

Explore More—Causes and Effects of Historical Events

Directions: Listen to your teacher talk about how the Cherokee Indians were forced off their land. Think about the many causes and effects of this historical event. Circle any words you don't understand. Underline or highlight important ideas in the text. Write notes in the margins to help you understand key points. Then answer the questions in your own words.

What caused the problem over land?

After the War for Independence, more and more settlers moved to American Indian land. The United States government began to make treaties with the Indians. The treaties set up boundaries between the Indians and the settlers. For a time it appeared that the Cherokee and other Indians in the Southeast would be able to keep their land. However, the settlers wanted the Indians' good farmland. And then gold was discovered on Cherokee land in Georgia.

What did the Indians do?

The Cherokee wanted to stay on their land. They wanted to have their own nation within the state of Georgia. Many of the Cherokee thought that if they became more like the settlers, they would be able to keep their land. They began to give up hunting as a way of life. They planted orchards, built mills, and had slaves, like the settlers.

What did the United States government do?

President Andrew Jackson worked to pass a law that would force Indians to leave their lands east of the Mississippi River. Then in 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Bill. This bill allowed the government to exchange land with the Indians and move them to land in Indian Territory, which later became the state of Oklahoma. The Indians signed treaty after treaty with the United States. With each treaty, the Indians gave up more land.

Continued on next page

What were the Cherokee codes?

Georgia passed a group of laws called the Cherokee codes. These codes said the Cherokee could not have their own laws and their government could not meet in the state of Georgia. Indians could not testify against settlers in court. And Cherokee were not allowed to dig for gold. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Cherokee codes were unconstitutional. However, President Jackson and the governor of Georgia refused to enforce this ruling.

Did the Cherokee change their plan?

The Cherokee didn't always agree about the best way to keep their land. In 1832, the Cherokee met at their October Council to discuss their problems with the U.S. government. Some thought they should sign the most recent treaty. This treaty said the Cherokee would be paid for their land and given land west of the Mississippi River. Others were against the treaty. They thought the Cherokee should stay on their land and fight for it. These internal disagreements sometimes made things more difficult for the Indians.

What were the effects of the Indians losing their land?

Almost every tribe had its own "Trail of Tears." The U.S. government ordered soldiers to force the Indians off their land. In most cases, the Indians did not have time to get ready for the trip. Settlers came and took their homes as they left. Most Indians lost everything except the clothes they were wearing.

By 1890, most American Indians lived on reservations—public land set aside for special use. The Indians' way of life was changed forever. They were uprooted from their homes. Many died from diseases and war.

This event also had an effect on the white settlers who took over Indian land. Their lives changed as well, although in most cases their lives changed for the better. They moved to better farmland, which enabled them to grow more crops and make more money.

Continued on next page

Why is it important to examine both the causes and effects of historical events?

Historical events do not take place in isolation. There are generally many circumstances that cause an event to happen, and many consequences that result from the event. By looking at the multiple causes and effects of historical events, we can better understand why they happened. In many cases, this will help us prevent the same mistakes from happening again. ❖

YOUR TURN!

1. What were the causes and effects of the Cherokee losing their land? Record your answers in the chart.

Causes	Effects

2. Think of another historical event you have learned about in *Explore America*. Record at least three causes and three effects of this event and record them in the chart below.

Event: _____

Causes	Effects