

## Removal of American Indians, 1830–1838

### Student Worksheet

#### Historical Context

As the United States grew during the early 19th century, white settlers came into increasing conflict with Native American nations. Settlers placed pressure on the federal government to acquire Native American territory and allow more white settlement on that land. In 1830, Congress passed the **Indian Removal Act**, permitting President **Andrew Jackson** to negotiate removal treaties with Native American tribes. These “negotiations” were typically one-sided, resulting in the forced removal of eastern tribes from their homelands west into **Indian Territory**.

#### Vocabulary

**Indian Removal Act**  
**Andrew Jackson**  
**Indian Territory**

#### Map Activity

To do this activity, you will need a blank outline map and access to the “Removal of American Indians, 1830–1838” digital map. Turn on the layers of the digital map as indicated in the following instructions, and answer the questions in the space provided:

1. Look at the map with all the layers turned off except the “State,” “Forest,” “Ocean,” and “Gulf” layers. Can you name the five Native American tribes that were forced to move from their homes in the southeastern United States as a result of the Indian Removal Act of 1830? Do you know where these groups lived before removal? See if you can identify these areas on the map.
2. Turn on the “Indian tribes’ home territories” layer to show the tribes’ locations before removal. Note each tribe’s location. Also note the home regions of the Fox and the Sauk, along the Mississippi River in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin.
3. Shade and label these home territories on your map.
4. Identify the Mississippi River on the map, and label it on your map. How far west of the Mississippi River did the tribes have to travel to reach Indian Territory? To which present-day states did they go? Write your answers here:

5. Turn on the “Land granted” and “Buffalo range” layer. Shade this territory on your map, and label the relocation areas of the seven tribes whose home territories you’ve seen on the eastern parts of the map.
6. Look carefully at the map and at the areas where the tribes were forced to settle. Use very light pencil lines to draw your guesses as to which routes each of the seven tribes would have taken to Indian Territory.
7. Turn on the “Dates of removal” and “Route of removal” layers to see the actual routes. Compare this layer to what you’ve drawn on your map. How closely did your predictions match the actual routes? What surprises you about the actual routes? In particular, note and describe the routes of the Seminole and the Cherokee.
8. Correct your map to show the actual routes.
9. Which of the eastern tribes was the last to move west? Do you know the name by which this tribe’s journey is commonly known? Write your answers here:
10. The Cherokee moved westward during an unusually cold winter. What is the climate like in this part of the country? Would it usually have been cold or mild in this area in the wintertime?
11. What major body of water did all of the tribes have to cross? What might it have been like to cross this body of water? What might it have been like in the winter, during the Cherokee Trail of Tears?
12. In what parts of the map would you expect to see military forts? Why?
13. Turn on the “Fort” layer to reveal the forts’ locations. Why do you think these forts might have been placed in these areas?

## Assessment

Write a paragraph answering the following questions:

Why did these Native American groups have to move, where did they go, and what might their journeys have been like?