

# Assimilation

Read the text and answer the questions.

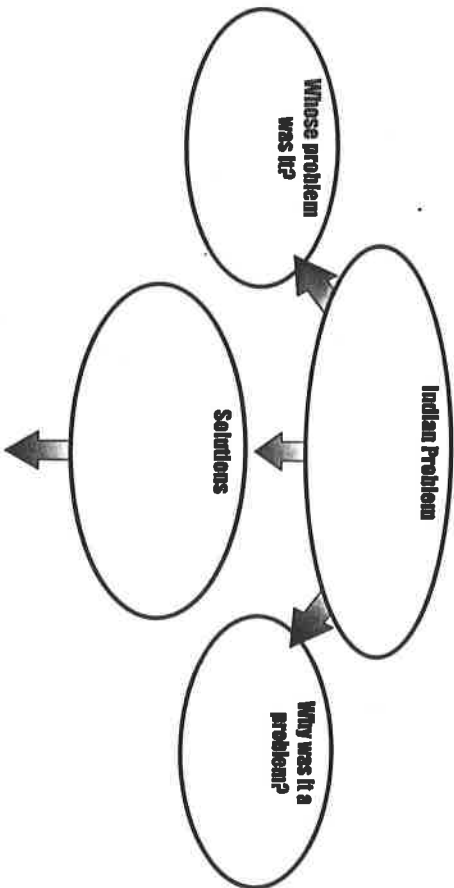
"After the Indian Wars, the United States developed a new solution to the so-called "Indian problem." Instead of continuing to battle Indian tribes across the West, the United States supported assimilation, a plan to force Native Americans to give up their culture and become part of white American culture.

The process of "Americanizing" the Native Americans started with the Dawes Act. This act divided the vast Native American lands into smaller reservations. It also gave small plots of land to Native Americans to own as property. Native Americans who owned land were "given" U.S. citizenship. By making Native Americans U.S. citizens, the government took away tribes' rights to self-government. Additionally, as U.S. citizens, Native Americans were subject to U.S. laws.

Under U.S. law, Native American children were forced to attend "federal boarding schools for Indians." U.S. soldiers gathered Native American children from the Indian reservations and took them to boarding schools far away from their family and tribal leaders. At boarding schools, Native American children were taught American history and American culture from the U.S. point of view. Native American children were forced to speak English, learn American values, wear American clothing, and practice American industrial skills such as carpentry for boys and housecleaning for girls. Separated from their parents, children did not learn much Native American culture. They were not taught their tribe's oral history, dance, art, and other ways of life. One Native American child recalls: "I remember coming home and my grandma asked me to talk to her in our native language and I said, 'Grandma, I don't know how.'"

- Define assimilation as it is used in the text.
  - Who wanted to assimilate the Native Americans? Why?
- List five direct effects of the Dawes Act.
- List five ways federal boarding schools attempted to assimilate Native Americans.

- Use the text and make inferences to complete the graphic organizer from the perspective of the U.S. government.



- Read the quotation and answer the questions below.

"A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one... In a sense, I agree with the sentiment. But only in this: that all the Indian there is in this race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man." Colonel Richard Pratt — Superintendent of a federal boarding school

- Summarize Colonel Pratt's point of view about Native Americans.
- Which sentence from the quotation best summarizes the purpose of the federal boarding schools?

- Look at the two photographs — both are of the same person, a Native American before and after attending a federal boarding school.
  - Compare and contrast the physical appearance of the Native American in the two photographs.



- Write a short essay about the "transformation, inside and out" of Native Americans at federal boarding schools. Cite evidence from the text, quotation, and photographs. Proofread and edit your work.