

# Impact of Westward Expansion on Native Americans and the Role of Government

Event Exploration

# Your Task

- Analyze the extent to which western expansion affected the lives of Native Americans during the period 1860–90 and evaluate the role of the federal government in those effects.
- For each of the primary source documents, answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper.

# Document A - Source: S.G. Colley, U.S. Indian Agent, *Report, Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War*, 38th Congress, 2nd Session, 1865.

“[F]rom the time that Major Wynkoop left this post to go out to rescue white prisoners until the arrival of Colonel Chivington here, which took place on the 28th of November last, no depredations of any kind had been committed by the Indians within two hundred miles of this post; that upon Colonel Chivington’s arrival herewith a large body of troops he was informed where these Indians were encamped. . . . [T]hat notwithstanding his knowledge of the facts as above set forth, he is informed that Colonel Chivington did, on the morning of the 29th of November last, surprise and attack said camp of friendly Indians and massacre a large number of them, (mostly women and children,) and did allow the troops of his command to mangle and mutilate them in the most horrible manner.”

1. What event prompted the soldiers attack? Do you think the author feels this was justified? Why or why not?

# Document B - Santana, Chief of the Kiowas, 1867. *U.S. Bureau of Ethnography Annual Report*, 17th, 1895–96

“A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its bank. These soldiers cut down my timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry.”

2. How has the government changed the landscape of the West according to Santana?

# Document C - "Promise of the High Plains," ca. 1880s in The Railroaders

3. Compare this poster to what you learned about the Dawes Act. How did the government treat settlers and Natives differently in respect to land?

## HO! FOR COFFEYVILLE, KAS!

The General Starting and Outfitting Point into  
the Beautiful

### Indian Territory,

Now opened for settlement by the Government. Parties who have returned report it the best country in the United States for Farming and Stock Raising, and well watered. The finest Timber West of the Great Wabash Valley. A Party will leave here the

21<sup>st</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 1879,

Consisting of 20 Wagons, with Stock and Farming Implements. Fifty families and two Portable Saw Mills and one Grist Mill, are now ready to accompany the Colony headed by COL. C. C. CARPENTER, of Kansas City, Mo., leaving that point MAY 5<sup>th</sup>, and concentrating at Coffeyville, Kansas, MAY 7<sup>th</sup>, where they will at once Organize and start for that Beautiful Country. Coffeyville, Kansas, being the nearest Point, and the Terminus of the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad, makes it the most desirable place to buy your Outfit for Settling upon the new Lands now owned by the Government. Wagons, Farming Implements and Provisions can be bought cheaper here than in the Eastern States. Coffeyville has sent out a party to locate a good Route, in advance of the Immigration, which will be immense, as there are

### OVER 14,000,000 ACRES

Now open for Settlement. Purchase through tickets to Coffeyville, via Kansas City.

Call on or Address

**Ex-Gov. DAN'L. WOODSON,**  
Coffeyville, Kansas.

To Parties accompanying my Colony, I would advise them to purchase their Outfit at Coffeyville, Kansas. I have examined Stock and Prices of Goods, such as Wagons, Plows, Lumber, Dry Goods, Groceries, and, in fact, everything that is needed by Parties Settling upon new Land, and find them as cheap as they can be bought in the East.

RESPECTFULLY YOURS,

**Col. C. C. CARPENTER.**

**P. S.**—Parties will have no trouble in getting teams at Coffeyville for hauling their goods into the Territory.

C. C. C.



Document D - John Wesley Powell, *Report of Special Commissioners J.W. Powell and G. W. Ingalls on the Condition of the Ute Indians of Utah; the Paiutes of Utah.*  
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874

“Third, The Indians should not be furnished with tents; as long as they have tents they move about with great facility, and are thus encouraged to continue their nomadic life. As fast as possible houses should be built for them... A few, especially the older people, are prejudiced against such a course, and perhaps at first could not be induced to live in them. . . .

“Eighth, It is unnecessary to mention the power which schools would have over the rising generation of Indians. Next to teaching them to work, the most important thing is to teach them the English language.”

4. Why does Powell feel it is important to rid the Natives of their “nomadic lifestyles”?

# Document E - Chief Luther Standing Bear, *My People, the Sioux*

“It did not occur to me at the time that I was going away to learn the ways of the white man. My idea was that I was leaving the reservation and going to stay away long enough to do some brave deed, and then come home again alive. If I could just do that, then I knew my father would be so proud of me.”

5. What is Standing Bear’s opinion of “assimilation”? Support your response.

# Discuss

- Be prepared to share your responses with the class and discuss the relationship between Native Americans and the US Government during Westward Expansion.