



# Ethnic Studies Lesson 2E: Native American Reservation System

**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)**

Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account (RI.11-12.7).

**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 impact of westward expansion, including Manifest Destiny, on American Indian nations and the Indian reservation system (History-Social Science Content Standard 8.8).

Understand the effects of the westward movement on American Indian nations, including the establishment of reservations, treaty-making, and assimilation policies (History-Social Science Content Standard 5.3).

Analyze the effects of federal Indian policies on tribal sovereignty and self-determination, including contemporary issues facing Native Americans today (History-Social Science Content Standard 8.12).

## Lesson Purpose

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Students will research the impact of the reservation system on Native Americans.

## Essential Questions

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*How did the concept of Manifest Destiny and continued movement west affect the formation of the Indian reservation system, and how does that continue to affect Native Americans today?*

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

## Materials

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[Library of Congress: Westward Expansion: Encounters at a Cultural Crossroads](#)

[Library of Congress: Primary Source Analysis Tool](#)

[Smithsonian American Art Museum](#)

[National Archives: Treaty of Fort Laramie \(1868\)](#)

[Hopi Reservation, Arizona State University](#)

[Nez Perce Tribe: History](#)

[Shoshone-Bannock Tribes: History](#)

[National Museum of the American Indian: Unratified California Treaty K, 1852](#)

[KWL Chart](#)

## Vocabulary

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reservation

Oregon Territory

Manifest Destiny

allotment

assimilation

## Lesson Steps

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### Step 1:

- Make copies of the Library of Congress [primary source analysis tool](#). As a class, ask students what they already know about the term Manifest Destiny. Use a group reading strategy such as round robin or

popcorn to read the Background Information from the [Library of Congress on Westward Expansion](#) (halfway through the page). Show students the [primary source analysis tool](#), and conduct a guided walkthrough of the worksheet using the *American Progress* painting by John Gast, 1872, and the map of Indian Reservations, 1883, tiles on the Westward Expansion page.

- Break students into groups and ask them to review several of the other primary sources on the page, with an emphasis on the question, “How do these primary sources reflect the idea of ‘Manifest Destiny,’ defined by the initial background reading as ‘the idea that the United States was destined to expand across the entire continent?’” Also, ask students to reflect on whether their source might represent a different point of view.
- When students have completed their research, as a class, have each group present their source, focusing especially on their questions and further investigations. If time allows, as a class, show students one more page, the [Smithsonian American Art Museum: Manifest Destiny](#), and pay close attention to the John Louis O’Sullivan *Eastern State Journal* article (1846) under the Primary Source drop-down at the bottom of the page. Conduct a final primary source analysis worksheet on this reference.

### Step 2:

- Have students return to their groups. Give each group one of the following reservation system milestones, and ask students to complete an event card on a 3 x 5 card that is similar to what was created in lesson 2C for Indian removal. Students should focus on the who, what, when, and where questions for their event card. Students may also note whether Native American signing of the treaty was motivated by retaining some lands or rights, by ending war, or through coercion.
  - [Treaty of Fort Laramie \(1868\): National Archives](#)
  - [Navajo Treaty of 1868: Smithsonian, Native Knowledge 360](#). Ask students to also research the Navajo flag that shows original reservation boundaries and current boundaries.
  - [Hopi Reservation \(1882\), Arizona State University](#)
  - [Nez Perce Tribe: History](#)
  - [Shoshone-Bannock Tribes: History](#)
  - [National Museum of the American Indian: Unratified California Treaty K, 1852](#)
- When students have completed their event cards, have students present them to the class and add to the timeline that was created during lesson 2C on Indian Removal. Explain what allotment was, for those students who encountered that policy. Remind students that approximately 374 treaties were ratified during the 1900s (additional information and treaty images can be found [HERE](#)). Ask students to reflect on if they believe that the terms of these treaties were honored or how they continue to affect Native Americans today, making note of the significant hardships and disruptions for Native American communities, including loss of land, forced relocation, and cultural upheaval.
- Ask students to reflect on the difference between the policies of assimilation and creating reservations. How are reservation policies the same as or different from boarding schools or allotment policies? Remind students that as of 2022, 87 percent of American Indian and Alaskan Native citizens reside outside of reservations. How does that reflect on Native American assimilation or culture? (more information on demographics can be found [HERE](#)).

### Step 3:

- Finally, ask students to add what they have learned to the KWL chart that was started in lesson 2A. As a class, ask students this lesson’s questions, “How did the concept of Manifest Destiny and continued movement west affect the formation of the Indian reservation system, and how does that continue to affect Native Americans today?” and this unit’s question, “How has life changed for American Indians in the United States over the last 350 years?”

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

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If there are any local reservations nearby, or a spokesperson can be located, consider asking a guest speaker to address the class on the history or present-day realities of a local reservation. As an alternative, have students read [Native American Aid, Living Conditions](#). As students listen or read, have them take notes to answer the question of “How do reservations continue to affect the lives of Native Americans today?” Students should write a short paragraph and cite their source of information.

## Additional Readings and Resources

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[Library of Congress: Primary Source Analysis Tools](#)

[National Archives: The Secret Treaties with California’s Indians](#)

[National Museum of the American Indian: Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations](#)

[Native American Aid, Living Conditions](#)

Sowell, Thomas. *Conquests and Cultures*. Basic Books, 1998, 299-300, 317-319.

**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 2A: KWL Chart**

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**KNOW**

**WONDER**

**LEARNED**

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