

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Treaty Tales

When the United States expanded westward, it made agreements, or treaties, with Native American tribes. These treaties were supposed to be fair deals, but often, they caused more harm than good for Native Americans. Over time, these agreements changed and had lasting effects on tribes and the country.



In the early 1800s, many treaties focused on land. The U.S. government wanted land for settlers and promised to give tribes money, supplies, or new land in exchange. One example is the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1851. It gave Native Americans certain lands to live on, called reservations. In return, tribes agreed to let settlers travel through their territory. However, settlers often broke these promises by moving onto Native lands.

As time went on, new treaties took more land from Native Americans. The U.S. government often used tricks or force to get tribes to sign agreements. Some leaders were pressured to sign treaties they didn't agree with. For example, the Treaty of Medicine Lodge in 1867 moved many tribes onto smaller reservations. Tribes were promised supplies and peace, but the promises were rarely kept.

By the late 1800s, the U.S. government stopped making treaties altogether. Instead, they passed laws like the Dawes Act of 1887, which broke up reservations and gave land to individual Native Americans. The goal was to make Native Americans farm like settlers, but it caused tribes to lose even more land. Over time, Native Americans lost millions of acres they had once controlled.

Today, many Native American tribes work to protect their rights and lands. Some tribes have gone to court to fight for the promises made in old treaties. These struggles show how important it is to understand history and respect agreements made with Native peoples.