

The Treaty Trail: U.S. - Indian Treaty Councils in the Northwest

A Treaty Trail Lesson Plan

Cause and Effect:

Students Examine an Artist's Perspective

By Meredith Essex

This may be used as a *Causes of Conflict Classroom-Based Assessment* for elementary school students.

Summary:

In this exercise, students will have the opportunity to examine artworks that are more than a century and a half old, approaching them not only as an artist's perspective, but also as primary, historical documents that reveal clues about the time period of U.S.-Indian treaties in the Pacific Northwest.

After examining a work of art by Gustav Sohon, an artist and interpreter who accompanied Washington Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens on the "Treaty Trail," students will also read primary accounts of the period, and examine maps and secondary sources. The lesson plan enables students to develop an understanding of some of the causes and effects of these treaties as they satisfy EALRs in history, geography, reading, arts, and social studies skills.



Arrival of the Nez Perce Walla Walla Treaty, May 1855 by Gustav Sohon.
Courtesy Washington State Historical Society.

Essential Questions for Students:






- What can a comparison of maps tell us about the impact of treaties on Indian life in Washington Territory?
- What are some of the causes and effects of the treaties between Washington Territory Indians and the U.S. government? How do you think the experience of the parties involved differs?
- What can you say about how cultural perspective influences art? Looking at the art of Gustav Sohon, what do you think he was trying to depict about the events that he was a part of? What do you think other artists from other cultures might have shown?

Essential Understandings:

1. Students will understand that the interaction of cultures can shape trends, influence historical events and have long term consequences.
2. Students will learn to use historic images as evidence of the past.
3. Students will look at the images for evidence of authority and power.
4. Students will examine artwork from multiple perspectives and evaluate potential messages within the painting as well as the history surrounding those images.

DOWNLOAD AREA

Download the PDFs required for this lesson plan:

-  [The Lesson Plan](#)
-  [Primary Source Documents](#)
-  [Secondary Source Documents](#)
-  [What is a Treaty?](#)
-  [Student Worksheets](#)

Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs)

This lesson plan satisfies the following EALRs: History WA1.2.1, Geography 1.2.1a, Reading 2.3.2, Arts 2.3 and 2.4 as well as the following Social Studies skills: 1.1.1e and 3.1.2d. [Click here](#) to print out the material for your reference.

CBA Scoring Rubric and Notes

The Office of State Public Instruction has created a scoring rubric for the Causes of Conflict Classroom Based Assessment. [Click here to download](#) and print this rubric for your information.

Primary Sources for Student Examination (provided):

1. Gustav Sohon's painting "[Arrival of the Nez Perce Walla Walla Treaty, May 1855](#)"

Primary Sources: A piece of evidence created during the time period under investigation by someone who participated in, witnessed, or commented upon the events that you are studying. It is the surviving record of past events such as photographs, diaries, or artifacts.

Secondary Sources for Student Examination (provided):

1. Map of [Washington Territory Indian Nations & Tribes](#) (adapted from 1854 Lambert Census Map)
2. Map of [Reservations in 1890](#) (adapted from US Census Office Map, 1890)
3. Map of [Current Reservations](#)
4. Map detail portraying [Current Western Washington Reservations](#)
5. [Gustav Sohon biography](#)
6. [Isaac Stevens biography](#)
7. [Chief Lawyer \(or Hallalhotsoot\) biography](#)
8. [Cause and Effect](#) reading
9. [What is a treaty?](#) reading

Secondary Sources: Books, articles, essays, and lectures created, often using primary sources, that describe and interpret a time period after events have taken place.

Instructions for Teachers:

SESSION ONE

Step I.

Prepare by studying the following sources about U.S.-Indian treaties in the Pacific Northwest:

Secondary Source Readings

Step II.

Introduce students to the Treaty Trail by summarizing for the class key points from what you have read. Define and discuss the concept of a "treaty", and introduce some of the key players: artist and interpreter, Gustav Sohon, Nez Perce Chief, Lawyer, and Washington Territory Governor, Isaac Stevens.

- *Emphasize to students that the class is looking at forces and key figures involved in the campaign for treaty signing which led to placement of Indians on reservations in Washington Territory.*

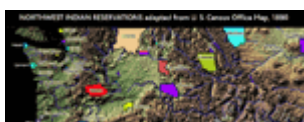
Step III.

Project digital images of, or show transparencies of, maps that indicate the shift from tribal occupation of their original tribal lands to the establishment of tribal reservations.



WASHINGTON TERRITORY INDIAN NATIONS & TRIBES

Adapted from 1854 Lambert Census Map



RESERVATIONS 1890

Adapted from 1890 U.S. Census Map

- With your students, take a look at maps that show the lands that Washington Indians once inhabited, and reservations that were established by treaty agreements between the U.S. government and Indian tribes. We suggest you begin by looking at original homelands, then shift to a look at reservations at 1890.
- Invite students to discuss ways that they think these changes shown on the maps would affect the traditional way of life of Washington Territory Indians. Have them write their ideas down and hand them in.

Step IV.

Let students know that they are going to research U.S.-Indian treaties. Their primary research question will be: what were the causes of the conflict surrounding treaties?

Distribute a copy of the following readings to each student: *The Treaty Trail: Cause and Effect*, *Cause and Effect Graphic Organizer* and *Cause and Effect Timeline Worksheet* (to be read in class or at home).



The Treaty Trail:
Cause and Effect

Causes of Conflict
Graphic Organizer

Student Checklist

Cause and Effect
Timeline Worksheet

Step V.

Tell students that they are going to list words or phrases on the graphic organizer that they have identified in their readings that communicate something about the causes of the events of U.S.-Indian treaties. They will be thinking about lands, economic development, encounter between cultural groups and the laws and intentions of the U.S. Government during the historical period being studied. Assign the Treaty Trail: Cause and Effect reading as a homework assignment.

Also explain to students that they are going to add some of the outcomes (or effects) of the treaties that placed many Indian communities on reservations. Add that they will be thinking about interaction of cultures and legal rights to lands. Mention that they can use the timeline as a way of keeping the different events separate in their minds. Students should also use the timeline during discussions to note key dates and as an aid coupled with the graphic organizer to assist them in writing their position paper at the end of this unit.

SESSION TWO

Step I.

After completion of the graphic organizer (as homework), facilitate a discussion about the difference between what different participants in the treaties expected.

- What did the U.S. government hope to achieve?
- What did tribes expect from the treaty agreements?

Step II.

Project or show transparency of art: Gustav Sohon's *Arrival of the Nez Perce Indians at Walla Walla Treaty, May 1855*. Explain that the class is focusing on a work of art that represents a specific time and place on the Treaty Trail, as well as the point of view of one artist.

Give each student a copy of the *Responding to Art as a Primary Source* worksheet.

Student worksheet:
Responding to Art
as a Primary Source

Ask students to do the following:

- Use the art vocabulary words and definitions on the *Responding to Art as a Primary Source* worksheet to help describe, analyze and interpret Gustav Sohon's *Arrival of the Nez Perce Indians at Walla Walla Treaty, May 1855*.
- Answer the questions and prompts in writing on the worksheet as thoroughly as possible.

Step III.

Guide group discussion where each student shares their historical interpretation of Sohon's art developed on the *Responding to Art as a Primary Source* worksheet. As you use the focus questions below to guide the conversation, you are helping students to integrate what they have learned and to answer the essential questions.

Please note that these discussion questions may elicit stereotypes and prejudices. The lesson plan requires students to support their interpretation with not only their personal response to the art, but with some concrete support from their reading.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- *Share your interpretation of this image: What is going on, what do you think is communicated about the time and place it represents: use your descriptive and analytical writing on the worksheet to help us understand your interpretation.*
- *What can you say about how cultural perspective influences art? Looking at the art of Gustav Sohon, what do you think he was trying to depict about the events that he was a part of? What do you think other artists from other cultures might have shown?*

Art Vocabulary:

art elements:

color what the eye sees when a wavelength of light is reflected from a surface

line mark made with a tool across a surface

shape a 2-dimensional enclosed space

space the illusion that a flat piece of art has three dimensions, or depth

texture the characteristic of the surface of a work of art resulting from the way in which the artist uses their materials

value lightness or darkness of an area of color or tone

composition the organization of art elements into a unified whole

principles of organization:

balance equalization of elements in a work of art

emphasis use of contrasts (color, size, shapes) to place greater attention on specific parts of a work of art

pattern repeating sequence of lines, shapes or colors

rhythm movement in art created through repetition of elements

unity wholeness, all elements belonging together in a work of art

variety diverse elements used together to create visual interest in a work of art

atmospheric perspective the illusion of distance created through reducing detail and muting colors as objects or figures recede in space

horizon where earth and sky meet

landscape art representing a place in the natural environment

perspective the illusion of distance created in a 2-dimensional work of art through reducing the size of objects, figures, or environmental features

scale the relative size of objects, figures or features of the environment

SESSION THREE

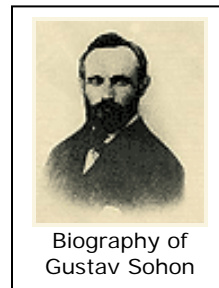
Step I.

Give each student a copy of a biography of the artist, Gustav Sohon, and a biography of Chief Lawyer of the Nez Perce tribe.

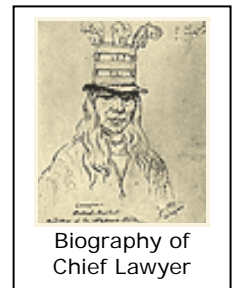
Ask students to do the following:

- Read Gustav Sohon's biography to learn more about the artist who made the art.
- Read Chief Lawyer's biography to learn more about Chief Lawyer and the Nez Perce people.

Prompt them to use their Cause and Effect timeline and their Graphic Organizer to record important information.



Biography of Gustav Sohon



Biography of Chief Lawyer

Step II.

Project a digital image of or show a transparency of the map of contemporary reservation lands. Have students identify where they live. Who are the closest tribes to their homes? Compare this map with the

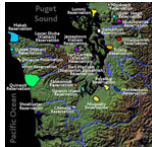
1854 Lambert Census Map identifying original tribal territory. How do they think that the lives of Native people changed between these time periods? How might these tribes feel about the treaties today?



WASHINGTON TERRITORY INDIAN NATIONS & TRIBES
Adapted from 1854 Lambert Census Map



CURRENT RESERVATIONS



DETAIL OF WESTERN WASHINGTON RESERVATIONS

SESSION FOUR (RECOMMENDED)

Step I.

Provide students at least one class period to research some of their unanswered questions about tribes, treaties or associated topics.

SESSION FIVE

Step I.

After students have engaged in this discussion, ask them to look over the tools that they have used throughout the lesson: their timeline, Responding to Art worksheet and graphic organizer. Remind them to refer to their Student Checklist. Relay to them that they are now going to use these tools to write a one-page position paper about the causes and effects of the U.S.-Indian treaties in Washington state.

Explain that the position paper topic consists of:

- *What are four causes of conflict associated with the U.S.-Indian Treaties? You must include at least one cause from each of history, geography, civics and economics.*

Students need to discuss what they feel are the historical, economic, geographic and civic causes of the conflict between Native Americans and the United States government during the treaty process. Please refer back to the scoring goals listed in the [CBA rubric](#) to determine grading for this assignment. Students can complete this assignment in class or may be given the project to do as homework. You may wish to invite them to share their papers with the rest of the class and engage in a discussion about what has been learned during the essay writing process.

Step V.

Review and reflect on targets, criteria, and learning process. Distribute copies of student worksheet: *Self assessment checklist* to each student. Facilitate use of checklist for self assessment by students.

Student worksheet:
Self assessment checklist

Complete teacher assessment checklist and compare with student self assessment checklist worksheets.

Teacher assessment
checklist