Great Plains

BAYOU BRIDGES

GRADE 8 LOUISIANA SOCIAL STUDIES

A Nation in Conflict

Student Volume

Mary Church Terrell

Segregated facilities

Westward expansion

THIS BOOK IS THE PROPERTY OF:

STATE _____

PROVINCE _____

COUNTY _____

PARISH _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

OTHER _____

Book No. _____

Enter information in spaces to the left as instructed.

ISSUED TO	*Year Used*	*CONDITION*	
		ISSUED	*RETURNED*

PUPILS to whom this textbook is issued must not write on any page or mark any part of it in any way, consumable textbooks excepted.

1. Teachers should see that the pupil's name is clearly written in ink in the spaces above in every book issued.
2. The following terms should be used in recording the condition of the book: New; Good; Fair; Poor; Bad.

A Nation in Conflict

Student Volume

Creative Commons Licensing

This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike
4.0 International License.

You are free:

to Share—to copy, distribute, and transmit the work
to Remix—to adapt the work

Under the following conditions:

Attribution—You must attribute the work in the following manner:

This work is based on an original work of the Core Knowledge® Foundation (www.coreknowledge.org) and the additions from the Louisiana Department of Education, made available through licensing under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike4.0 International License. This does not in any way imply that the Core Knowledge Foundation or the Louisiana Department of Education endorses this work.

Noncommercial—You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

Share Alike—If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one.

With the understanding that:

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. The best way to do this is with a link to this web page:

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Copyright © 2024 the Louisiana Department of Education for the additions to CKHG and the Core Knowledge Foundation for its predecessor work CKHG.

www.coreknowledge.org

All Rights Reserved.

Core Knowledge®, Core Knowledge Curriculum Series™, Core Knowledge History and Geography™, and CKSci™ are trademarks of the Core Knowledge Foundation. Bayou Bridges is a trademark of the Louisiana Department of Education.

Trademarks and trade names are shown in this book strictly for illustrative and educational purposes and are the property of their respective owners. References herein should not be regarded as affecting the validity of said trademarks and trade names.

ISBN: 979-8-88970-051-7

A Nation in Conflict

Table of Contents

01 Chapter 1:
The West and the Native American Experience 2

02 Chapter 2:
Post-Reconstruction and the Jim Crow Era 20

Glossary 33

Chapter 1

The West and the Native American Experience

The Framing Question

What drew so many Americans westward after the Civil War, and what was the effect of this settlement on Native American homelands and cultures?

The Allure of the West

During and after the American Civil War (1861–65), the promises of the "American West" portrayed in folklore and music captivated millions. Americans envisioned clear skies, open spaces, and a fresh start. These dreams motivated people to move westward, and new government policies that made this move easier only further encouraged settlement west of the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains.

As people began migrating west in search of land and fortune, Native Americans struggled to hold on to their ancestral homelands.

Many years later, in the 1890s, an American historian named Frederick Jackson Turner would write an essay telling people how important this physical space known as "the frontier" was in the development of American history. Turner described the frontier as a symbol of freedom, democracy, and new opportunity for Americans, many of whom would continue to move farther and farther westward in pursuit of these things.

Yet while many envisioned the frontier as a land of opportunity and new beginnings, Native Americans had lived on much of that same land for many thousands of years. These groups found their ancestral homelands and their ways of life threatened by the mass arrival of new settlers.

Western Migration

After the Civil War, many people moved westward in search of riches. However, this was not the first time that large groups had trekked westward. The discovery of gold in California in the 1840s had already led to a first rush of settlers into that area. Then, ten years later, gold was discovered in Colorado, igniting another rush of settlers. However, most people did not find gold.

In addition to mining for gold, the cattle industry had also brought people west. By 1860, there were about five million cattle in the small corner of Texas that lies between the Rio Grande and the town of San Antonio. Then, as railroads expanded westward, cattle ranchers moved their herds closer to these trains that would take their cows to the markets in the East.

After the Civil War, the railroads, like settlement, only continued to grow. The transcontinental railroad that Congress had first taken action on during the war was finally completed. Tracks laid east from Sacramento, California, and west from Omaha, Nebraska, met in Utah in 1869. The transcontinental railroad played a crucial role in connecting the country's people, regions, and economies. However, all this came at a significant cost to Native Americans, who continued to be displaced from their lands.

Much of the railroad stretched across the heart of the country into a vast area called the Great Plains. This expanse of flat land extends from the Rio Grande in the south up to Canada, covering more than three thousand miles (4,800 km). At their

The tracks of the transcontinental railroad often crossed lands long used by Native Americans. Railroads did not only bring an influx of settlers to these regions—they also disrupted traditional migratory patterns of animals on which Indigenous groups depended.

widest point, the Great Plains span more than one thousand miles (1,600 km) from the Appalachian Mountains to the Rocky Mountains. Before modern development, these wide, grassy plains seemed like endless countryside. Following the end of the Civil War, American settlers and European immigrants turned their attention toward the plains region. But they were not planning to mine or raise cattle. Instead, they were eager to claim their own piece of this land for agriculture.

The passage of the Homestead Act of 1862, which promised 160 acres (65 hectares) of land for free to anyone who would settle on and farm it for at least five years, had only further inspired would-be "homesteaders." Railroads, seeking to encourage settlement, also advertised cheap land across the United States and in Europe. Prominent posters promised "millions of acres" of "Iowa and Nebraska lands for sale on 10 years credit." At the same time, new technologies emerged that would make farming, construction, and water access easier on the vast plains. Additionally, a recent shift in weather patterns had led to a period of unusually high levels of rainfall. People began to believe that the climate of the typically dry area had permanently changed and that farming it would now be easier. They had faith that the Great Plains would continue to enjoy abundant rainfall. Years later, they would realize they were wrong. A severe period of drought that hit the south-central United States would earn the region the name "the Dust Bowl" because of the intense dust storms that occurred.

Regardless of rainfall, technology, or affordable land, life on the plains was not easy, and its soil posed challenges. Yet between 1870 and 1890, farmers actually claimed more land on the Great Plains than the combined area of England and France.

Posters such as this enticed people to the Great Plains with promises of fertile land—and low interest rates on loans to buy that land.

Westward Expansion and the Establishment of New States

As more and more people moved to the western United States, populations in these territories increased. Several territories were granted statehood between 1870 and 1890.

Find Out the Facts

Research what life in the Great Plains was like in summer and in winter during this time period.

The Challenges of Manifest Destiny

As you have learned, westward settlement, which often involved displacing Native Americans, was seen by many new settlers as the natural next step in **Manifest** Destiny—the belief that Americans had a mission to expand the boundaries of their country by pushing west across the continent. Ever since independence, Americans had believed that by moving west, they could improve their circumstances. They could create a better life for themselves and their families, with opportunities for land ownership,

Vocabulary

manifest, adj. easily understood or obvious

wealth, and a prosperous future. Now, with railroads crisscrossing the country and cities sprouting along them, the West represented not only a geographic frontier but also a symbol of progress and limitless possibilities. Americans watched with a mix of pride and awe as the frontier line steadily pushed westward throughout the 1870s and 1880s, embodying the ever-advancing spirit of the nation.

However, despite great optimism and belief, many families struggled to farm their homesteads, and additional farming expenses like fencing, plows, animals, barns, and seed proved to be a continuous financial burden—especially if there had been little money saved to begin with. Nonetheless, there were those among the less fortunate who were successful, including African Americans who had recently been freed from slavery. Following the Civil War and the collapse of Reconstruction, thousands of formerly enslaved people embarked on a journey to Kansas. As you may know,

This image illustrates the unstoppable force of westward expansion while also revealing the impact on Native Americans and the complexities of "progress."

they called themselves Exodusters, as they made an exodus from their former homes to what they hoped would be a land of promise. By the end of 1880, more than forty thousand Exodusters called Kansas home, with still more settling in other areas of the Great Plains.

Part of the allure of the American West was fostered by newspapers and dime novels that painted a thrilling picture of the "Wild West," filled with gunfighters and cowboys. Characters like Billy the Kid and Jesse James became larger-than-life figures, although in truth their actions were far from heroic. Wild West shows, like Buffalo Bill's, helped America develop an independent identity that

The Impact of Westward Expansion on Louisiana Higher Education

Did you know that the Louisiana public college and university system has its roots in westward expansion? From the time of the Louisiana Purchase, it quickly became obvious that the vast expanses of newly settled land needed educational institutions. The Morrill Land-Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 granted federal land to states to establish colleges focused on agriculture, science, and engineering. This led to the founding of Louisiana State University, Southern University, and Grambling State University. As you will read in the next chapter, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were also established to provide educational opportunities for African Americans during a time of racial segregation. The Louisiana public college and university system has helped shape the state's economy and culture.

Longtime frontiersman William Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, created a very successful Wild West show, which exaggerated many of the ideas Americans had about the frontier.

was different from that of any European nation. However, the true story of the West was about the daily challenges faced by farmers, ranchers, and Native Americans fighting to protect their lands. While the Wild West had its share of excitement, it was also a complex and diverse place where people worked hard to build their futures—and preserve their pasts.

Think Twice

Why do you think Americans longed for an "independent identity" that was unlike other countries', especially those in Europe?

Broken Promises and the Plight of the Bison

Throughout the first half of the 1800s, many Native American groups living in the western United States had already experienced significant changes that led to the loss of their lands and cultural traditions. As westward settlement increased in the second half of the nineteenth century, the U.S. government made treaties and agreements with Native American groups. However, most of these agreements were not respected. Furthermore, Native American groups did not have one central government, like Great Britain or France, so treaties made with one group did not apply to others. Nor did Americans understand the independent nature of Native Americans. Their leaders did not have the same authority as a U.S. president. Leaders were respected for their bravery or wisdom, but their decisions were not always seen as law. Many Native American groups did not give their leaders that kind of power.

In the years following the Civil War, the U.S. government continued to try to control Native Americans in two different ways. The first approach was forcefully moving them to designated reservations. This practice of forced relocation had been taking place since long before the war, as groups were pushed west across the Mississippi River to territory far from their own homelands. The second approach was **assimilation**, through which it was hoped that Native Americans would simply adopt American practices. Assimilation continued through the last

Vocabulary

assimilation, n. the adoption of the ways of another culture

decades of the century as the government focused on younger Native Americans, sending them to schools like Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. These schools aimed to separate Native American children from their cultures and traditions by cutting their hair, prohibiting them from using their native languages and practicing their religions, and teaching them English and vocational skills. Children at these schools were often punished if they showed any sign of practicing Native culture.

Find Out the Facts

Find out more about life for Native American children in the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

At this time, most Americans believed in individual ownership of land, using it to grow food or build towns. As these same Americans settled on Native American land, they assumed that Native Americans would eventually adapt to *their* way of life and even adopt their religion.

Continuous migration by settlers to the Great Plains and beyond endangered another aspect of Native American cultures and livelihoods—the American bison. Plains peoples depended on bison for many of their needs. Many parts of a single bison could be used for food, clothing, tools, and even shelter. But the forced relocation of other Native American tribes that had been happening since before the Civil War, and the resulting increase in the Native population, had a dramatic impact on the bison. The animals were now overhunted.

At the same time, Americans killed thousands and thousands of bison for their hides, which, as leather, sold for great profit. Some even killed these animals for sport, shooting them from trains. Estimates place the bison

The slaughter of bison herds caused tremendous hardship for Native Americans.

population at forty million in 1800. By 1850, that number had been cut in half. By 1875, the bison population had been reduced to about one million. Twenty years later, in 1895, there were fewer than one thousand bison in the United States. This gradual depletion of bison meant less and less food for Native Americans, leading to more competition and intertribal wars.

Find Out the Facts

Find out more about the decimation of the bison and the impact it had on a specific Native American nation living on the Great Plains.

Writers' Corner

Using your research on the American bison, write a narrative poem explaining the importance of these animals to a specific Native American nation.

The Sand Creek Massacre

In November of 1864, a tragic event unfolded in Denver, Colorado, leading to one of the most devastating attacks on Native Americans in U.S. history.

The murder of a mining family had sparked rumors that nearby Native Americans were responsible. Many in the community vowed revenge, including an army colonel named J. M. Chivington, who was charged to punish the "hostile" Native Americans.

Earlier that summer, Governor John Evans of the Colorado Territory had called on all Native Americans who were willing to live peacefully with settlers to seek protection at military posts. Those who refused this offer would be deemed unfriendly and could face attack. Two groups of Cheyenne, led by Black Kettle and White Antelope, and one group of Arapaho, led by Left Hand, voluntarily entered Fort Lyon. They surrendered some of their weapons in exchange for protection and food. However, after a while, these groups were informed that they would no longer receive food at the fort and must leave. Major Scott Anthony, commander of Fort Lyon, advised the leaders to relocate their people to Sand Creek, approximately thirty-five miles (56 km) away.

On November 28, 1864, Colonel Chivington arrived at Fort Lyon with several hundred soldiers. He set out for Sand Creek that evening with Major Anthony.

At dawn the next day, Chivington, Anthony, and their troops descended upon the Native American camp at Sand Creek. Despite Chief Black Kettle's attempts to signal peaceful intent by displaying an American flag and a white truce flag, Chivington ordered a brutal attack. Within two hours, 123 Native Americans were killed. The majority of the victims were women, children, and infants. Congress later investigated the series of events, confirming that Chivington and his troops had mercilessly murdered unsuspecting and defenseless Native Americans who were supposed to be under the protection of the United States. Yet Chivington and the others involved were never punished for their crimes.

The Sand Creek Massacre was only one event in a series of clashes and wars between Native Americans and U.S. soldiers known as the Indian Wars. As you will read, many conflicts would follow, often ignited by the way land in the West was now being used and claimed.

Think Twice

How would you describe the events at Sand Creek?

Native American Resistance

In 1868, the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie was signed, guaranteeing the Sioux a reservation in South Dakota's Black Hills. However, when gold was discovered in the Black Hills in 1874, prospectors and miners flowed into the area, leading to conflict with the Sioux and Cheyenne. Angry that many Native Americans, including hunting groups, refused to stay within the Sioux reservation, the U.S. government authorized the army to force them to comply. Officials sent army **regiments** under the direction of General George F. Crook, General Alfred H. Terry, and Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer to the region.

Vocabulary

regiment, n. a unit in an army

Aware that government officials were more interested in protecting settlers and their newly claimed land than enforcing the existing treaty, the Sioux, led by Chiefs Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, fought against U.S. forces to protect their lands and way of life. During the Battle

of Rosebud in June 1876, Sioux warriors surprised and defeated Crook's troops in southeastern Montana Territory.

Think Twice

Why do you think the discovery of gold so quickly changed the conditions of the 1868 treaty?

Tensions continued to mount, and major conflict ensued. On June 25, 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer and his regiment spotted a group of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors on the Little Bighorn River, also in Montana. Custer led one column of a planned two-part attack under the command of General Terry. Terry's column was to join him in two days. Instead of waiting for Terry, "Long Hair" (as the Native Americans called Custer) decided to attack the warriors. Unknowingly, Custer was up against the largest fighting force ever assembled by Native Americans on the Great Plains. Of the more than two hundred soldiers who followed Custer into battle, not one lived to tell the story of what happened during that one hour on June 25. Only a single horse named Comanche survived.

This Native American art depicts the Battle of the Little Bighorn, fought in June 1876.

In reaction to Custer's death, the defeat at the Little Bighorn, and Crook's earlier losses, Americans demanded more military action. The Sioux continued to win against U.S. troops. But even though they won battle after battle, the Native Americans could not stop the flow of settlers. With bison dwindling in numbers, hunger led more and more Sioux to surrender. In May 1877, Sitting Bull led his remaining followers across the border into Canada. However, the Canadian government decided it could not be responsible for taking care of Native Americans from the United States. After four years, Sitting Bull returned to the United States. Although he had a promise of **amnesty** for his people, he served two years in South Dakota's Fort Randall for

Vocabulary

amnesty, n. a decision, usually by a government, not to punish a person or group that has committed a crime

being the leader of the Sioux resistance and for killing American soldiers. When he was released from prison, he returned to the reservation.

Assimilation and Rebellion

More than lives were lost in the conflict between Native Americans and settlers. The Native Americans lost homelands. Their parents and ancestors were buried on lands they could no longer visit. Those lands were the life source for all their worldly needs. The reservations they were forced to live on were often barren and inhospitable and did not provide for their needs. On the plains reservations, insects and drought prevented Native Americans from growing gardens. Treaties promised subsistence (just enough food to survive), but many times, the promises were not honored. Sometimes, Native Americans received only half of the food they needed to survive.

In 1887, the U.S. Congress passed the Dawes Act, also known as the General Allotment Act, with the aim of assimilating Native Americans into mainstream American society. As a result of this legislation, the federal government gave itself the authority to divide tribal lands, or reservations, into smaller individual allotments for Native Americans. Government officials believed this would promote farming and private property ownership within Native American groups. Additionally, tribal land not allotted to Native American families or individuals was to be sold to settlers.

The Dawes Act had several negative consequences for Native Americans. Native Americans often had skills that were different from those needed to successfully farm the land they were allotted. Many ended up selling their land to settlers for prices far less than its value. As a result, millions of acres of Native American land were lost. Additionally, the Dawes Act had a detrimental impact on Native Americans' cultures and traditions, as it required them to abandon their communal way of life and adopt the individualistic values of American society. Such forced assimilation further weakened their cultural identity and heritage.

Traditional Native American cultures valued spirituality. Native Americans relied on a Great Spirit to speak to them through signs and symbols, even dreams and visions. In 1889, a Paiute leader in

modern-day western Nevada by the name of Wovoka claimed to have had a vision of hope. He said that in his vision, he had seen his dead ancestors, who were happy and young again. He claimed that he had also been given a dance that, if performed, would bring dead and living Native Americans together in their old homelands. The bison would return as well. The settlers would go back to the land where the sun rose. The dance he spoke of came to be called the Ghost Dance. In order for the vision to come true, Wovoka told his people, they must live quietly and honestly. He spoke of nonviolence.

By the fall of 1889, leaders of other tribes had journeyed to hear Wovoka's message and to dance the large circle dances he taught them. They took his message and his dances back to their people.

The Ghost Dance became a symbol of hope and resistance for many Native Americans.

Some tribes danced the Ghost Dance nightly. But other tribes, such as the Sioux, heard things a certain way: the good days would return, yes, but *only* if the settlers went away. In less than a year, the Ghost Dance was embraced by many Plains Native Americans. They even wore Ghost Shirts—cotton shirts decorated with feathers and drawings of eagles and bison—that they hoped would protect them from soldiers' bullets.

The Ghost Dance inspired some Native Americans, but it made many settlers fearful. One federal agent informed officials in Washington that Native Americans were "dancing in the snow and [were] wild and crazy," adding, "We need protection and we need it now. The leaders should be arrested and confined at some military post until the matter is quieted, and this should be done now." Finally, in November 1890, American officials banned the Ghost Dance in Dakota Territory. When the dances continued, troops were called into the area. The military was sure that trouble was brewing. Suspecting that the great Sioux leader Sitting Bull might be the one to lead a rebellion, the Bureau of Indian Affairs agent at the Standing Rock Reservation wrote, "[Sitting Bull] is the

chief mischief-maker . . . and if he were not here this craze, so general among the Sioux, would never have gotten a foothold at this agency."

Think Twice

How do you think the Ghost Dance movement and the settlers' fear of it reflected a lack of understanding between the groups?

Orders came for Sitting Bull's arrest. Police representing the Bureau of Indian Affairs arrived to arrest the former leader, but his followers tried to protect him. A fight broke out, and Sitting Bull was killed. Big Foot, Sitting Bull's half brother, was next on the soldiers' arrest list.

Wounded Knee

When Big Foot heard of his half brother's death, he and a group fled south to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Many of Sitting Bull's followers joined Chief Big Foot, who was a leader of the Ghost Dancers. On December 28, 1890, a group of about five hundred U.S. soldiers caught up with Big Foot's group of 106 warriors and about 250 women and children. Ill and facing terrible odds, Big Foot was persuaded to lead his people to Wounded Knee Creek. There, they would be disarmed before proceeding to the Pine Ridge Reservation.

The next morning, December 29, soldiers under the direction of General Nelson A. Miles entered Big Foot's camp to gather all firearms. Only a few of the Sioux agreed to this. The soldiers searched the tepees and found about thirty-eight rifles. Then they asked the Sioux to open the blankets draped about them against the cold. A young warrior, Black Coyote, raised his hidden rifle over his head and shouted that he would not give it up. As soldiers wrestled with Black Coyote, the rifle fired.

The soldiers were already extremely nervous and feared that they would be killed. They opened fire immediately. From above, the army fired its cannon into the camp. The Sioux ran for their lives. By noon, three hundred of them, including Big Foot and many women and children, lay dead. Fifty were wounded. Troops continued hunting those Sioux who had fled. The army casualties were twenty-five dead, thirty-nine wounded.

Many army deaths were from "friendly crossfire"—one soldier shooting at a Sioux but hitting another soldier on the other side of the camp. Viewing the scene later in the day, the Oglala Sioux holy man Black Elk said, "I wished that I had died too, but I was not sorry for the women and children. It was better for them to be happy in the other world." U.S. forces left many wounded Sioux to die in the cold, returning several days later to bury the dead. Nineteen soldiers who fought at the Battle of Wounded Knee received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the country's most distinguished military honor.

Scattered fighting between U.S. forces and Native Americans continued. But the massacre of Wounded Knee stopped what were known as the Ghost Dance Indian Wars. Wounded Knee was also the last full-scale armed attack against Native Americans on U.S. soil.

Think Twice

Why do you think Black Elk said he was not sorry for the dead women and children?

U.S. troops, shown here in the distance, killed hundreds of Native Americans at Wounded Knee.

PRIMARY SOURCE: "THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY," BY FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER (1893)

In 1890, the U.S. Census Bureau declared the western frontier "closed" because there was no longer a consistent stretch of territory with a population density of fewer than two people per square mile (2.6 km^2). In this excerpt, Turner comments on the legacy of the previous decades' rapid western expansion.

Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development.

. . . The peculiarity of American institutions is, the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people—to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life. . .

. . . The result is that to the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom—these are traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier. Since the days when the fleet of Columbus sailed into the waters of the New World, America has been another name for opportunity, and the people of the United States have taken their tone from the incessant expansion which has not only been open but has even been forced upon them. He would be a rash prophet who should assert that the expansive character of American life has now entirely ceased. Movement has been its dominant fact, and, unless this training has no effect upon a people, the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise. But never again will such gifts of free land offer themselves.

Source: Turner, Frederick J. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." *The Frontier in American History*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921. pp. 1-3, 37.

PRIMARY SOURCE: FROM *A CENTURY OF DISHONOR*, BY HELEN HUNT JACKSON (1881)

There are within the limits of the United States between two hundred and fifty and three hundred thousand Indians, exclusive of those in Alaska. The names of the different tribes and bands, as entered in the statistical tables of the Indian Office Reports, number nearly three hundred. . . .

There is not among these three hundred bands of Indians one which has not suffered cruelly at the hands either of the Government or of white settlers. The poorer, the more insignificant, the more helpless the band, the more certain the cruelty and outrage to which they have been subjected. This is especially true of the bands on the Pacific slope. These Indians found themselves of a sudden surrounded by and caught up in the great influx of gold-seeking settlers, as helpless creatures on a shore are caught up in a tidal wave. There was not time for the Government to make treaties; not even time for communities to make laws. The tale of the wrongs, the oppressions, the murders of the Pacific-slope Indians in the last thirty years would be a volume by itself, and is too monstrous to be believed.

It makes little difference, however, where one opens the record of the history of the Indians; every page and every year has its dark stain. The story of one tribe is the story of all, varied only by differences of time and place; but neither time nor place makes any difference in the main facts. Colorado is as greedy and unjust in 1880 as was Georgia in 1830, and Ohio in 1795; and the United States Government breaks promises now as deftly as then, and with an added ingenuity from long practice.

Source: Jackson, Helen Hunt. *A Century of Dishonor: A Sketch of the United States Government's Dealings with Some of the Indian Tribes*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881, pp. 336–338.

Chapter 2
Post-Reconstruction and the Jim Crow Era

The Framing Question

How did African Americans navigate the challenges of the post-Reconstruction era, and what methods did they use to fight for civil rights?

Hope to Hardship

Immediately following the Civil War, the United States had begun to rebuild and try to mend the division the massive conflict had caused. This period was known as Reconstruction (1865–77). For many, it was a time of hope and optimism, as formerly enslaved persons were granted rights and citizenship under the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments.

The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified February 3, 1870, states that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Once Reconstruction came to an end, the promise of this protection was often ignored.

But as you know, the promises of equality and freedom during Reconstruction turned out to be short-lived, giving way to tumultuous, uncertain times in the South. The post-Reconstruction era was soon marked by racial injustices and the rise of segregation policies known as Jim Crow laws.

Unraveling Threads and Jim Crow Laws

As you may have learned, the Compromise of 1877 marked the end of Reconstruction. Much of the progress of Reconstruction-era policies designed to help African Americans after the Civil War was reversed. Racial discrimination and **political disenfranchisement** tactics like poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses were commonplace, and groups like Red Shirts continued to use violence and fear to prevent African Americans from exercising their right to vote.

Vocabulary

political disenfranchisement, n. the deprivation of the right to vote

As violence escalated, the number of African Americans elected to government positions sharply declined, as would-be candidates chose not to run for office out of fear for their safety and their families' well-being.

In addition, Jim Crow laws began to be passed by various southern governments to segregate Black and white Americans, thereby denying African Americans many of the same opportunities and rights as white people. You may have learned that Jim Crow laws mandated the segregation of schools, restaurants, theaters, transportation, and even drinking fountains throughout the South, and African Americans faced humiliating and degrading treatment as they were forced to use separate and usually inferior facilities.

From schools to theaters to public transportation, African Americans were subjected to separate and often inferior facilities as a result of segregation.

In 1896, the Supreme Court issued a decision in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* that upheld Jim Crow laws. In 1890, the state of Louisiana had passed a law requiring separate cars on trains for African American and white passengers. This legislation was similar to laws that had previously been enacted in other southern states. When Homer Plessy, a New Orleans

Battle of Liberty Place

On September 14, 1874, fighting broke out on the streets of New Orleans. It began when the Democratic-Conservative White League, in an attempt to stop Reconstruction in Louisiana, attacked the Republican Metropolitan Police. As the fighting ensued, thousands looked on. The Metropolitan Police were quickly overwhelmed and forced to retreat. More than thirty people died, and many were injured. Almost immediately, the White League gained control of the city, removing Governor William Pitt Kellogg from office. President Ulysses S. Grant was outraged. When it became clear that Grant was willing to use army forces against the White League, they surrendered, and Governor Kellogg was reinstated.

resident of mixed race, sat in the "white" car of an East Louisiana Railroad train in 1892, he was arrested and charged with violating the law. In court, his lawyer argued that the Louisiana law requiring "separate but equal accommodation" was unconstitutional. After Judge John H. Ferguson ruled against him, Plessy appealed his case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. There, a majority of justices declared that the Louisiana segregation law and others like it were constitutional as long as the separate facilities provided were "equal," stating:

> If the civil and political rights of both races be equal, one cannot be inferior to the other civilly or politically. If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane.

This decision ensured the continuation of Jim Crow by reinforcing segregation and the racial divide it helped produce. In many parts of the United States, the practice of "separate but equal" would remain in effect until the 1950s.

African American and White Populations in Former Confederate States, 1880

Although the populations of many states with Jim Crow laws were close to or more than 50 percent Black, African Americans continued to be denied the rights to which they were entitled by the U.S. Constitution until the mid-twentieth century.

Find Out the Facts

Find out more about Americans' reaction to the Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*.

Writers' Corner

Using your research on *Plessy v. Ferguson*, write a narrative poem about the effect it had on the lives of African Americans.

The consequences of the Jim Crow era were far-reaching. African Americans, particularly in the South, were subjected to discrimination and racism in nearly every part of their lives. Black schools often lacked resources and quality education. Economic opportunities were limited. Job discrimination left many trapped in low-paying jobs. Social interactions were strained, as interracial friendships and relationships were strictly discouraged by societal norms.

Changes to the Louisiana Constitution

The state constitution of Louisiana changed several times over the years following Reconstruction. In a little over a decade, Louisiana shifted from having one of the country's most racially fair constitutions to a document that significantly reduced the rights of African Americans as first established in the Louisiana constitution of 1868.

The Louisiana constitution of 1879 undermined the political participation of African Americans through a series of restrictive measures. Among these were a poll tax and the removal of bans on segregated facilities. In addition, the 1879 constitution eliminated the office of the state superintendent of education. This rolled back the gains made in ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of race.

Twenty years later, the Louisiana constitution was rewritten yet again. This time, many changes reflected the recent Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. That case had Louisiana at its heart, and its aftereffects would ripple through the entire nation for decades to come. The Louisiana constitution of 1898 granted the state legislature the power to enforce segregation in public facilities. It also made property ownership a requirement for voting and put a literacy test and grandfather clause into effect. Before the 1898 constitution went into

effect, 130,000 African Americans in the state were registered to vote. By 1900, this number had dropped to 5,320.

Think Twice

How might the Louisiana constitutions of 1879 and 1898 have impacted African American citizens' sense of identity and belonging in society?

The changes to the Louisiana constitution were not isolated events. They were part of a broader trend that swept across the southern states during this era. By effectively denying African Americans the right to vote, hold office, and receive an equal education, the 1898 Louisiana constitution had a harmful impact on the lives of African Americans in the state. It targeted African Americans, leaving them voiceless and without the protections they had been previously granted.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) hold a significant place in American history. These institutions were founded to counter the discrimination that existed in the American education system. They have often been beacons of hope and progress for African Americans.

The first HBCU, the Institute for Colored Youth—now called Cheyney University—was founded in 1837 in Cheyney, Pennsylvania. Numerous other HBCUs were later established, mostly in southern states. These schools embraced the mission of providing African Americans the education, opportunities, and sense of empowerment they were often denied in other institutions of higher learning. HBCUs have produced generations of African American doctors, lawyers, educators, scientists, artists, and other leaders who have made remarkable contributions to various fields. Today, about one hundred HBCUs continue to educate African American students, as well as students of other races.

Louisiana is home to six HBCUs, including Southern University and A&M College.

HBCUs have also been important in advancing social and racial equality in the United States. Students and faculty within these institutions have actively challenged racism and discrimination in the American education system and society. They have played a vital role in preserving and celebrating African American history, culture, and heritage while also fostering a sense of belonging and community for African American students. HBCUs have cultivated their legacy as learning environments that are free from bias and supportive of academic and personal growth.

Louisiana's HBCUs

Louisiana has six Historically Black Colleges and Universities that were founded in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first to be established was Southern University, which opened in 1881 in response to an 1879 constitutional mandate for "the education of persons of color."

The other five HBCUs in Louisiana are Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern University at New Orleans, Southern University at Shreveport, and Xavier University of Louisiana. These schools offer a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs and have produced many notable alumni. In addition, the six institutions provide an economic boost to the state economy, generating more than eight thousand jobs and many millions of dollars in spending within the surrounding communities.

Think Twice

How do you think HBCUs have contributed to the educational and social advancement of African Americans?

An Uphill Battle for Civil Rights

As you know, the end of Reconstruction was a significant setback for African Americans' civil rights. Yet they persisted in their fight for the equality they deserved, pushing back against voter suppression, segregation, and other practices. Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois were among those who worked to improve the status of African Americans. However, they offered very different strategies for doing so.

Booker T. Washington, who was born into slavery, was director of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, an academic and vocational school that trained African Americans in skilled trades such as carpentry, brickmaking, printing, and home economics. He believed that pursuing educational and economic opportunities was the best strategy for African Americans to gain equality, rather than directly challenging political disenfranchisement and social segregation in the South. In a speech in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1895, Washington said:

> To those of my race who . . . underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the southern white man, . . . I would say, "Cast down your bucket where you are." . . . Cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom you are surrounded. . . . Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. . . . No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top.

Booker T. Washington was the first leader of the Tuskegee Institute, a historically Black teachers' college in Alabama founded in 1881.

For these views, some people considered Washington an **accommodationist**.

Vocabulary

accommodationist, n. one who compromises or adapts to the attitudes of someone else

W. E. B. Du Bois was the first African American to earn a PhD from Harvard University. He wrote that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line"—in other words, the segregation and racism that divided Americans. Du Bois believed that the best strategy was for talented, highly-educated African Americans to lead and inspire, focusing on the restoration of their civil and political rights. In his 1903 book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois wrote:

> Mr. Washington's doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical spectators; when in fact the burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean if we do not all work on righting these great wrongs. . . .

In 1905, Du Bois and twenty-eight other civil rights activists met in Buffalo,

W. E. B. Du Bois graduated from Fisk University, a historically Black college in Tennessee, in 1888, before pursuing graduate studies at Harvard University. He became an activist, author, editor, and historian who was an enormous presence in the struggle for civil rights at the turn of the twentieth century.

New York. The city's hotels refused to accommodate the group, so they moved their meeting to nearby Niagara Falls in Ontario, Canada. The newly formed civil rights organization became the Niagara Movement. The organization, like Du Bois, opposed Booker T. Washington's approach to equality and instead pushed for immediate legal change.

Three years later, in 1908, a deadly race riot occurred in Springfield, Illinois. Thousands of white people burned the homes and businesses of African Americans and killed two Black people by **lynching**. The event inspired members of

Vocabulary

lynching, n. the killing of a person by a mob, often by hanging

the Niagara Movement, along with other African American and some white civil rights activists, to establish the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP sought to end segregation and worked on passing legislation or obtaining judicial rulings that would end discrimination against African Americans. Du Bois, a prominent member, was the longtime editor of the NAACP's quarterly magazine, *The Crisis*.

Ida B. Wells was another prominent activist who advocated for African American rights. Wells was born into slavery in Mississippi in 1862. She attended a freedmen's school before becoming a teacher in her own right at just fourteen years of age. She experienced firsthand the limited education opportunities available to African American students, and in 1891, she expressed her views on the issue in a series of newspaper articles. Although the articles were written under a pen name, she still lost her job. For many, this would have been a difficult blow, but for Wells, it was an opportunity.

Ida B. Wells

Mary Church Terrell

She embarked on a career in journalism and used her platform to campaign against lynching. She cofounded the National Association of Colored Women and, like W. E. B. Du Bois, was a founding member of the NAACP. Wells was also active in the women's suffrage movement.

Mary Church Terrell

Another notable figure in the push for civil rights was Mary Church Terrell. Born in 1863 in Memphis, Tennessee, to parents who were formerly enslaved, Terrell responded to the racially based violence she saw around her with the motto "Lifting as we climb," working to empower fellow African Americans through education and civic action. As both a **suffragist** and civil rights activist, Terrell fought passionately for equal voting rights for all Americans, regardless of their race or gender. Terrell cofounded the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), along with Ida B. Wells and others, and served as its first president from 1896 to 1901.

Vocabulary

suffragist, n. a person who supports extending the right to vote, especially to women

Find Out the Facts

Research the life of Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, or Ida B. Wells.

Writers' Corner

Using your research, create a short biographical presentation on the individual you chose to research.

The push for civil rights in the post-Reconstruction era was difficult. Leaders faced constant resistance, but their work moved forward. The work of African American activists at the time laid a foundation for the eventual victories of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Their relentless pursuit of justice paved the way for social change and inspired future generations to continue the fight for civil rights for all Americans.

De Jure Segregation vs. De Facto Segregation

Federal legislation and judicial rulings during the era of the Civil Rights Movement ended laws that had allowed for legally sanctioned, or de jure, segregation. However, de facto segregation, or segregation in practice, still exists today.

PRIMARY SOURCE: STATE CONSTITUTION OF LOUISIANA, 1898

The following sections describe the required qualifications for voting under the 1898 Louisiana constitution.

Art. 197
Sec. 3. He shall be able to read and write, and shall demonstrate his ability to do so when he applies for registration, by making, under oath administered by the registration officer or his deputy, written application therefor, in the English language, or in his mother tongue. . . .

Sec. 4. If he be not able to read and write, . . . then he shall be entitled to register and vote if he shall, at the time he offers to register, be the bona fide owner of property assessed to him in this State at a valuation of not less than three hundred dollars . . . and on which, if such property be personal only, all taxes due shall have been paid. . . .

Sec. 5. No male person who was on January 1st, 1867, or at any date prior thereto, entitled to vote under the Constitution or statutes of any State of the United States, wherein he then resided, and no son or grandson of any such person not less than twenty-one years of age at the date of the adoption of this Constitution, and no male person of foreign birth, who was naturalized prior to the first day of January, 1898, shall be denied the right to register and vote in this State by reason of his failure to possess the educational or property qualifications prescribed by this Constitution. . . .

Art. 198. No person less than sixty years of age shall be permitted to vote at any election in the State who shall not, in addition to the qualifications above prescribed, have paid on or before the 31st day of December, of each year, for the two years preceding the year in which he offers to vote, a poll tax of one dollar per annum, to be used exclusively in aid of the public schools of the parish in which such tax shall have been collected. . . .

Source: *Constitution of the State of Louisiana: Adopted in Convention at the City of New Orleans, May 12, 1898*. New Orleans: H. J. Hearsey, 1898, pp. 77–81.

PRIMARY SOURCE: JUSTICE HARLAN'S DISSENT IN *PLESSY v. FERGUSON* (1896)

In view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. There is no caste here. Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law. The humblest is the peer of the most powerful. The law regards man as man, and takes no account of his surroundings or of his color when his civil rights as guaranteed by the supreme law of the land are involved. . . .

In my opinion, the judgment this day rendered will, in time, prove to be quite as pernicious as the decision made by this tribunal in the *Dred Scott case*.

Source: *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 559 (1896).

Glossary

A

accommodationist, n. one who compromises or adapts to the attitudes of someone else **(28)**

amnesty, n. a decision, usually by a government, not to punish a person or group that has committed a crime **(13)**

assimilation, n. the adoption of the ways of another culture **(9)**

L

lynching, n. the killing of a person by a mob, often by hanging **(28)**

M

manifest, adj. easily understood or obvious **(6)**

P

political disenfranchisement, n. the deprivation of the right to vote **(21)**

R

regiment, n. a unit in an army **(12)**

S

suffragist, n. a person who supports extending the right to vote, especially to women **(30)**

Illustration and Photo Credits

Akademie / Alamy Stock Photo: i, iii, 7

Classic Image / Alamy Stock Photo: 20–21

Everett Collection Historical / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover C, 29b

Ian G Dagnall / Alamy Stock Photo: 8

IanDagnall Computing / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover B, 22

Land sale poster, 1875 (print)/American School, (19th century) / American/Private Collection/Peter Newark American Pictures / Bridgeman Images: Cover A, 5

Magite Historic / Alamy Stock Photo: 25

Native Americans Plains People moving camp, 1897 (w/c on paper)/Russell, Charles Marion (1865–1926) / American/Private Collection/Peter Newark American Pictures / Bridgeman Images: 2–3

Niday Picture Library / Alamy Stock Photo: 29a

Pictures Now / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover D, 4

Retreat of Major Marcus Reno's command (ink on paper)/Amos Bad Heart Buffalo (1869–1913) / American/Private Collection/The Stapleton Collection / Bridgeman Images: 13

Science History Images / Alamy Stock Photo: 28

Shooting (gouache on paper)/Private Collection/© Look and Learn / Bridgeman Images: 10

Sioux ghost dance/Baraldi, Severino (b.1930) / Italian/Private Collection/© Look and Learn / Bridgeman Images: 15

Students in Mechanical Drawing Class at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, 1902 (b/w photo)/Johnston, Frances Benjamin (1864–1952) / American/Private Collection/Bridgeman Images: 27

U.S. troops surrounding the Indians on Wounded Knee battle field 1913 (photo)/Universal History Archive/UIG / Bridgeman Images: 17

CKHG™

Core Knowledge History and Geography™

in partnership with

Bayou Bridges: A K–8 Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum

A comprehensive program in world and U.S. history, integrating topics in geography, civics, economics, and the arts, exploring civilizations, cultures, concepts, and skills specified in the 2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies

Core Knowledge History and Geography™
units at this level include:

A Nation in Conflict
The Changing Nation
The Changing World
Prosperity and Decline
The World at War
The Postwar Era
The Modern Era

www.coreknowledge.org

ISBN: 979-8-88970-051-7

Core Knowledge Curriculum Series™