered “Indian country.” As a class, show students the [WORKSHEET](#) they will be filling out. Have students watch [PBS: History in a Nutshell](#) (video 12 minutes, 41 seconds). As students watch, they should fill out the shared worksheet with information from the video. The video should be frequently paused to allow students to take notes.

**Step 2:**

- Once the video is complete, have students work in pairs to create an event card on a 3x5 card. Event cards should include the who, what, where, when of the event. Assign one of the 15 dates to each pair of students and have them design an event card for that date. Students may need to conduct additional research in order to fully design the card. Have students mount the cards on a class timeline chart on the wall. (The timeline will be an ongoing project and will include parallel timelines for other ethnicities. Make sure to include enough wall space.) Alternatively, the cards and the timeline could be presented digitally.

**Step 3:**

- Once students have completed this assignment, as a class, ask students to view [Department of the Interior: Map of Federally Recognized American Indian Reservations](#) (this map is slow to load, but it is the most authoritative map of current reservation locations). Ask students to comment on what they notice about the map, where reservations currently are, and why that might be that way.

**Step 4:**

- In the same pair groups, ask students to review examples of how Native American tribes responded to Indian removal. [Students should access the National Museum of the American Indian, Native Knowledge 360, How did six different Native Nations try to avoid removal?](#) Students should create an additional timeline event card with the who, what, when, and where of the Native American response.
- When pairs have completed their event card, have student pairs share their event card with the class and post on the timeline.

**Step 5:**

- As a class, ask students to respond to this lesson's questions, "What were the events leading up to Indian removal, and how were Native American tribes impacted?" and this unit's question, "How has life changed for American Indians in the United States over the last 350 years?" Make sure to note any additional questions or lines of inquiry to the KWL chart.

## **Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection**

---

As time permits and for homework, have students write a newspaper article with the who, what, when, and where of an event from the Indian Removal period. To prepare students for this task, students can read from an original article: [Iowa State Historical Society: Tribal Newspaper Article about Cherokee Nation and White Settlers in Georgia, March 4, 1829.](#)

## **Additional Readings and Resources**

---

[Iowa State Historical Society: Tribal Newspaper Article about Cherokee Nation and White Settlers in Georgia, March 4, 1829.](#)

[National Museum of the American Indian, Digital Lesson and Instructional Resource: American Indian Removal: What Does It Mean to Remove a People?](#)

[National Museum of the American Indian, Hear from the Historian: American Indian Removal, Dr. Mark Hirsch](#)

[Primary Source: Library of Congress, Digital Collections, Indian Removal Act Debate References](#)

## NATIVE AMERICANS

Primary Source: O'Sullivan, John L. "Annexation." In the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Vol. XVII (July 1945).

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. Basic Books, 1998, 311-312.

Sturgis, Amy H. *The Trail of Tears and Indian Removal*. Greenwood, 2006.

**NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES:** America is a pluralistic country, ethnically. It is also a pluralistic country politically—left, right, and center. Ethnic studies educators have ready access to resources from the left-of-center in the [2021 California Model Curriculum](#) and in the [Liberated Model Curriculum](#). This Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum favors teachers exposing students to views from across the political spectrum. Educators often lack guidance to materials from outside the left-of-center. Therefore, in the sections on Additional Readings and Resources, the Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum alerts educators to credible resources that provide an alternative to the other Model Curricula. In doing so, this curriculum encourages educators to acquaint students with evidence-based views from left, right, and center.

## Ethnic Studies 2C: Indian Removal

While watching the video below, fill in information in the table.

[PBS: History in a Nutshell, The Trail of Tears \(12 minutes, 41 seconds\), August 26, 2022](#)

EVENT	WHEN, WHERE	WHO, WHAT
<b>Louisiana Purchase</b>	<i>1803, land west of the Mississippi—not including Oregon Territory and Spanish holdings</i>	<i>President Thomas Jefferson purchased the land from the French and encouraged Eastern tribes to move voluntarily west of the Mississippi</i>
<b>Discovery of gold in Georgia</b>		
<b>Andrew Jackson becomes president of the US</b>		
<b>Indian Removal Act</b>		
<b>Georgia Land Lottery</b>		
<b>Seminole War</b>		
<b><i>Cherokee Nation v. Georgia</i>, Supreme Court case</b>		

NATIVE AMERICANS

EVENT

WHEN, WHERE

WHO, WHAT

<i>Worster v. Georgia</i> , Supreme Court case		
Martin Van Buren becomes president of the US		
Choctaw removal		
Seminole removal		
Creek removal		
Chickasaw removal		
Cherokee Trail of Tears		

### Ethnic Studies 2A: KWL Chart

---

KNOW	WONDER	LEARNED
<p><i>What do we think we already know about this topic?</i></p>	<p><i>What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.</i></p>	<p><i>After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.</i></p>