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8.57 Write a narrative piece that describes the impact of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the United States government and cites evidence from primary source accounts of the Trail of Tears. (C,G,H,TN)

**The Indian Removal Act**

- Settlers moving west got tired of making treaties with the Indians. In 1827, Congress ordered them to be removed.
- Some Sauk Indians did not move peacefully. Chief Black Hawk was one of them. This is Black Hawk’s War.
- He fought a two year war but ran out of supplies and was forced to leave the area.
- In 1830, Jackson pressured Congress to pass the Indian Removal Act: it allowed the government to remove all Indians east of the Mississippi River.
- Congress established the Indian Territory. It was an area that is now Oklahoma.
- Congress set up the Bureau of Indian Affairs to regulate the government’s policy toward Native Americans.

***EXTENDED RESPONSE LESSON***

In order to complete this standard, read this information, research what is provided and research on your own to develop your writing of the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

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**FIGURE 1.1**

YouTube - Billy Ray Cyrus “Trail of Tears”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oI7B6m8fKKA

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**FIGURE 1.2**

Trail of Tears - National Historic Trail

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg
The Five Tribes

The Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole tribes lived in the South, including the state of Tennessee. These tribes had farmland and they had what was left of their traditional hunting ground.

As we have already read, much of their traditional land had been given up through earlier treaties. Some of the members of these tribes had already moved west and out of this region. As time went on, these tribes became known as the Five Civilized Tribes because they lived like the white settlers. The settlers wanted the Indians to live like them. They tried to teach the Indians to go to school, church, wear clothes like the white people, and live in houses. Many of these tribes did just that. They built wooden homes, they raised cattle, and they became very similar to their white neighbors. The Five Tribes had even designed a government that look very much like the United States Government’s.

Cherokee Territory

Many white settlers believed that the Cherokees were the most “civilized” or lived most like them than any of the other four tribes. They learned to speak English, but had also developed their own alphabet. They did have their
own government and their own tribal leaders. They established New Echota, in the northern part of Georgia, as their capital.

The Cherokees started becoming very successful farmers. They grew cotton, corn, and other crops. They opened trade shops - blacksmiths, carpenters, and became sawmill owners. Some even converted to Christianity and set up schools and built churches in other communities.

The Indian Removal Act

**FIGURE 1.5**

YouTube - The Indian Removal Act of 1830

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X76l6fwQAV0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X76l6fwQAV0)

YouTube - The Indian Removal Act

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kzRTaKtyiI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kzRTaKtyiI)

Even with these changes, the Cherokees and other tribes did not gain respect of the white leaders or settlers. The settlers wanted Indian land and they pressured the government to take it from the Indians and sell it to the white settlers.

At first, the leaders of Tennessee tried to encourage the Indian groups in Tennessee to leave their homes and move west. Some did leave but most wanted to stay on their land. It had been theirs for centuries. The Cherokees wanted the state governments of Tennessee and Georgia to let them have their own land and to let them declare statehood with their tribal lands. President Jackson was against that idea. Cherokee lands were valuable and Jackson wanted the land taken from the Cherokees and sold to settlers. President Jackson asked Congress to make laws that would force the Cherokees and other tribes to leave their land. In 1830, the Indian Removal Act was passed and signed into law. It was almost a unanimous vote. Every Congressman voted for it except David “Davy” Crockett from Tennessee.

**FIGURE 1.6**

Most of the Cherokee land was in the state of Georgia and the Cherokees filed a lawsuit against the state of Georgia. This case went to the United States Supreme Court. The Supreme Court voted to let the Cherokees keep their land,
but President Jackson ignored the Court’s ruling and made plans to remove the Five Tribes.

John Ross, Chief of the Cherokees

This created confusion for the Cherokee people. One of their chiefs, John Ross, believed that they had the right to stay. Another chief, John Ridge, felt that they had to move west. This divided the Cherokees.

YouTube - Trail of Tears movie from the National Park Service
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LSkfmCj8Jg

YouTube - Trail of Tears
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJuCzdeHFLg
New Echota, in Georgia, was the capital of the Cherokees.

Representatives of the United States government and Cherokee leaders met in New Echota to sign the treaty that would give up Cherokee lands. The United States gave $5 million to the Cherokees for their land. John Ridge signed the treaty but John Ross would not. He went to Washington D.C. and hoped that President Jackson would work out a better agreement. President Jackson refused to see him.
The Trail of Tears

www.brainpop.com - The Trail of Tears

http://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/trailoftears/

A painting of the Trail of Tears by Max D. Standley

In 1838, the population of the Cherokee nation in Tennessee and Georgia was about 14,000. Chief John Ross still believed because of the Supreme Court’s ruling, that the United States government could not force the Cherokees to leave their land. He was wrong.

General Winfield Scott and his soldiers began rounding up the Cherokees and placing them in forts or stockades. These were fences that they built around the Cherokees - much like a corral for keep cattle. Most of the Cherokees had to leave their homes so quickly that they were unable to even gather some of their belongings. Their homes and personal items were left behind to be taken by other settlers. The government gave the name “collection camps” to these stockades. Even though Chief Ross tried to work out agreements with General Scott, the United States government stood firm. The Cherokees realized that they had no choice but to move west.

Along with the United States soldiers who kept them from leaving the group, the Cherokees began their long march to Indian Territory.
Routes taken during the Trail of Tears

This journey was a 1000 mile march. The Indians began their march in late summer/early fall of 1838. They were beginning their 1000 mile walk to Indian Territory - now Oklahoma. As the march went on, the weather became cold. It rained, it snowed and most of the Cherokees did not have enough food or clothing to protect them from the bad weather. Historians believe that as many as one-third of the Cherokees died on the journey. That is one of the reasons that this march was known as the “Trail of Tears.”
This represents the Cherokee who live in Tennessee and North Carolina today.

A small number of Cherokees did escape the soldiers and remained in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. Many Cherokee descendants live in Unicoi, Tennessee and Cherokee, North Carolina.
Of the Five Civilized Tribes, the Cherokees were the last to be removed from the tribal lands. By the end of the Indian removal, more than 70,000 Indians had moved to present-day Oklahoma. The journey was very hard and long. Some Indians traveled in wagons and some by water, but most walked the entire way.

They walked in all kinds of weather. They walked when the heat was unbearable and when the winter snows were deep. When they were able to stop for the night, there wasn’t protection from the weather. They had very little to eat. Cornmeal and fodder was their main food source. Fodder is chopped up hay that is used for animal food. Their hunger made them weaker and many died along the trail.

**YouTube - Billy Ray Cyrus “Trail of Tears”**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oT7B6m8fKKA

**Additional Resources**

From the National Park Service...

http://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm
From Tennessee History for Kids…
http://www.tnhistoryforkids.org/esl/esl7

From Kids Connect…

From www.history.com
http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears

From the Cherokee Nation at www.cherokee.org…
http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears.aspx

http://mrnussbaum.com/nativeamericans-2/


http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/uhic/PrimarySourcesDetailsPage/PrimarySourcesDetailsWindow?displayName=PrimarySources
prodId=UHIC
action=e
windowstate=normal
catId=
documentId=GALE|CX2687400040
mode=view
userGroupName=gray02935
jsid=2517fa659410dd62497df52255657c06

http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears.aspx