

## Section 2

### Native Americans Struggle to Survive

#### Section 2 Focus Question

What were the consequences of the conflict between the Native Americans and white settlers? To begin answering this question,

- Discover who the people of the Plains were.
- Find out about broken treaties.
- Learn about the last stand for Custer and the Sioux.
- Read about Native American efforts at resistance.
- Understand the failure of reform.

#### Section 2 Summary

The gold rush and the railroads meant disaster for Native Americans of the West.

#### People of the Plains

When Europeans arrived, they introduced horses and guns to Native Americans. This allowed Native Americans to kill more game and travel faster and farther. Many Plains nations followed the buffalo herds. As a result, buffalo hunting played a key role in people's survival.

In many Plains nations, women managed village life. Men were hunters and warriors. Often, they also led religious life. ✓

#### Broken Treaties

U.S. treaties promised to safeguard Native American lands. As miners and settlers pushed west, they broke the treaties. In 1851, Plains nations signed the Fort Laramie Treaty. This treaty said their lands would be protected by the United States if they stopped following the buffalo. However, the United States soon broke the treaty.

Native Americans protested. In response, Colonel John Chivington and 700 volunteers attacked a band of Cheyenne under army protection at Sand Creek in eastern Colorado in 1864. Chivington attacked anyway. The Sand Creek Massacre helped to ignite an era of war. ✓

#### Last Stand for Custer and the Sioux

Native Americans were moved to **reservations**, or land set aside for Native Americans to live on. But they were unable to thrive on them. The land they were given was so poor no

#### Key Events

1867

First cattle drive on Chisholm Trail.

1887

Dawes Act breaks up Native American tribal lands.

1889

Oklahoma opens to homesteaders.

#### ✓ Checkpoint

Describe the roles of women and men in the Plains nations.

Women: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Men: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### ✓ Checkpoint

Name the event that helped start an era of war.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Strategy

Why are the events described in this section called a “Last Stand”?

---

---

---

## ✓ Checkpoint

Name two Native American leaders who resisted the reservation system.

---

---

## ✓ Checkpoint

Name the event that marked the end of the Indian Wars.

---

## ✓ Checkpoint

List two things the Dawes Act did.

---

---

settlers would take it. If gold was discovered on reservation land, the land was taken away.

In June 1876, Colonel George Custer attacked the Sioux and Cheyennes. He was ordered to force them onto a reservation. Chiefs **Sitting Bull** and Crazy Horse won the Battle of Little Bighorn, but the Sioux and Cheyennes were rounded up a winter or two later by a larger force. ✓

### Other Efforts at Resistance

Under pressure, many Nez Percés agreed to go to a reservation. When Chief Joseph and a large band of Nez Percés tried to flee to Canada, they were captured near the border.

The Navajos of the Southwest resisted removal to reservations until 1864. They were then sent to the Pecos River in Arizona. The Apaches, led by Geronimo, fought until 1886, when they, too, were sent to a reservation.

In the 1880s, soldiers worried about the Ghost Dance. Native Americans said the dance gave them visions of returning to their old ways. In 1890, Sitting Bull was killed by Native American police sent to stop the dance. Then soldiers surrounded a group of Sioux fleeing to avoid more violence. While the Sioux were giving up their guns, a shot was fired. The army opened fire. They killed nearly 200 Sioux men, women, and children. This Battle of Wounded Knee ended the Indian Wars. ✓

### The Failure of Reform

Reformers criticized the government for its harsh treatment of Native American nations. Hoping to improve Native American life, Congress passed the Dawes Act in 1887. The act tried to end Native Americans’ wandering and turn them into farmers. It set up schools and gave Native American men 160 acres to farm. But few Native Americans took to farming, and with the buffalo hunt gone, they remained poor. Many grew dependent on the government. ✓

### Check Your Progress

1. How did the Plains nations’ lives change after the arrival of Europeans?

---

---

2. Why did the Dawes Act fail?

---

---