

DBQ: Impact of Westward Expansion on Native Americans and the Role of Government

Directions

The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A–H and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. High scores will be earned only for essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period.

1. 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.

Use the documents and responses to each document to construct your response.

Document A

Santana, Chief of the Kiowas

Source: 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.”

1. Why do you believe there are soldiers camped out on the outskirts of Indian territory?
2. What is being done that is damaging to the Indians, and why is it such a tragedy?

Document B

S.G. Colley, U.S. Indian Agent, Report, Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War

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. According to this report, what types of atrocities are being committed by the U.S. military?

Document C

Chief Luther Standing Bear, *My People, the Sioux*

Source: Chief Luther Standing Bear, *My People, the Sioux* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929).

“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.”

1. What does this statement infer about what the Native Americans felt was occurring?

Document D

Letter to Professor Baird

Source: Smithsonian Institution: Division of Correspondence, June 7, 1886. 54468.

June 1st, 1886

Camp on Little Dry Creek, Montana

Professor S.F. Baird:

Dear Sir:

Mr. Hadley and I with a Cheyenne Indian, White Dog, have just returned to camp from a five days scout through the bad lands, during which we camped beside our horses whenever night overtook us,—and we got an old bull buffalo day before yesterday. There were only two buffalo in that land (!), and we got the largest and finest one.

Since seeing the buffalo on this native heath I am more than ever impressed with our wants in the way of good mountable skins of fine specimens, and still more of the imperative duty which devolves upon some institution to collect a store of skins to meet the demands of the future, when the bones of the last American bison shall lie bleaching on the prairie.

Wm G. Hornaday

1. What was the purpose of this scouting expedition that is being reported on, and why is it significant?

Document E

The Homestead Act

Source: United States. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. XII, 1862, pp.392-394 (12 Stat. 392)

May 20, 1862

AN ACT to secure homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain. Be it enacted, That any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of intention to become such, as required by the naturalization laws of the United States, and who has never borne arms against the United States Government or given aid and comfort to its enemies, shall, from and after the first of January, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, be entitled to enter one quarter-section or a less quantity of unappropriated public lands, upon which said person may have filed a pre-emption claim. . . . Provided, that any person owning or residing on land may, under the provision of the act, enter other land lying contiguous to his or her said land, which shall not, with the land already owned and occupied, exceed in the aggregate one hundred and sixty acres.

1. What is the purpose of the Homestead Act? What are they trying to do?
2. What did a person need to in order to own land?

Document F
Powell Report

Source: 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.”

1. What are the intentions of the Government in dealings with the Native Americans?

Document G
“Promise of the High Plains,” ca. 1880s in The Railroaders

Credit: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division (Call # Portfolio 20, Folder 16)

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

21st 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 5th**, and concentrating at Coffeyville, Kansas, **MAY 7th**, 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.

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.**

1. Based on this poster, name two reasons people would want to take the long passage to Kansas.

Document H

-Indian Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce, upon his surrender to the U.S. government troops, September 1877

"I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed... He who led the young men is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are-perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever."

1. Based on this statement, state two reasons Chief Joseph finally decided to surrender to the United States government troops.

DBQ ESSAY QUESTION: Must be written in a complete 5 paragraph essay!

1. 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.