

Cherokee Removal Role Play



Problem to Consider

The year is 1830. There is a bill before the United States Congress that would provide funds (**\$500,000 in 1830** or **\$10,000,000 in 2012.**) to move all Indians now living east of the Mississippi River to "Indian Territory" (Oklahoma) west of the Mississippi River. The Indians would be given permanent title to this land. The money would pay the Indians for any improvements made on the land in the East where they're now living. It would also cover the expenses of their transportation and for a year in their new homes in Indian Territory.

Problem to Consider

The U.S. Congress has decided to hold hearings on this bill and you are invited to give testimony and to question other individuals who will give testimony. The main question for discussion is:

Should all Indians living east of the Mississippi River be moved, by force if necessary, west of the Mississippi River to Indian Territory?

Questions for each group to consider in planning your presentation:

1. Do you support the Indian Removal Bill? Why or why not?
2. What questions do you have for members of the other groups that will be in attendance?
3. What will you do if Congress passes this bill? What will you do if Congress does not pass this bill?

Cherokee Role Play Steps:

1. Read your assigned groups information sheet on the IPAD. Your group should discuss their ideas on the questions they will be addressing at the Congressional Hearing. Then as a group answer the 3 questions that you will be presenting to the class.

Cherokee Role Play Steps:

2. Choose half of your group to be traveling negotiators. These people will meet with people in the other groups to share ideas, argue, and build alliances. Each of your group roles includes different information, so this is an opportunity to teach each other. Travelers may not meet with other travelers, but only with seated members of other groups. Travelers may travel together or separately

Cherokee Role Play Steps:

3. Return to your groups to prepare a written presentation you'll make at the Congressional Hearing. Utilize both the information in the handouts and any relevant points brought up during the traveling phase of the assignment. Also create a list of at least 4 questions you intended to ask other groups once their presentations are completed

Cherokee Role Play Steps:

4. Each group will give its presentation. After this, members of other groups may question or rebut points made by the presenting group. This process continues until we've heard from all the groups.

Debrief

1. Whose remarks most angered or troubled you?
2. What reasons did some groups offer for why the Indians should be moved? What were their real motives?
3. In real life, a slim majority of U.S. representatives and senators voted to remove the Indians (102-97). What arguments might they have found most persuasive?

Debrief

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