

The Long Walk and the Escape to Utah

Summary

The student will be able to examine United States Indian policy by understanding the events surrounding the Long Walk. They also will be able to understand how the Long Walk and the escape to Utah serve as examples of Navajo determination and persistence.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 90 minutes each

Materials

Teacher Materials

- [At a Glance: The Long Walk and the Escape to Utah](#) (pdf)
- Navajo Interactive Map (available online at <http://www.UtahIndians.org>)
- Video: [We Shall Remain: The Navajo](#)

Student Materials

- [Federal Indian Policy Vocabulary](#) (pdf)
- [Grey Eyes Remembers the Long Walk](#) (pdf)
- ["The Carson Expedition--Depredations of the Navajoes"](#) (pdf)
- ["Kit Carson's Expedition against the Indians"](#) (pdf)
- ["The Navajoes"](#) (pdf)

Background for Teachers

In the winter of 1863/1864, after their crops, livestock, and homes had been destroyed by the United States Army under Christopher "Kit" Carson, over 8,000 Navajos were forced to walk twelve-to-fifteen miles a day-- with little food and little or no protection from the winter weather--from their ancestral homelands to the remote and desolate Bosque Redondo Reservation. The memory of the Long Walk has haunted generations of Navajos, and the story of the Long Walk is important to the history of Utah's Navajos. Some Navajos were able to escape the army and moved into what is now southeastern Utah. Their continued presence in this area eventually led the government to add additional lands in Utah to the Navajo Reservation.

Instructional Procedures

Using the Navajo Interactive Map, the information from *At a Glance*, and/or a clip from *We Shall Remain: The Navajo*, introduce students to the story of the Long Walk. Ask the students to think about what it would have taken to survive such an experience, whether they had been among those who were forced to Bosque Redondo or whether they were part of the group that escaped north. Ask the students to consider how these experiences might have affected the future of the Navajo. Give the students the Federal Indian Policy Vocabulary worksheet and tell them to study the vocabulary. The next day (or following a study period), review the Federal Indian Policy Vocabulary and then distribute copies of the newspaper articles and the Navajo oral histories. Have the students read the newspaper stories and the oral histories. The students should review the materials and write a description of what the newspaper stories and oral histories suggest about federal Indian policy. Following this activity, the class may discuss how primary historical documents can reflect a historical event in different ways.

Extensions

Continue the story of the Navajo to include the restoration of the Navajo to their ancestral homelands with the Treaty of 1868.

Have the students view *We Shall Remain: Trail of Tears* (available to Utah Educators in [eMedia](#)) and compare/contrast the Navajo Long Walk to the Cherokee removal experience.

Have the students do additional research/writing assignments on a particular aspect of federal Indian policy or a specific element of Navajo government or culture.

Assessment Plan

Discussion contributions

Writing assignment

[End of Unit Assessment](#)

Bibliography

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Authors

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