

Module 4: Creating a New Nation - 1788 to the 1840s

Topic 4 Content: Trail of Tears Notes

Introduction



As a result of westward migration, the settlers were constantly involved in conflicts with Native Americans. Conflict became so common that many Native Americans were forcibly removed from their homelands. The Native Americans were forced to march away from their homes to follow the "Trail of Tears." In this interactivity, explore the relocation of Native Americans. Click **Start** to begin.

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Indian Removal

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- President Jackson viewed American Indian tribes as a threat to the Union.
- Americans felt it was their “Manifest Destiny” to take the land.

Next

The “age of the common man”, ushered in by President Jackson, was marked by many positive changes to politics in America. This time period, however, was also marked by an increase in issues that greatly affected certain sections of the country. At the start of President Jackson’s term, there were many American Indian tribes that resided on large tracts of land in the Southern states. The Seminole Tribes resided in Florida. The Cherokee and Creek occupied a large area of Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The Chickasaw and Choctaw existed in Mississippi and Arkansas.

President Jackson saw these tribes as a threat to the Union, even though many like the Cherokee had taken on many of the white American customs and lifestyles. In addition, many Americans believed it was their “Manifest Destiny” to take the land from the American Indians.

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Indian Removal Act

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The map illustrates the Indian Removal Act, showing the forced migration routes of five major American Indian tribes from their ancestral lands in the Southeast to new lands in the West. The tribes and their removal routes are: Cherokee (red line), Chickasaw (orange line), Choctaw (yellow line), Creek (green line), and Seminole (blue line). The map also shows the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico, and the states of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. A legend identifies the tribes and their removal routes, as well as tribal territory and reservations. A scale bar shows distances in kilometers and miles. An inset map shows the location of the Indian Removal Act in the context of the United States.

- Under pressure of the Federal Government, American Indians agreed to leave their lands and head west.
- American Indians that did not leave were removed by force.
- Many American Indians died from lack of food, exposure to the weather, and disease.

[Replay](#) [Exit](#)

Through legislation called the Indian Removal Act, Jackson's administration began a series of operations to remove American Indians from their land to new lands, which were all west of the Mississippi River and mostly in what is today Oklahoma. Under the pressure of the Federal Government and fear of continued violence, American Indian tribes sometimes signed treaties with the United States, agreeing to leave their native lands and head further west. Other times American Indians were removed from their native lands by force. The removals were not well planned, leading to many American Indian deaths from lack of food, exposure to the weather, and disease.