

Federal Indian Policy – Treaty Period

Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies
Grade Level: Grades 7-8
Suggested Duration: Five Class Periods

Stage 1 Desired Results

SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARDS FOR SIXTH THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE

(3) The geography content standards for sixth through eighth grade are that each student will:

(e) explain the role and impact of spatial patterns of settlement and movement in shaping societies and cultures, including Indigenous cultures;

(f) identify how the historical and contemporary movement of people, goods, and ideas from one area can impact change, conflict, and cooperation in other areas.

(4) The history content standards for sixth through eighth grade are that each student will:

(e) explain how Montana has changed over time and how this history impacts the present.

Understandings

- Prior to European contact all tribes had structured forms of government to manage their affairs.
- Treaties are legal and binding documents.
- Treaties are legal documents that pertain to land, water resources, education, etc.
- Federal Indian Policy guided the process of treaty making.
- The US Government has been influencing and working with tribes through various federal policies. (Essential Understanding 5)

Essential Questions

- Why did the US Government develop treaties with tribal nations?
- How are treaties legal and binding in the State of Montana?
- Do all tribal nations have treaties? Why?
- How are the treaties still upheld by the US Government?

Students will be able to...

- discuss treaties and how and when they were created (US Government).
- recognize Montana tribal treaties and the legal issues that arise.



Students will know...

- the legal process of treaties.
- how treaties were created.
- who the treaties affected.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Students will read and research literature and legal documents on the process of treaties.
2. Students will conduct a research project on treaties of the Montana tribes.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities

To introduce the topic, ask students what they currently know about treaties made between American Indian tribes and the US Government. Brainstorm a list of ideas they come up with and write on the board/overhead. After the students finish brainstorming, show the video on tribal sovereignty from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' *The Rez We Live On* video series. At the conclusion of the video, ask the students to provide any new thoughts or ideas they gleaned from watching the video.

Give a brief overview of the main points contained in Chapter Two: Federalism and the Indian Treaty Period (1787-1871) of ***History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy***. This should give students some basic background information regarding treaty making. Also, be sure to include the following points in your overview:

- Treaties were made between tribes and the US government and were based upon three basic assumptions on the part of the US government.
 - Indian tribes were sovereign nations
 - Tribes possessed some form of transferrable ownership to their lands
 - Negotiation and establishment of treaties was the responsibility of the Federal government and not individual states or citizens
- Reservations were the result of treaties, acts of congress, and executive orders (be sure students understand these are orders made by Presidents) and were not lands given to Indian tribes by the US Government.
- Treaties were often renegotiated or rewritten because white settlers would violate the terms of the treaty and move onto tribal lands due to gold discoveries or in search of farm or ranch land.
- Many of the rights and services provided to Indian tribes by the Federal government today were included in the treaties they signed. These include education, health care, and hunting and fishing rights.

Assign small groups/pairs of students a different tribal group from Montana to research a treaty made between them and the US Government. Students will be asked to research and present the following information from the tribe and treaty researched. A brief report and presentation will be required.

- ✓ What is the name of the treaty?

- ✓ When was the treaty signed?
- ✓ What were the main points agreed upon in the treaty?
- ✓ What tribes signed the treaty?
- ✓ What did tribe(s) give up in the treaty?
- ✓ How much land did the tribe(s) reserve for their use in the treaty?
- ✓ What were the main reasons the US Government wanted the treaty signed?

Evaluation will be based upon students answering all the suggested questions, how well they demonstrate a basic understanding regarding treaties, and the quality of their presentation to their classmates.

Resources

Cajune, Julie. "Chapter Three Tribal Histories Narrative – Treaty Period: Sovereignty and A Promise," [*Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide*](#), Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2011, 2013.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. "[Sovereignty](#)," The Rez We Live On.

Juneau, Stan, revised and updated by Walter Fleming and Lance Foster. [*History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy*](#). Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2013.

[Montana Indian Law Portal](#) This site has treaty documents for the Montana tribes.

National Archives. [American Indian Treaties](#).

Additional Resources

montanatribes.org [videos](#) of contemporary Montana Indians discussing treaties.