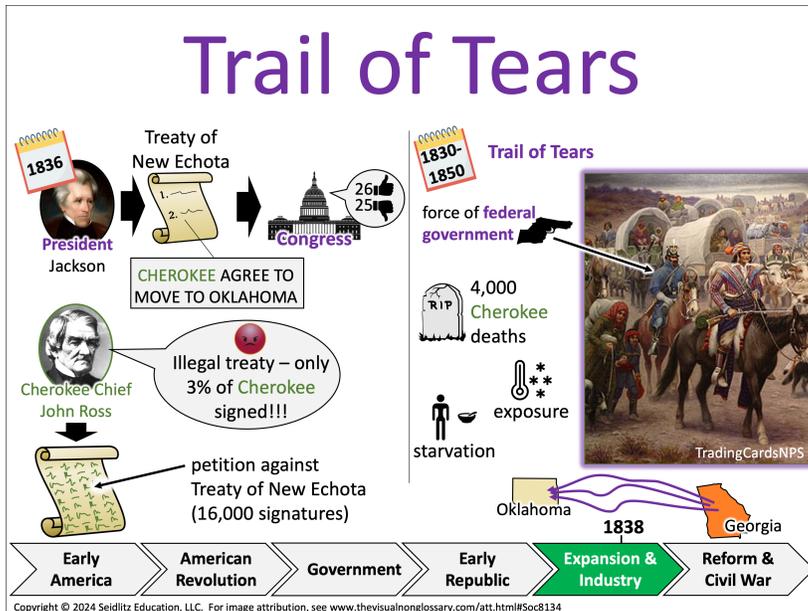


The Trail of Tears

As we read, we'll look for how the Indian Removal Act led to the Trail of Tears, forcing Native Americans off their land, and how those actions impacted Native communities for generations.

Pay Attention To:

- What the Supreme Court decided in *Worcester v. Georgia*
- What the Indian Removal Act allowed the President and Congress to do
- How the Trail of Tears affected the Cherokee and other tribes
- How Native Americans resisted removal
- What lasting impacts removal had on Native communities



In the early 1800s, the U.S. government wanted to give land to white settlers. To do this, **Congress** passed the **Indian Removal Act** in 1830. This law gave the **President** the power to move Native American tribes west of the Mississippi River. Some tribes agreed, but others, like the Cherokee, did not.

The Cherokee had their own laws and government. Even though the Supreme Court ruled in ***Worcester v. Georgia*** that the Cherokee had a right to their land, **President** Andrew Jackson ignored the decision.

In 1835, a small group of Cherokee signed the **Treaty of New Echota** to give up their land. Most Cherokee did not agree—over 16,000 signed a petition against the treaty. Still, the **federal government** used it to force the Cherokee to move.

In 1838, thousands of Cherokee were taken from their homes and forced to walk more than 1,000 miles to Indian Territory. This journey is called the **Trail of Tears**. It was very hard. Families had little food or shelter. Many walked in the cold and got sick. About 4,000 Cherokee, or one fourth of their people, died during the journey.

In total, about 100,000 Native Americans, including the Choctaw, Seminole, and Muscogee, were forced to move between 1831 and 1850. The **Trail of Tears** shows how the **President, Congress,** and **federal government** caused great suffering. Even though it was allowed by the **Indian Removal Act**, it hurt Native Americans deeply.

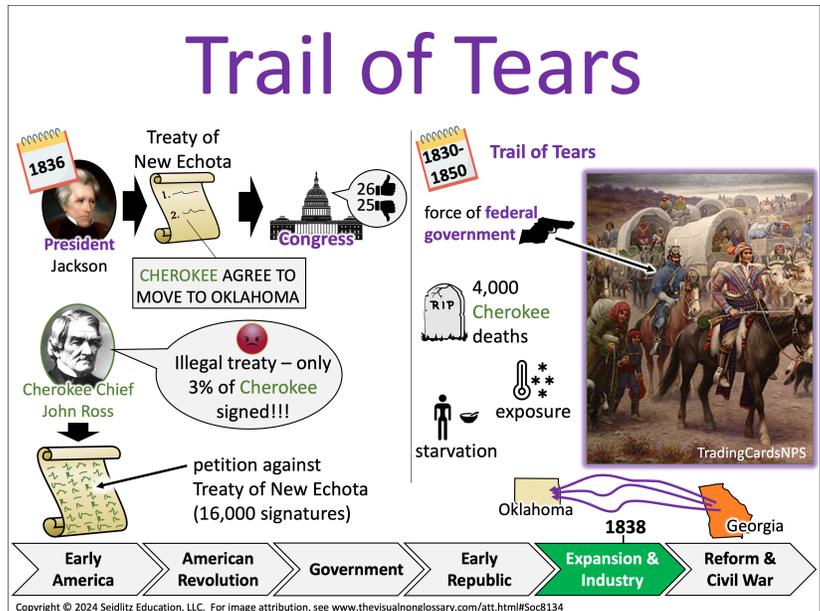


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In the early 1800s, the U.S. government began encouraging the expansion of white settlers into Native American lands. Under growing pressure to claim new territory, **Congress** passed the **Indian Removal Act** in 1830. This law gave the **President** the power to negotiate with Native American tribes to move them west of the Mississippi River. While some tribes agreed under pressure, others, like the Cherokee, resisted.

The Cherokee Nation had adopted many aspects of American society, including a written constitution and legal system. Still, the **federal government** viewed their land in Georgia as a barrier to growth. Although the Supreme Court ruled in **Worcester v. Georgia** that the Cherokee had a right to their land, **President** Andrew Jackson ignored the decision.

In 1835, a small group of Cherokee signed the **Treaty of New Echota**, agreeing to move to what is now Oklahoma. The treaty was not approved by the majority of Cherokee—more than 16,000 people signed a petition against it. Despite this opposition, the **federal government** used the treaty as justification for removal.

In 1838, thousands of Cherokee were rounded up and forced to march over 1,000 miles to Indian Territory. This journey became known as the **Trail of Tears**. The trip took place under harsh conditions, with little food or shelter. Many families traveled on foot, exposed to cold weather and disease. Around 4,000 Cherokee, or one quarter of the total population, died from exposure, starvation, or illness along the way.

In total, as many as 100,000 Native Americans, including the Choctaw, Seminole, and Muscogee, were forcibly removed between 1831 and 1850, making the **Trail of Tears** one of the largest and most tragic examples of forced displacement in American history. It reflects how laws and decisions made by the **President**, **Congress**, and the **federal government** led to great suffering among Native Americans. Though it was justified by the **Indian Removal Act**, the consequences devastated the Cherokee and other tribes for generations.



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In the 1830s, federal leaders sought to expand white settlement into lands occupied by Native American tribes. To carry out this plan, **Congress** passed the **Indian Removal Act** in 1830, giving the **President** authority to relocate Native groups to territory west of the Mississippi River. While some tribes consented under pressure, the Cherokee strongly resisted removal.

The Cherokee had developed a legal system and constitution, adopting many American customs. However, the **federal government** saw Cherokee land in Georgia as an obstacle to westward expansion. The Supreme Court ruled in **Worcester v. Georgia** that the Cherokee had the legal right to remain, but **President** Andrew Jackson ignored the ruling and proceeded with removal plans.

In 1835, a small, unauthorized group of Cherokee signed the **Treaty of New Echota**, which ceded Cherokee land in exchange for relocation. Over 16,000 Cherokee opposed the treaty in a formal petition, but the **federal government** enforced it anyway.

By 1838, U.S. troops forced thousands of Cherokee to march over 1,000 miles to Indian Territory. This tragic migration became known as the **Trail of Tears**. Poor weather, hunger, and disease plagued the journey. An estimated 4,000 Cherokee, or about one quarter of the population, died from exposure, starvation, and illness.

In total, as many as 100,000 Native Americans, including the Choctaw, Seminole, and Muscogee, were displaced between 1831 and 1850. The **Trail of Tears** stands as one of the most harrowing episodes of forced relocation in U.S. history. It demonstrates how actions by the **President, Congress, and the federal government**, justified by the **Indian Removal Act**, inflicted lasting trauma on Native American communities.

