



Edexcel - GCSE (Grade 9-1)

**STUDY GUIDE**



# **The American West, c1835–c1895**

42

STUDY GUIDE

# The American West, c1835–c1895

Edexcel - GCSE





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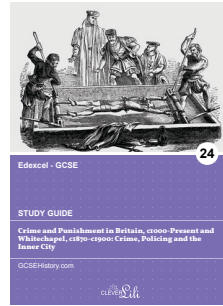
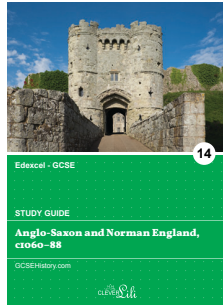
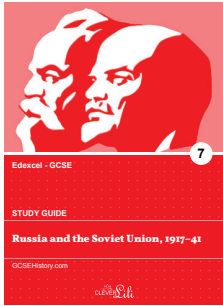
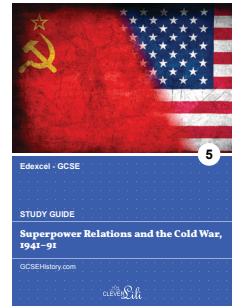
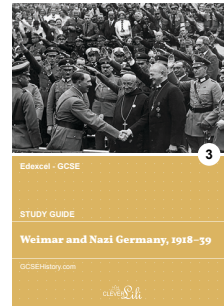
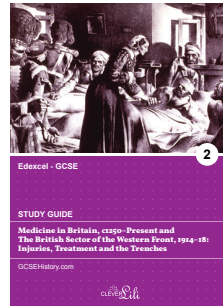
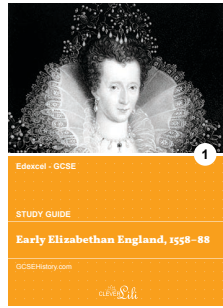
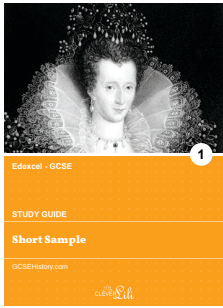
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## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In this study guide, you will see a series of icons, highlighted words and page references. The key below will help you quickly establish what these mean and where to go for more information.

### Icons

-  **WHAT** questions cover the key events and themes.
-  **WHO** questions cover the key people involved.
-  **WHEN** questions cover the timings of key events.
-  **WHERE** questions cover the locations of key moments.
-  **WHY** questions cover the reasons behind key events.
-  **HOW** questions take a closer look at the way in which events, situations and trends occur.
-  **IMPORTANCE** questions take a closer look at the significance of events, situations, and recurrent trends and themes.
-  **DECISIONS** questions take a closer look at choices made at events and situations during this era.

### Highlighted words

**Abdicate** - occasionally, you will see certain words highlighted within an answer. This means that, if you need it, you'll find an explanation of the word or phrase in the glossary which starts on **page 19**.

### Page references

**Tudor** (p.7) - occasionally, a certain subject within an answer is covered in more depth on a different page. If you'd like to learn more about it, you can go directly to the **page indicated**.

## WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

The American West c1835-c1895 period study investigates the expansion of the American West, the settlement and development of the land, and the conflicts and conquests which resulted in the establishment of the western United States. You will study the role played by key events and individuals during its development, as well as how the American West changed the lives of many. You will focus on crucial events during this period, and study the different political, economic and social changes that occurred.

### Purpose

This study will enable you to understand the complexities of how the American West came to be. You will investigate themes such as settlement, religion and beliefs, nationalism, technology, farming, government, and tribal structures. This course will enable you to develop the historical skills of explanation and analysis of key events so you can demonstrate your understanding of how events are connected.

### Topics

The American West c1835-c1895 is split into three key topics:

- 🗒 In Topic 1 you will study the beginnings of settlement of the American West from 1835-1862. You will investigate what life was like for the Plains Indians, as well as the US government policy which helped enable mass migration by white settlers, and how this led to tension between Native Americans and those seeking to take their land.
- 🗒 Topic 2 looks at the development of the American West between 1862 and 1876. You will investigate how life on the Great Plains developed, the consequences of the Civil War on the American West, and the impact of industrialisation and how it came into conflict with the lives of Native Americans. You will analyse how these developments led to conflicts, specifically Little Crow's War, the Sand Creek Massacre, and Red Cloud's War.
- 🗒 Topic 3 looks at the conflicts and conquests that occurred from 1876 to 1895. You will study how tension increased during this period, as well as investigating the changes in farming and the growing cattle industry. You will investigate the continuous problems of lawlessness, and how difficult it was to establish law and order. You will focus on some significant figures, the growth of settlement (such as the Exoduster movement), and the continuous destruction of the Plains Indians' way of life and their near-extinction.

### Key Individuals

Some of the key individuals studied on this course include:

- 👤 Brigham Young.
- 👤 Little Crow.
- 👤 Red Cloud.
- 👤 Abraham Lincoln.
- 👤 Crazy Horse.
- 👤 Sitting Bull.
- 👤 George Armstrong Custer.
- 👤 President Grant.

### Key Events




Some of the key events you will study on this course include:

- 📅 The Californian Gold Rush.
- 📅 The American Civil War.
- 📅 Little Crow's War.
- 📅 The Sand Creek Massacre.
- 📅 The Great Sioux War.
- 📅 The Fetterman Trap.
- 📅 The Exoduster Movement.
- 📅 The Battle of Little Bighorn.
- 📅 The Wounded Knee Massacre.
- 📅 The Closure of the Frontier by the US Government.



### Assessment

The American West c1835-1895 period study forms part of Paper 2, which you will have a total of 1 hour 45 minutes to complete. You should spend approximately 50 minutes on this section. There will be 3 exam questions which will assess what you have learned on The American West. c1835-1895. For Question 3, you will select two out of three options.

-  Question 1 is worth 8 marks and requires you to identify two consequences of an event. You will need to support the identified consequences with facts and explain how the consequences occurred.
-  Question 2 is worth 8 marks and requires you to write an analytical narrative account of an event or time period. You will need to describe what happened, as well as explain how and why events are connected.
-  Question 3 is worth 8 marks and requires you to explain the importance of two events, people or developments in relation to specific situations. You will need to explain what difference the event made to the specific situation.

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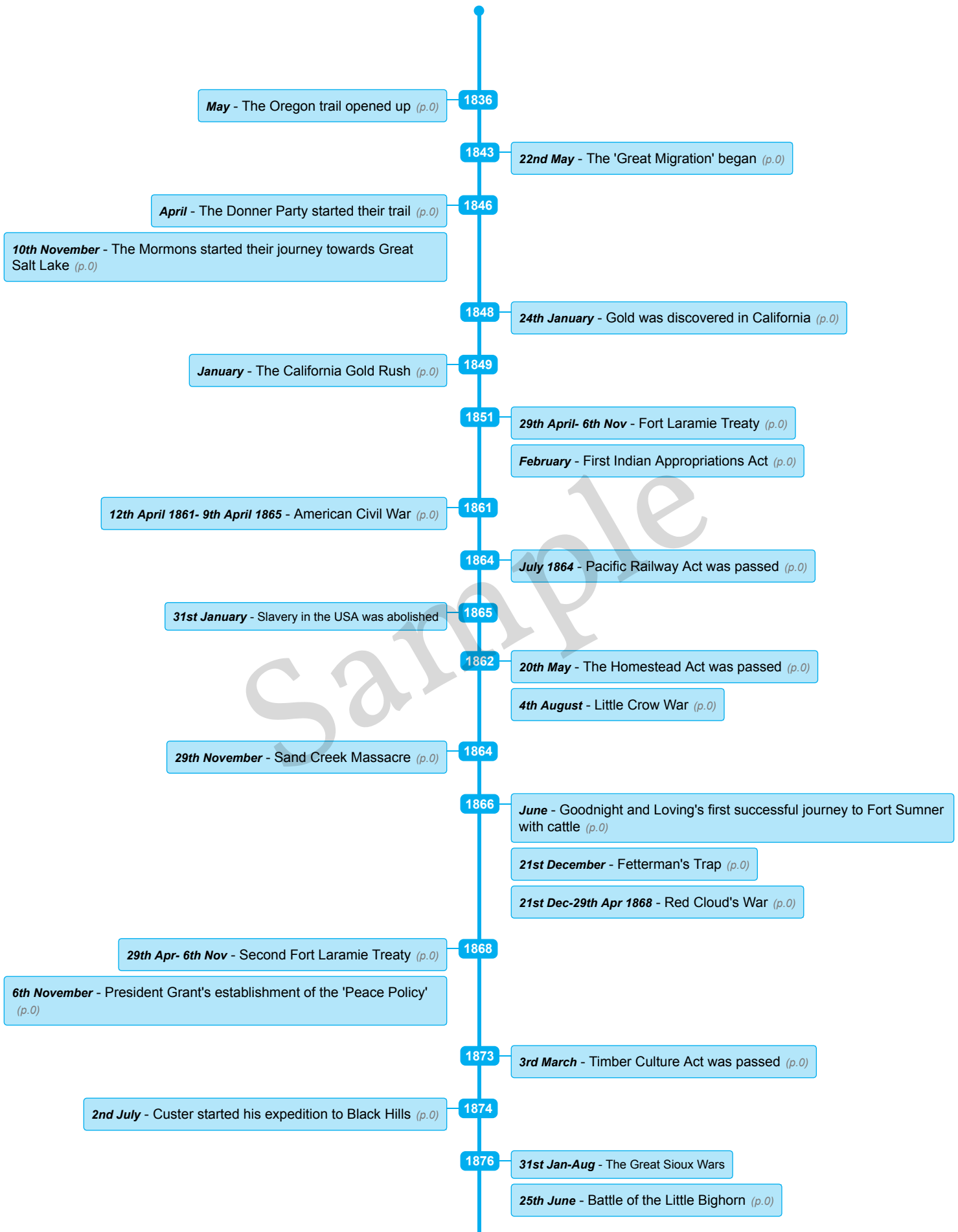


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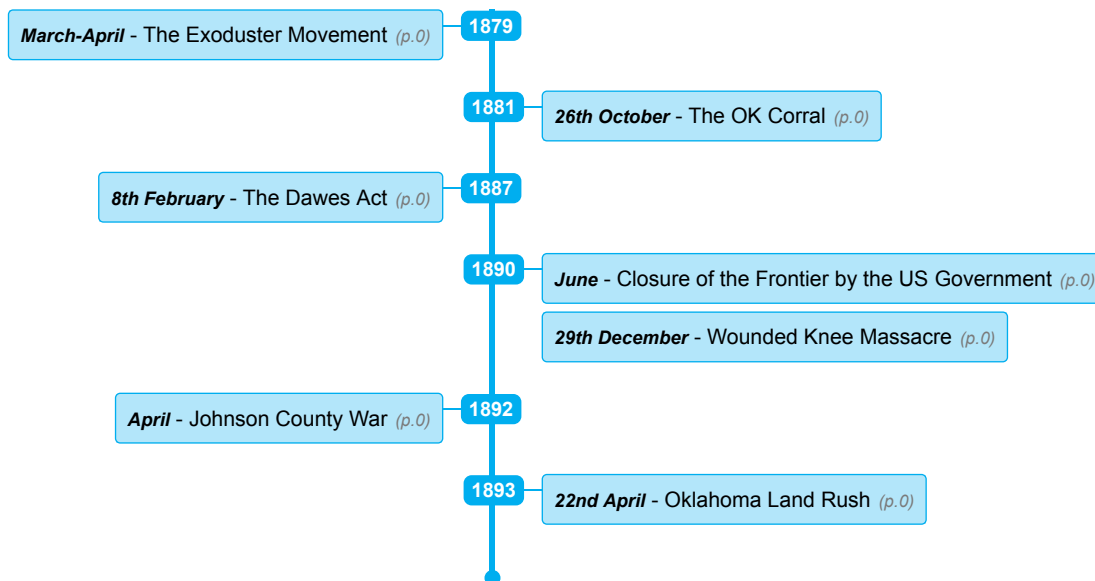
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# THE AMERICAN WEST, C1835-1895

## TIMELINE



## THE AMERICAN WEST, C1835-1895



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# THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT

The term used by people who lived east of the Mississippi River, when it was 'unknown' land.



## What was the Great American Desert?

The Great American Desert was the area of land between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. This was the name given to the area by the early settlers in America - later it became known as the 'Great Plains'.



## What did white settlers think of the Great American Desert?

Due to the poor conditions, the area now known as the Great Plains was dismissed by most Americans as inhospitable. They called it the Great American Desert.



## Why was the Great American Desert inhospitable?

There were 3 reasons why the Great American Desert was thought to be difficult to live in.

- ✓ The weather was **extreme**. It was cold and windy in the winter, and hot and dry in the summer.
- ✓ A lack of natural resources, particularly wood, made it difficult to build a home or farm the land.
- ✓ Dangerous or disruptive animals, like wolves and locusts, could cause problems for settlers.
- ✓ There were huge thunderstorms. Lightning could ignite fires that raged through the dry grass.



## How did native people survive in the American Desert?

Although white Americans struggled to survive on the Great Plains, Native Americans (p.15) thrived. They had developed ways in which to survive its conditions, mainly focused on a nomadic way of life.

- ✓ The Native Americans (p.15) followed the vast herds of buffalo (p.0), which provided them with food and other resources. No part of a buffalo was wasted.
- ✓ They used tipis as homes, as these were easy to carry, and to erect and dismantle.
- ✓ They treated the land and animals with respect. This reverence helped them survive, as they co-existed with nature, and this honoured the Great Spirit.



## How could native people survive the winter in the American Desert?

When the winter was particularly harsh the tribes sometimes moved into wooden lodges. These were circular buildings built from earth and logs, with a fire in the centre. They could fit around 60 people inside a lodge.



## Why did attitudes towards the American Desert begin to change in the 1840s?

The USA won a war against Mexico in 1848. It took over land in California and Oregon. Texas also joined the Union in 1845. These two events meant that white settlers had to cross the American Desert to get to the new **territories**.

### DID YOU KNOW?

At the time it was known as 'The Great American Desert', the area was inhabited by Native American Indians. White settlers deemed it to be uninhabitable.



# NATIVE AMERICANS

The term used for the peoples who lived in America before it was taken over by white settlers.



## Who were the Native Americans?

Native Americans were the first peoples to live on the American continent. They were already living diverse, successful lives when the first Europeans arrived in the seventeenth century.



## What Native American tribes were there?

There were over 500 tribes. Those that lived on the Great Plains included the Sioux, the Apache, the Pawnee, and the Cheyenne.



## What did the Native Americans believe about the land?

The Native Americans believed the land was sacred, and often called it 'mother'. They believed it was a living thing, and they wanted to live in harmony with the land. They believed that no-one could own the land, and most tribes believed it should not be disturbed for farming.

- ✓ An example of the Native American respect for the land is the Lakota Sioux, who saw the Paha Sapa (Black Hills of South Dakota) as particularly sacred. They believed that their tribe originated in its caves.



## What were the Native Americans' religious beliefs?

The Native Americans had some specific religious beliefs.

- ✓ They thought that spirits could guide them through 'vision quests'. Boys received a spirit animal when they reached puberty.
- ✓ They believed they could enter the spirit world by performing dances.
- ✓ Some personal items were 'charged' with spirits. Wearing these would bring luck or protection.



## Why were circles important to Native Americans?

Circles were sacred to Native Americans, who believed they have spiritual significance. They believed that life moves in a circle from birth to death and they believed that circles in nature, such as the sun and moon, are important. Tribal **councils** sat in circles, and the tipi (*p.o*) was built into a circle, to acknowledge the importance of the shape.



## What did Native Americans believe about nature?

Native Americans believed that everything in nature has a spirit, so it was important to respect nature and to live in harmony with it.



## What roles did Native Americans have within the tribe?

People's roles within the tribe depended on age and gender.

- ✓ Women married, had children, looked after their families, owned and maintained the tipi (*p.o*), and processed the buffalo (*p.o*). They were highly respected for this vital role.
- ✓ Men hunted, and provided for their wives and children. Men led the tribe and took part in tribal ceremonies. They were also in charge of fighting.
- ✓ The elderly were well looked after by their families. However, if they felt they had become a burden, they sometimes went away from the tribe voluntarily, to die from exposure.
- ✓ Children were held in very high regard and were rarely punished. They were expected to behave well and learn from their elders.



### Why did Native Americans fight?

Native Americans fought other tribes for status or for hunting areas, or they **raided** others to steal horses. The Sioux were considered the most warlike of all the tribes.



### How did Native Americans fight?

There were a number of main features of Native American warfare.

- ✓ Native Americans would attack and retreat, using ambush as the main fighting **tactic**. Brotherhoods took this on as their main role. They would only attack if they thought they would win. If they began to lose they would run away.
- ✓ Warriors demonstrated their bravery by 'counting **coup**' on someone from another tribe. A warrior had to attempt to touch an enemy with a coup stick, and then get away. The most skilled could do this without the enemy or himself being injured or killed.
- ✓ If a Native American killed another warrior, he could remove the top of his scalp (*p.0*) and keep it as a trophy.



### How were Native American tribes organised?

Tribes were organized in the following 5 ways.

- ✓ Each tribe was divided into 'bands' that worked together to survive.
- ✓ Each band could be as small as 20 or as large as several hundred people.
- ✓ Each summer, many bands might meet together at a tribal gathering.
- ✓ Comanches met as a tribe a lot. Members could move between bands if they wished, as often as they wished.
- ✓ The Pawnee considered each band to be a separate village.



### What was the biggest Native American tribe?

The Sioux was the largest tribe. It contained the sub-tribes of the Lakota, the Nakota and the Dakotas. The Lakota was so large it also had sub-tribes within it.



### Who was the leader of a band in the Native American tribes?

The most popular, most powerful and most successful members of a band were elected as the band's chief. A tribe could have lots of chiefs, each with a different role.



### What were the different leaders of a band in the Native American tribes?

Depending on the needs of the tribe, they would have more or fewer chiefs. There were 3 popular types of leaders in a band.

- ✓ The War Chief.
- ✓ The Spiritual Chief.
- ✓ The Negotiation Chief, dealing with negotiations with other tribes.



### How was the chief of a band chosen in the Native American tribes?

In Native American **culture**, reputation and power were typically gained with hunting or combat skills, and those who had gained a reputation could be chosen as chiefs.



### What was the band chief's main responsibility in the Native American tribes?

A chief's main role was to make decisions for the band - usually on where they should move to, and where they should set up camp. Often the band had a **council** to make decisions, which was led by the chief.





### Who were the band elders in the Native American tribes?

Elders were wise people, who taught the **culture** and values in of the society to the younger members of the tribe, in order for their traditions and practices to continue.



### What was the band's council in the Native American tribes?

The band's **council** would advise the chief in order to help him make decisions.



### Who are some famous Native American chiefs?

Chiefs gained fame usually through wars with White Americans. Examples of famous chiefs are:

- ✓ Red Cloud (p.0).
- ✓ Sitting Bull.
- ✓ Crazy Horse (p.0).



### What was the brotherhood for the Native Americans?

Brotherhoods were an important part of Native American tribal **culture**.

- ✓ Brotherhoods were groups of men from the tribe or band. There could be many brotherhoods within the tribe or group.
- ✓ Members of brotherhoods taught the skills of warfare to the younger members of the tribe. They also helped with the buffalo (p.0) hunts.
- ✓ Men could only join a brotherhood if they had proven themselves brave and skillful warriors.
- ✓ Examples of brotherhoods in the Lakota Sioux included the Crow Owners, the White Horse (p.0) Riders, and the Strong Hearts.

Sample



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Sample

# GLOSSARY

## A

**Abolition** - the act of abolishing something, i.e. to stop or get rid of it.

**Agriculture** - an umbrella term to do with farming, growing crops or raising animals.

**Alliance** - a union between groups or countries that benefits each member.

## B

**Bankrupt** - to be insolvent; to have run out of resources with which to pay existing debts.

**Blasphemy** - the act of speaking insultingly about or with lack of reverence for God or sacred objects.

**Blockade** - a way of blocking or sealing an area to prevent goods, supplies or people from entering or leaving. It often refers to blocking transport routes.

**Bribe, Bribery, Bribes** - to dishonestly persuade someone to do something for you in return for money or other inducements.

## C

**Campaign** - a political movement to get something changed; in military terms, it refers to a series of operations to achieve a goal.

**Cavalry** - the name given to soldiers who fight on horseback.

**Claim** - someone's assertion of their right to something - for example, a claim to the throne.

**Communal** - referring to something that is shared by all members of a community, be it an action or possession etc.

**Conscription** - mandatory enlistment of people into a state service, usually the military.

**Corrupt** - when someone is willing to act dishonestly for their own personal gain.

**Council** - an advisory or administrative body set up to manage the affairs of a place or organisation. The Council of the League of Nations contained the organisation's most powerful members.

**Coup** - a sudden, violent and illegal overthrow of the government by a small group - for example, the chiefs of an army.

**Culture** - the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

**Currency** - an umbrella term for any form of legal tender, but most commonly referring to money.

## D

**Debt** - when something, usually money, is owed by a person, organisation or institution to another.

**Deport** - to expel someone from a country and, usually, return them to their homeland.

**Disarm** - to remove any land, sea and air weaponry.

**Dispute** - a disagreement or argument; often used to describe conflict between different countries.

## E

**Economic** - relating to the economy; also used when justifying something in terms of profitability.

**Economy** - a country, state or region's position in terms of production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money.

**Export** - to transport goods for sale to another country.

**Extreme** - furthest from the centre or any given point. If someone holds extreme views, they are not moderate and are considered radical.

## F

**Famine** - a severe food shortage resulting in starvation and death, usually the result of bad harvests.

**Fasting** - to deliberately refrain from eating, and often drinking, for a period of time.

**Fatalities, Fatality** - Deaths.

**Federal** - in US politics this means 'national', referring to the whole country rather than any individual state.

**Frontier** - a line or border between two areas.

## G

**Guerrilla tactics, Guerrilla warfare** - a way of fighting that typically involves hit-and-run style tactics.

## H

**Harvest** - the process of gathering and collecting crops.

## I

**Immigrant** - someone who moves to another country.

**Immigration** - the act of coming to a foreign country with the intention of living there permanently.

**Independence, Independent** - to be free of control, often meaning by another country, allowing the people of a nation the ability to govern themselves.

**Industrialisation, Industrialise, Industrialised** - the process of developing industry in a country or region where previously there was little or none.

**Industry** - the part of the economy concerned with turning raw materials into manufactured goods, for example making furniture from wood.

**Inferior** - lower in rank, status or quality.

**Inflation** - the general increase in the prices of goods which means money does not buy as much as it used to.

**Integrate** - to bring people or groups with specific characteristics

or needs into equal participation with others; to merge one thing with another to form a single entity.

**Investor** - someone who puts money into something with the expectation of future profit.

## J

**Juries, Jury** - a group of people sworn to listen to evidence on a legal case and then deliver an impartial verdict based on what they have heard.

## L

**Lynch, Lynched, Lynching** - the killing of someone by a group of people for an alleged offence without a legal trial, usually publicly and often by hanging.

## M

**Manifest destiny** - the belief white Americans had the God-given right to expand westwards across North America.

**Mass** - an act of worship in the Catholic Church.

**Massacre** - the deliberate and brutal slaughter of many people.

**Mechanisation** - Where human workers are replaced by machines or robots.

**Militia** - an army created from the general population.

**Mine** - an explosive device usually hidden underground or underwater.

**Minister** - a senior member of government, usually responsible for a particular area such as education or finance.

## N

**New World** - the name given in the 16th century to describe the Americas and the Caribbean, distinguishing it from the 'Old World', which referred to Europe.

## P

**Persecute** - to treat someone unfairly because of their race, religion or political beliefs.

**Persecution** - hostility towards or harassment of someone, usually due to their race, religion or political beliefs.

**Pioneer** - the first person to explore or settle in a new area.

**Polygamy** - the practise of being married to more than one person at the same time.

**Population** - the number of people who live in a specified place.

**Poverty** - the state of being extremely poor.

**Prejudice** - prejudgement - when you assume something about someone based on a feature like their religion or skin colour, rather than knowing it as fact.

**President** - the elected head of state of a republic.

**Prevent, Preventative, Preventive** - steps taken to stop something from happening.

**Printing press** - a machine that reproduces writing and images by using ink on paper, making many identical copies.

**Production** - a term used to describe how much of something is made, for example saying a factory has a high production rate.

**Profit** - generally refers to financial gain; the amount of money made after deducting buying, operating or production costs.

**Prospector** - someone who searches for gold.

## Q

**Quarantine** - a period of isolation where a person or animal who has or may have a communicable disease is kept away from others.

## R

**Raid** - a quick surprise attack on the enemy.

**Refugee, Refugees** - a person who has been forced to leave where they live due to war, disaster or persecution.

**Reservation** - an area of land given to Native Americans by the US government to keep them away from settlers.

**Riots** - violent disturbances involving a crowd of people.

**Rustling** - Rustling is the stealing of livestock.

## S

**Secede, Secession** - formal withdrawal from a larger entity, such as 11 states leaving the United States prior to the American Civil War.

**Sharecropper** - someone who farmed land belonging to a landowner in return for giving them a share of their crops.

**Sheriff, Sheriffs** - an important royal official in medieval England, responsible for running the local court and ensuring tax was paid to the monarch.

**Siege** - action by enemy forces to surround a place or building, cutting off access and supplies, with the aim of either destroying it, gaining entry, or starving the inhabitants out.

**Sod** - the surface of the ground, often mud, on which grass is growing.

**State, States** - an area of land or a territory ruled by one government.

## T

**Tactic** - a strategy or method of achieving a goal.

**Terrain** - a stretch of land and usually used to refer to its physical features, eg mountainous, jungle etc.

**Territories, Territory** - an area of land under the control of a ruler/country.

**Treaty** - a formal agreement, signed and ratified by two or more

parties.

### W

**Ward, Wards** - A ward is someone who is taken under the protection and power of someone else, usually because it is believed that they do not have the capacity to know what is best for them.

Sample

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