

Unit: Westward Expansion
Lesson #3 The Being & Fate of the Indigenous

Essential Questions:

- What ultimate effect will westward expansion have on the native people?
- How did the land that the natives live on lead to their eventual downfall?

Sourcing--

Have a student on the overhead display the following:

- Circle who wrote the ordinance...
- Underline twice when the document was written
- Put a box around the area that gives a general purpose for **why** the document was written

Contextualization--

Read the biography of George Catlin and look at the paintings that were created by him and discuss the following...

1. What were the Native Americans like that Catlin studied before the actual expansion?
2. What difficulties did they face as America began to expand?
3. Make some predictions about what might happen to their cultures after expansion.

Comprehension--

Have students create a painting (like George Catlin) that displays what he thought would happen to the Natives in the area

Corroboration--

Indian Nation Map

All Letters of G. Catlin

Speckled Snake, a very old Creek elder, 1829

LETTERS AND NOTES ON THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CONDITIONS OF NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS

by George Catlin

(First published in London in 1844)

LETTER -- No. 1

...Of the Indians, I have much more to say, and to the following delineations of them, and their character and customs, I shall make no further apology for requesting the attention of my readers...

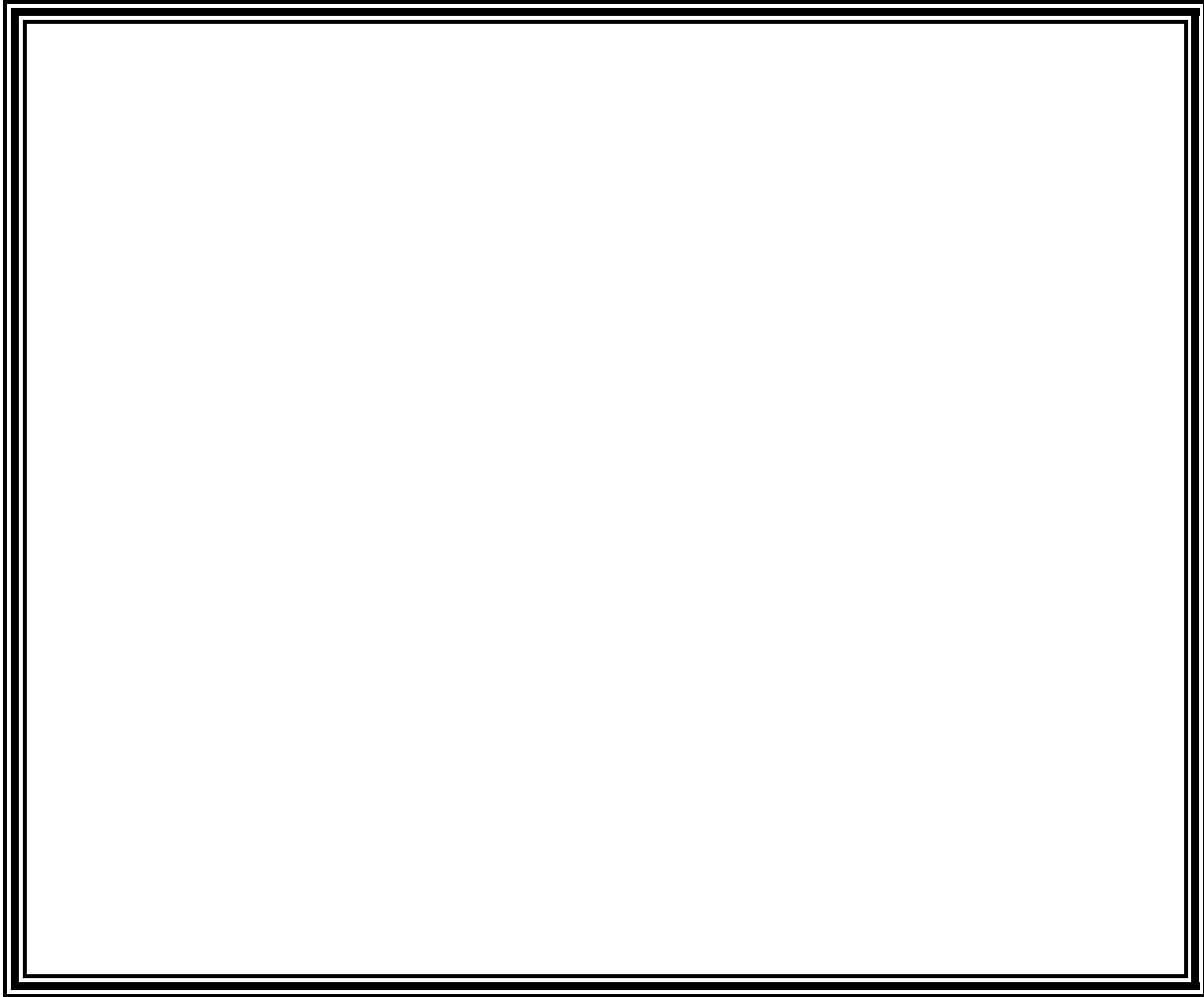
The Indians (as I shall call them), the savages or red men of the forests and prairies of North America, are at this time a subject of great interest and some importance to the civilized world; rendered more particularly so in this age, from their relative position to, and their rapid declension from, the civilized nations of the earth. A numerous nation of human beings, whose origin is beyond the reach of human investigation -- whose early history is lost -- whose term of national existence is nearly expired--three-fourths of whose country has fallen into the possession of civilized man within the short space of 250 years -- twelve millions of whose bodies have fattened the soil in the mean time; who have fallen victims to whiskey, the small-pox and the bayonet; leaving at this time but a meager proportion to live a shore time longer, in the certain apprehension of soon sharing a similar fate...

...The Indians of North America, as I have before said, are copper-coloured, with long black hair, black eyes, tall, straight, and elastic forms -- are less than two millions in number -- were originally the undisputed owners of the soil, and got their title to their lands from the Great Spirit who created them on it, -- were once a happy and flourishing people, enjoying all the comforts and luxuries of life which they knew of, and consequently cared for... Their country was entered by white men, but a few hundred years since; and thirty millions of these are now scuffling for the goods and luxuries of life, over the bones and ashes of twelve millions of red men; six millions of whom have fallen victims to the small-pox, and the remainder to the sword, the bayonet, and whiskey; all of which means of their death and destruction have been introduced and visited upon them by acquisitive white men; and by white men, also, whose forefathers were welcomed and embraced in the land where the poor Indian met and fed them with ears of green corn and with pemican." Of the two millions remaining alive at this time, about 1,400,000, are already the miserable living victims and dupes of white man's cupidity degraded, discouraged and lost in the bewildering maze that is produced by little use of whiskey and its concomitant vices; and the remaining number are yet unroused and unenticed from their wild haunts or their primitive modes, by the dread or love of white man and his allurements...

...He should consider, that if he has seen the savages of North America without making such a tour, he has fixed his eyes upon and drawn his conclusions (in all probability) only from those who inhabit the Frontier; whose habits have been changed -- whose pride has been cut down -- whose country has been ransacked--whose wives and daughters have been shamefully abused--whose lands have been wrested from them -- whose limbs have become enervated and naked by the excessive use of whiskey -- whose friends and relations have been prematurely thrown into their graves -- whose native pride and dignity have at last given way to the unnatural vices which civilized cupidity has engrafted upon them, to be silently nurtured and magnified by a burning sense of injury and injustice, and ready for that cruel vengeance which often falls from the hand that is palsied by refined abuses, and yet unrestrained by the glorious influences of refined and moral cultivation. That if he has laid up what he considers well-founded knowledge of these people, from books which he has read, and from newspapers only, he should pause at least, and withhold his sentence before he passes it upon the character of a people, who are dying at the hands of their enemies, without the means of recording their own annals -- struggling in their nakedness with their simple weapons, against guns and gunpowder -- against whiskey and steel, and disease, and mailed warriors who are continually trampling them to the earth, and at last exultingly promulgating from the very soil which they have wrestled from the poor savage, the history of his cruelties and barbarities, whilst his bones are quietly resting under the very furrows which their ploughs are turning.

...of these strange people, they have had some friends who have done them justice; yet as a part of all systems of Justice whenever it is meted to the poor Indian, it comes invariably too late, or is administered at an ineffectual distance; and that too when his enemies are continually about him, and effectually applying the means of his destruction.

The Fate of the Indigenous...



After George Catlin visited over 45 indigenous tribes in the North American continent that faced the white settlers' expansion efforts, he predicted the Native tribes' fate would be

because of the efforts of white settlers who moved into the tribal lands.

Who were the white settlers and what did Catlin predict they would do?

Who is George Catlin?

http://www.essortment.com/all/whoisgeorgeca_rjdi.htm

George Catlin was both artist and author. Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on July 26, 1796, his early years were spent being molded by two very distinct personalities. His father, an attorney, wanted nothing more than his son to follow in his footsteps, which George did do for a short time, even practicing law for a few years in Pennsylvania after his admission to the bar. His mother though, seems to have been much more influential in her son's life. The Wyoming massacre of 1778 found the young woman as a captive of the Indians. Years later, the young George would enjoy hearing his mother's tales of the wild frontier. This, coupled with his introduction to several Native Americans he came into contact with while studying, and already making a name for himself among other artists and aristocrats, in Philadelphia, set his future in stone.

He was to become by many a person's standard an historian of the Native Americans. Besides his paintings that would go down in history as some of the most exact replications of the 'true' Americans, he also left a legacy of writings behind. 'Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians' was published in 1841, some eleven years after he set out for his travels across the great west.

Catlin's Letters were a colorful assortment of lore and great west tales of Indian life and his own personal interaction with the Native Americans he came into contact with in his travels. At one point, he was both keeping detailed notes, which would later make it into much of his published

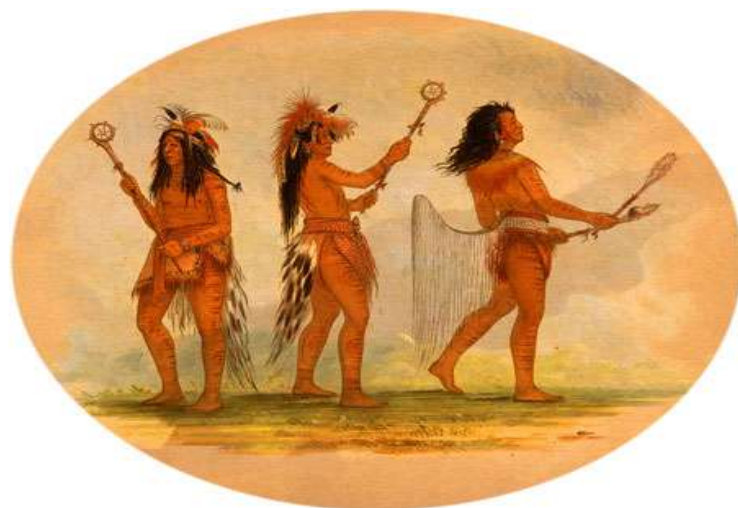


writings, and also turning out two paintings a day. Later, it was said, that through his writings to himself, he would redo the original paintings in much more detail than the originals. George Catlin would become known for details that were so exact, the portraits he drew seemed to be just a breath away from life. Beads and ornamentation as finely detailed as the originals. In some of his work though, he seemed to portray nothing more than just a shadow of what many knew him capable of. His notes to himself would come into play in these works, when later he would redo some of these to accompany his published writings, and they would be much more detailed than the first works that he made in the field.

Portraits he produced included both men, women, and children from many different tribes included Pawnee, Mandan, Hidatsa, Sioux, Ponca, Arikara, Plains Ojibwa, Plains Cree, Santee, Seminole, Iroquois, and many, many others. With nearly all of his portraits, it was not enough for him to just put the image down onto canvas; he would also gather as much information on his subject as he could. One portrait, 'Grizzly Bear' from 1831, of a Menominee Indian, portrays the warrior, and we know that this man lead a group of his tribesman to Washington. His note taking was so detailed that we know that his subject for the portrait 'Mid-day Sun' was a Hidatsa maiden who felt she was not pretty enough to be painted, and only after much coaxing by her family did she finally stand for the painting to be done.

Without George Catlin, our nation would have lost a great part of what is our natural history before expansion. Before the advent of our modern day portrait taker, the camera, he captured images far better, and in much more detail, than even a camera could have.

The Paintings of George Catlin:
1830's American Indigenous Peoples
<http://www.nga.gov/kids/catlin/catlin1.htm>



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<http://www.xmission.com/~drudy/mtman/html/catlin/letter1.html>