

the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers

the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers provide essential insights into one of the most significant and controversial pieces of legislation affecting Native American communities in U.S. history. This act, also known as the General Allotment Act, aimed to assimilate Native Americans into American society by dividing communal tribal lands into individual plots. Understanding the historical context, provisions, and consequences of the Dawes Act is crucial for students and educators alike. This article offers comprehensive explanations and detailed responses often required in educational worksheets focused on this topic. Readers will gain clarity on how the act reshaped Native American land ownership, its intended goals, and the long-term effects on indigenous peoples. The discussion also includes common questions and answers found in the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers, helping to deepen knowledge about this pivotal era. The following sections will explore the background, key components, impacts, and frequently asked questions related to the Dawes Act.

- Background and Historical Context of the Dawes Act
- Key Provisions of the Dawes Act of 1887
- Impact of the Dawes Act on Native American Communities
- Common Worksheet Questions and Answers
- Legacy and Modern Perspectives on the Dawes Act

Background and Historical Context of the Dawes Act

The Dawes Act of 1887 emerged during a period of rapid change in U.S. government policies toward Native American tribes. Prior to the act, Native Americans lived primarily on tribal lands held communally. Federal policy shifted toward assimilating Native Americans into mainstream American society, influenced by prevailing attitudes that viewed communal landholding and traditional cultures as barriers to progress. The act was named after Senator Henry L. Dawes of Massachusetts, who championed legislation aimed at breaking up tribal landholdings.

Pre-Dawes Land Policies

Before the Dawes Act, the U.S. government managed Native American lands through treaties and reservations. Tribes held land collectively, and tribal sovereignty was recognized to some extent. However, increasing settler expansion and economic interests pressured the government to redefine land ownership. The reservation system was intended to isolate tribes from settlers but also restricted their economic freedom.

Motivations Behind the Dawes Act

The primary goal of the Dawes Act was to promote assimilation by encouraging individual land ownership among Native Americans. Policymakers believed that dividing land into individual allotments would encourage farming, private property ownership, and integration into Euro-American culture. Additionally, the act aimed to reduce tribal power and open "surplus" lands to non-Native settlers.

Key Provisions of the Dawes Act of 1887

The Dawes Act introduced several important provisions that fundamentally altered land tenure for Native Americans. It authorized the federal government to survey tribal lands and allot parcels of land to individual Native Americans. This section outlines the main legal components of the act that are commonly addressed in the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers.

Land Allotment Process

Under the act, each Native American family head received an allotment of 160 acres of farmland or 320 acres of grazing land. Single adults and orphans were allotted smaller parcels, typically 80 acres. These allotments were held in trust by the federal government for 25 years, after which the individual could receive full ownership and U.S. citizenship.

Surplus Land and Its Disposal

After allotments were distributed, any remaining "surplus" land was declared open for sale to non-Native settlers. This policy dramatically reduced the total land base held by Native Americans. The transfer of surplus lands to settlers was a significant aspect of the act's impact, often leading to loss of tribal territory.

Citizenship and Trust Period

The Dawes Act granted U.S. citizenship to Native Americans who accepted allotments, but only after the 25-year trust period ended. The trust was intended to protect Native landowners from immediate sale or loss of their property, although many lost land due to fraud or other pressures once the trust expired.

Impact of the Dawes Act on Native American Communities

The Dawes Act had profound and lasting effects on Native American tribes and individuals. While it aimed to promote assimilation, the consequences were often detrimental to tribal cohesion and land ownership. This section explains the major impacts that are frequently discussed in educational materials and worksheet answers.

Loss of Tribal Land and Sovereignty

The most significant impact was the dramatic reduction of Native American land holdings. Between 1887 and 1934, tribes lost approximately two-thirds of their lands. The fragmentation of communal lands weakened tribal governance and cultural unity, undermining tribal sovereignty and identity.

Economic and Social Consequences

Many Native Americans were unfamiliar with the concept of private land ownership and farming as envisioned by policymakers. The imposed system often failed to provide economic stability, leading to poverty and land loss. Additionally, the act disrupted traditional social structures and cultural practices within tribes.

Resistance and Adaptation

Some Native Americans resisted allotment policies, while others adapted by using their land to support their communities. However, the overarching impact was a forced transformation that many tribes struggled to reconcile with their traditional ways of life.

Common Worksheet Questions and Answers

Worksheets on the Dawes Act of 1887 often include questions designed to assess understanding of its key elements and effects. Below are typical

questions along with accurate, concise answers to aid comprehension.

1. What was the main purpose of the Dawes Act?

The main purpose was to assimilate Native Americans into American society by dividing tribal lands into individual allotments and encouraging private land ownership.

2. How much land was allotted to Native American families?

Typically, each family received 160 acres of farmland or 320 acres of grazing land.

3. What happened to the surplus land after allotments were made?

Surplus land was sold to non-Native settlers, significantly reducing the land held by Native Americans.

4. How did the Dawes Act affect tribal sovereignty?

It weakened tribal sovereignty by breaking up communal landholdings and promoting individual ownership, which undermined tribal governance and cultural unity.

5. When did Native Americans receive U.S. citizenship under the act?

Citizenship was granted after the 25-year trust period on allotted lands ended, or earlier if individuals accepted allotments.

Legacy and Modern Perspectives on the Dawes Act

The legacy of the Dawes Act continues to influence Native American communities and U.S. policy today. While the act intended to encourage integration and economic development, its outcomes are widely viewed as harmful to Native American cultures and land rights. This section addresses ongoing perspectives and the act's place in history.

Criticism and Historical Reevaluation

Modern historians and Native American advocates critique the Dawes Act for its role in dispossessing tribes of their lands and eroding cultural

identities. It is often cited as an example of paternalistic and assimilationist policies that failed to respect tribal sovereignty.

Policy Changes and Reforms

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 repealed the Dawes Act's allotment provisions and sought to restore tribal self-government and communal land ownership. This marked a significant policy shift toward recognizing the importance of tribal sovereignty and cultural preservation.

Contemporary Relevance

Understanding the Dawes Act remains essential for comprehending the historical context of Native American land issues and federal relations. Educational resources, including the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers, help illuminate this complex history for new generations.

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the primary purpose of the Dawes Act of 1887?

The primary purpose of the Dawes Act of 1887 was to assimilate Native Americans into American society by dividing tribal lands into individual allotments for Native American families and individuals.

How did the Dawes Act of 1887 affect Native American tribal land ownership?

The Dawes Act resulted in the breakup of communal tribal lands into individual plots, drastically reducing the total land controlled by Native American tribes.

What was a major consequence of the Dawes Act on Native American communities?

A major consequence was the loss of Native American land to non-Native settlers and a decline in traditional cultural and social structures.

Who was eligible to receive land allotments under the Dawes Act?

Native American individuals, including heads of families, single adults, and

orphans, were eligible to receive land allotments.

How did the Dawes Act aim to promote assimilation?

The Dawes Act aimed to promote assimilation by encouraging Native Americans to adopt farming practices and individual land ownership similar to European-American settlers.

What happened to the 'surplus' land after allotments were made under the Dawes Act?

Surplus land remaining after allotments were made was sold to non-Native settlers, further decreasing Native American landholdings.

Did the Dawes Act of 1887 improve Native American economic conditions?

In many cases, the Dawes Act did not improve economic conditions; many Native Americans were unprepared for farming and lost their land due to debt or fraud.

How did the Dawes Act impact tribal sovereignty?

The Dawes Act undermined tribal sovereignty by breaking up communal lands and weakening tribal governments and social cohesion.

When was the Dawes Act officially repealed or replaced?

The Dawes Act was effectively repealed by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which ended allotment and restored tribal self-government.

What is a key term commonly found in 'Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers'?

Key terms often include 'allotment,' 'assimilation,' 'tribal lands,' 'surplus land,' and 'Indian Reorganization Act.'

Additional Resources

1. The Dawes Act and Native American Land Rights

This book provides an in-depth analysis of the Dawes Act of 1887, exploring its intentions and consequences for Native American communities. It examines how the policy aimed to assimilate Indigenous peoples by allotting communal lands to individual members. The book also discusses the long-term effects on tribal sovereignty and land ownership.

2. Broken Promises: The Impact of the Dawes Act on Indigenous Peoples

Focusing on the social and economic ramifications of the Dawes Act, this work highlights the struggles Native Americans faced due to forced allotment and loss of tribal lands. It includes firsthand accounts and historical documents that illustrate the cultural disruption caused by the Act. The book is a valuable resource for understanding the complexities behind federal Indian policy.

3. The Dawes Act: A Historical Overview and Worksheet Guide

Designed as an educational tool, this book combines historical context with interactive worksheets to help students engage with the material. It covers the background of the Dawes Act, its provisions, and its effects on Native American tribes. The included worksheets provide answers and explanations to reinforce learning.

4. Assimilation and Resistance: Native American Responses to the Dawes Act

This book explores the varied reactions of Native American communities to the Dawes Act, from acceptance to resistance. It delves into the cultural and political challenges faced during the implementation of the policy. The narrative sheds light on Indigenous resilience and efforts to preserve identity amid federal pressures.

5. Land, Law, and Legacy: The Dawes Act in American History

Offering a comprehensive historical perspective, this book traces the origins and legacy of the Dawes Act within the broader context of American expansionism. It examines legal battles and policy changes that followed the Act's passage. Readers gain insight into how the Act shaped Native American land tenure well into the 20th century.

6. Teaching the Dawes Act: Worksheets and Answer Keys for Educators

This resource is tailored for teachers seeking effective lesson plans on the Dawes Act. It includes worksheets with detailed answer keys to facilitate classroom discussion and assessment. The material is structured to promote critical thinking about the Act's historical significance and impact.

7. From Communal Lands to Individual Plots: The Dawes Act Explained

This book breaks down the legal and social mechanisms of the Dawes Act, explaining how it transformed Native American land ownership. It addresses the shift from collective to individual landholding and the resulting consequences. The text is accessible for readers new to the topic, with clear explanations and examples.

8. Native American History and the Dawes Act: An Annotated Guide

Providing annotated summaries of key documents and scholarly articles, this guide helps readers navigate the complex history surrounding the Dawes Act. It includes critical analyses and differing viewpoints to foster a well-rounded understanding. The book is ideal for students and researchers interested in Indigenous history.

9. The Dawes Act and Its Aftermath: A Critical Examination

This critical study assesses the Dawes Act's role in federal Indian policy

and its long-term repercussions. It discusses the Act's failures and unintended outcomes, such as increased land loss and poverty among Native Americans. The book encourages reflection on policy-making and Indigenous rights in American history.

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