8.92 Trace the evolution of federal policies toward American Indians, including movement to reservations; assimilation, boarding schools, wars with Indians (Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee), and the impact of the railroad and settlement patterns of pioneers, Buffalo Soldiers (George Jordan), and the Dawes Act. (C,E,G,H,P,TN)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q16OZkgSXfM  Published on Aug 8, 2013

In which John Green teaches you about the Wild, Wild, West, which as it turns out, wasn’t as wild as it seemed in the movies. When we think of the western expansion of the United States in the 19th century, we’re conditioned to imagine the loner. The self-reliant, unattached cowpoke roaming the prairie in search of wandering calves, or the half-addled prospector who has broken from reality thanks to the solitude of his single-minded quest for gold dust. While there may be a grain of truth to these classic Hollywood stereotypes, it isn’t a very big grain of truth. Many of the pioneers who settled the west were family groups. Many were immigrants. Many were major corporations. The big losers in the westward migration were Native Americans, who were killed or moved onto reservations. Not cool, American pioneers.
Federal policies toward American Indians

Beginning in colonial times, the American Indian had been forced off their lands. Indian leaders such as Pontiac and Tecumseh tried to unite the Indians, and keep the white settlers at bay, but were unsuccessful. Many Indian groups tried to get along with the white settlers and live side by side, but settlers wanted the land to themselves.

By 1840 the government had made over 200 treaties with the Indians. The power of the president to make treaties was the procedure used in relations with the Indians. As settlers moved westward to begin cattle ranching and mining, many of these treaties were broken. Indian leaders such as Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse and Geronimo tried to fight against the government, but they were eventually forced onto Indian reservations.

During the early 19th century, as the eastern settlers of the United States felt the desire to explore westward, the natives were caught in the middle of things. Eastern Indian tribes were forced out of their homelands to barren areas that contained fruitless soils, though they had a prosperous relationship beforehand. The reason given to justify the Indian removal stated by Thomas Jefferson was to, "give them a space to live undisturbed by white people as they gradually adjust to civilized ways". Though a problem occurred where westward expansion was on the rise and areas in the west were becoming full with settlers and the lands that Natives resided on (Nebraska and Kansas territories) ended up being taken from them by the government and given to settlers. Treaties were signed by the natives of the area, stating they accepted the downsized reservations or allotments, although their allotments were usually sold to the white settlers by force. The outcome of this removal devastated the Natives, and cost them their tribal identity and independence.
WARS WITH INDIANS

Little Big Horn

The Battle of Little Big Horn

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60yL.VrhksWk

The Battle of Little Bighorn, also called Custer’s Last Stand, happened in 1876 near the Little Bighorn River in Montana. Chief Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull led Native American forces against Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Ten-thousand Native American Sioux and Cheyenne tribesmen joined Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull in mid June. The U.S. government had confined the Native Americans to their reservations. The Indians had signed treaties with the US government, but once gold was discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota, the US government ignored the treaties and moved in to the region.

Pictured Above: An artist’s interpretation of the Battle of Little Big Horn

Custer was perhaps the most flamboyant and brash officer in the United States Army. He was confident that his technologically superior troops could contain the Native American fighters. Armed with new weapons of destruction such as the rapid-firing GATLING GUN, Custer and his soldiers felt that it was only a matter of time before the Indians would surrender and submit to life on a smaller reservation. Custer hoped to make that happen sooner rather than later.

His orders were to locate the Sioux encampment in the BIG HORN MOUNTAINS of Montana and trap them until reinforcements arrived. But the prideful Custer sought to engage the Sioux on his own.

On June 25, 1876, he discovered a small Indian village on the banks of the LITTLE BIG HORN River. Custer confidently ordered his troops to attack, not realizing that he was confronting the main Sioux and Cheyenne encampment. About three thousand Sioux warriors led by Crazy Horse descended upon Custer’s regiment, and within hours the entire SEVENTH CAVALRY and General Custer were massacred.
This would be one of the greatest victories for Native Americans. Once again the US government worked to calm the Native Americans and eventually confined the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians to a reservation.

Wounded Knee

The Battle of Wounded Knee was the last major confrontation between the US Army and the Plains Indians. The Ghost Dance was a spiritual movement that became popular among Indian tribes. The Sioux Indians had been confined to a reservation and were discouraged about their living conditions. The Ghost Dance taught that the Indians had angered the gods and this is why they were confined to the reservation. They felt they had abandoned their traditional ways which angered the gods.

An Indian agent was alarmed by the influence of the Ghost Dance and its prediction that many whites would be killed. The agent sent a message to Washington D.C. saying that the Indians were “acting crazy”. Sitting Bull, presumed to be a Ghost Dance supporter, was killed when an agent tried to arrest him. This act made tensions grow among the Indians.

Once the Calvary arrived, they made the Indians surrender their weapons. The Indians were afraid of being attacked if they gave up their weapons, but they did it anyway. A scuffle broke out and the Sioux Indians were defenseless so they resorted to hand to hand combat with knives. The army began firing on the Indians, and by the time the battle was over 146 Indians were dead. This confrontation ended the Ghost Dance movement.
How Did the Westward Expansion Affect the Native Americas?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3knJOD3uNw

After the Civil War, treaties were made with Indian tribes out West that allowed land to be made available to the public. This allowed railroad construction to begin, which gave pioneers a way to move westward more easily.

The building of the transcontinental railroad was the main cause of the depletion of the buffalo, a much needed resource for the Indian population to survive. All parts of the buffalo were used by the Indians for tools, food, clothing, tepees, warm rugs, and making hunting weapons. Because of deforestation (cutting down of trees) to allow the railroad to be built, much of the buffalo and wild game the Indians depended on, lost its main habitat. Trees were also used to make railroad ties and bridges for trains to pass over. These actions caused a great amount of environmental damage which caused the Native Americans to suffer.

- In the Great Plains hunter-gatherer groups such as the Sioux depended on buffalo herds which were decimated by American pioneers, sometimes simply for sport.
- In the Southwest, groups with hunting and farming subsistence patterns like the Navaho and Hopi lost access to water resources to settlers.
- In the Pacific Northwest, native fishermen groups like the Nez Perce were forced to concede their prime fishing
spots to settlers and canneries.

http://resourcesforhistoryteachers.wikispaces.com/USII.4

**Buffalo Soldiers (George Jordan)**

Listen to a little Bob Marley - indirectly singing about the Buffalo Soldiers!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5FCdx7Dn0o
George Jordan (1847 – October 24, 1904) was a Buffalo Soldier in the United States Army and a recipient of America’s highest military decoration—the Medal of Honor—for his actions in the Indian Wars of the western United States.

Jordan joined the Army from Nashville, Tennessee, and by 1880 was serving as a Sergeant in Company K of the 9th Cavalry Regiment in New Mexico. On May 7, 1890, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Tularosa on May 14, 1880 and at Carrizo Canyon on August 12, 1881.

Jordan reached the rank of First Sergeant before leaving the Army in 1897.[1] He died in 1904 and was buried in Fort McPherson National Cemetery, Maxwell, Nebraska.

Buffalo Soldiers originally were members of the U.S. 10th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army, formed on September 21, 1866 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This nickname was given to the "Negro Cavalry" by the Native American tribes they fought; the term eventually became synonymous with all of the African-American regiments formed in 1866.

Buffalo soldiers, as the American Indians called them because their hair looked like buffalo hair, were actually African American soldiers. George Jordan, a buffalo soldier born in 1847 in Williamson County, Tennessee, received the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Indian Wars out west.

Buffalo soldiers were all black regiments in the US Army. Two of the regiments were the 9th and 10th Cavalry unit. These units were the first black units to serve during peacetime in the West. Many of these soldiers were former slaves, self-educated, sharecroppers or former Civil War veterans. Even though the regiment did not receive the best
uniforms like other Cavalry units, the Buffalo soldier protected the frontier. They built forts, conducted surveys and kept peace by taking care of any disturbances took place.

**Figure 1.10**

**History of the Buffalo Soldiers**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbcxZM32ZrQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbcxZM32ZrQ)

**Dawes Act/ Assimilation/Boarding schools**

**Figure 1.11**

**Figure 1.12**

**The Dawes Act of 1887**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45HATCWo2PQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45HATCWo2PQ)

The Dawes Act was signed into law in 1887 by President Grover Cleveland. The Dawes Act was meant to help Native Americans assimilate into the white culture. The Indian Reservations were divided into smaller units and divided among the tribe. Cleveland did not believe the government should support the people, so he wanted the Native Americans to learn to farm instead of leaving them on the reservations where they could not earn a living. The plan consisted of the head of each household receiving 160 acres of land. The government would hold the land in a trust for 25 years until the family could prove they were self-sufficient farmers. If they were unsuccessful, then the land reverted back to the government. The government could then sell it. Native American land holdings greatly decreased because of this act.
The Dawes Act also created schools for the Native American children so they could assimilate into society. Children were sent to boarding schools and punished if they practiced any of their Native American ways. President Franklin Roosevelt abolished the Dawes Act in 1934.

American Indian boarding schools were boarding schools established in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries to educate Native American children and youths according to Euro-American standards. They were first established by Christian missionaries of various denominations, who often started schools on reservations and founded boarding schools to provide opportunities for children who did not have schools nearby, especially in the lightly populated areas of the West. The government paid religious societies to provide education to Native American children on reservations. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) founded additional boarding schools based on the assimilation model of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

Children were usually immersed in European-American culture through appearance changes with haircuts, were forbidden to speak their native languages, and traditional names were replaced by new European-American names (in order to both "civilize" and "Christianize"). The experience of the schools was often harsh, especially for the younger children who were separated from their families. In numerous ways, they were encouraged or forced to abandon their Native American identities and cultures.