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Paideia Seminar Lesson Plan

Text: Cherokee Removal “Orders. No. 25” (1838) by General Winfield Scott¹

Grade/Subject: MS / Social Studies (American History)

Ideas, Values: Citizenship, History, Human Rights, Property, Race

Date of Origin: 4/20/2015

Pre-Seminar Content

Launch Activity:

Have participants consider the following definition from a 2011 Congressional Research Service report (post the definition on the board):

The weight of legal and historical authority indicates that the term "natural born" citizen would mean a person who is entitled to U.S. citizenship "by birth" or "at birth," either by being born "in" the United States and under its jurisdiction, even those born to alien parents; by being born abroad to U.S. citizen-parents; or by being born in other situations meeting legal requirements for U.S. citizenship "at birth."

Write a journal entry in which you “translate” this definition into common terms and give examples of who would or would not qualify for citizenship under this definition.

Inspectional Read:

Have students examine the text without reading it. Have them list the interesting elements that they see, including the title, the “author,” the audience, etc. Discuss the nature of military “orders” as a text. Number the paragraphs in the text 1-12. Read the entire text aloud slowly, noting that this is how the soldiers themselves would have been given the orders. Ask students to follow along on their own copies of the text. As you come to a word or phrase that is unfamiliar, the students should raise their hands and identify the unknown vocabulary. The words and phrases should be added to a list on the board.

¹ For the original “primary document” as well as a transcript, go to <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/states/northcarolina/pdf/orders.pdf> .

Background Information:

Share the following as appropriate: Cherokee removal, also called the Trail of Tears, refers to the forced relocation between 1836 to 1839 of the Cherokee Nation from their lands in Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, and North Carolina to the Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) in the Western United States, which resulted in the deaths of approximately 4,000 Cherokees. The policy of Indian Removal was championed by President Andrew Jackson, despite the strong opposition of the majority of Cherokee people, led by Chief John Ross. In 1832, the Cherokee petitioned the Senate of the United States to protect their rights under the Constitution of the United States, but the Senate rejected their petition.

Many white Americans, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, protested vigorously against this apparent violation of human rights. Nevertheless, as the May 23, 1838, deadline for voluntary removal approached, President Van Buren assigned General Winfield Scott to head the forcible removal operation. He arrived at New Echota on May 17, 1838, in command of U.S. Army and state militia totaling about 7,000 soldiers. They began rounding up Cherokees in Georgia on May 26, 1838; ten days later, operations began in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Alabama. Men, women, and children were removed at gunpoint from their homes over three weeks and gathered together in camps, often with very few of their possessions.

Share the first, introductory part of the Orders (which follows) with students and discuss how the Orders themselves were actually delivered to the soldiers:

MAJOR GENERAL SCOTT, of the United States' Army, announces to the troops assembled and assembling in this country, that, with them, he has been charged by the President to cause the Cherokee Indians yet remaining in North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama, to remove to the West, according to the terms of the Treaty of 1835. His Staff will be as follows:

- Lieutenant Colonel W. J. Worth, acting Adjutant General, Chief of the Staff.
- Major M. M. Payne, acting Inspector General.
- Lieutenants R. Anderson, & E. D. Keyes, regular Aids-de-camp.
- Colonel A. H. Kenan & Lieutenant H. B. Shaw, volunteer Aids-de-camp.

Any order given orally, or in writing, by either of those officers, in the name of the Major General, will be respected and obeyed as if given by himself.

The Chiefs of Ordnance, of the Quarter-Master's Department and of the Commissariat, as also the Medical Director of this Army, will, as soon as they can be ascertained, be announced in orders.

To carry out the general object with the greatest promptitude and certainty, and with the least possible distress to the Indians, the country they are to evacuate is divided into three principal Military Districts, under as many officers of high rank, to command the troops serving therein, subject to the instructions of the Major General.

Eastern District, to be commanded by Brigadier General Eustis, of the United States' Army, or the highest officer in rank, serving therein:--North Carolina, the part of Tennessee lying north of Gilmer county, Georgia, and the counties of Gilmer, Union, and Lumpkin, in Georgia. Head Quarters, in the first instance, say, at Fort Butler.

Western District, to be commanded by Colonel Lindsay, of the United States' Army, or the highest officer in rank serving therein:--Alabama, the residue of Tennessee and Dade county, in Georgia. Head Quarters, in the first instance, say, at Ross' Landing.

Middle District, to be commanded by Brigadier General Armistead of the United States' Army, or the highest officer in rank, serving therein:--All that part of the Cherokee country, lying within the State of Georgia, and which is not comprised in the two other districts. Head Quarters, in the first instance, say, at New Echota.

It is not intended that the foregoing boundaries between the principal commanders shall be strictly observed. Either, when carried near the district of another, will not hesitate to extend his operations, according to the necessities of the case, but with all practicable harmony, into the adjoining district. And, among his principal objects, in case of actual or apprehended hostilities, will be that of affording adequate protection to our white people in and around the Cherokee country.

The senior officer actually present in each district will receive instructions from the Major General as to the time of commencing the removal, and every thing that may occur interesting to the service, in the district, will be promptly reported to the same source. The Major General will endeavour to visit in a short time all parts of the Cherokee country occupied by the troops.

The duties devolved on the army, through the orders of the Major General & those of the commanders of districts, under him, are of a highly important and critical nature.

Vocabulary:

Assign all the unknown words to teams of students to define in this context. Working together as a class, create an annotated version of the text (with footnoted definitions) to be used during the Analytical Reading, Seminar Discussion, and Writing Process. Practice the pronunciation of unfamiliar words that might be useful during the seminar discussion. Discuss what it would mean if/when General Scott's soldiers didn't understand the vocabulary in the text.

Analytical Read:

Now perform a dramatic reading of the text. Assign each of the 12 paragraphs to a student, whose role it will be to read the assigned paragraph aloud as if at the head of a company of soldiers. Give students time to practice with a partner and then go outside (regardless of weather) and have each "captain" in turn read his or her paragraph to the "troops," who are assembled in orderly ranks. After returning to class, discuss any unfamiliar passages.

Pre-Seminar Process:

- ✓ **Define and State the purpose for the seminar.**

“A Paideia seminar is a collaborative, intellectual dialogue about a text, facilitated with open ended questions.

“The main purpose of seminar is to arrive at a fuller understanding of the textual ideas and values, of ourselves, and of each other.

- ✓ **Describe the responsibilities of facilitator and participants.**

“I am primarily responsible for asking challenging, open-ended questions, and I will take a variety of notes to keep up with the talk turns and flow of ideas. I will help move the discussion along in a productive direction by asking follow-up questions based on my notes. “I am asking you to think, listen and speak candidly about your thoughts, reactions and ideas. You can help each other do this by using each other’s names.

“You do not need to raise your hands in order to speak, rather, the discussion is collaborative in that you try to stay focused on the main speaker and wait your turn to talk.

“You should try to both agree and disagree in a courteous, thoughtful manner. For example, you might say, ‘I disagree with Joanna because...,’ focusing on the ideas involved not the individuals.

- ✓ **Have participants set a Personal Goal.**

“Now, please reflect on how you normally participate in a discussion as a group. What goal can you set for yourself that will help the flow and meaning of the seminar? “Please consider the list of personal participation goals – either on the Speaking and Listening Checklist or on the board.”

- ✓ To speak at least three times
- ✓ To refer to the text
- ✓ To ask a question
- ✓ To speak out of uncertainty
- ✓ To build on others’ comments

“Is there one that is relevant for you? Please choose one goal from the list or that you feel is best and commit to achieving it during the discussion we are about to have... write down (or circle) your personal goal.”

- ✓ **Agree on a Group Goal.**

For this seminar, I will suggest our group goal (select display for all to see).

Seminar Questions:

✓ **Opening (Identify main ideas from the text):**

- ❖ What one sentence in this set of orders teaches the most about this event in American history? (round-robin response)
- ❖ Why did you choose that sentence? (spontaneous discussion)

✓ **Core (Analyze textual details):**

- ❖ In paragraph 11, Scott writes that “the Cherokees, by the advances which they have made in Christianity and civilization, are by far the most interesting tribe of Indians in the territorial limits of the United States.” What do you think he meant by this sentence? Why do you think he included it in a set of military orders?
- ❖ In paragraph 12, Scott writes that “a general war and carnage” would be “utterly abhorrent to the generous sympathies of the whole American people.” What is he warning his troops against?
- ❖ Why do you think he felt it necessary to issue this warning?
- ❖ Based on this text, are the Cherokee citizens of the United States or of any state? How does their status affect their removal?
- ❖ Based on this text, did the government have the right to “remove” the Cherokee from their traditional lands in 1838? Why or why not?

✓ **Closing (Personalize and apply the ideas):**

- ❖ If, in 1838, the government of the United States claimed the right to “remove” 15,000 people from one part of the country to another, based solely on race and/or citizenship status, what is to prevent the same government from taking similar action in 2038? Can you think of circumstances under which a similar action would be justified?

Post-Seminar Process:

“Thank you for your focused and thoughtful participation in our seminar”.

- ✓ **Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal goal.**

“As part of the post-seminar process, I would first like to ask you to take a few minutes to reflect on your relative success in meeting the personal process goal you set prior to beginning the discussion. Please review the goal you set for yourself and reflect in writing to what extent you met the goal. In addition, note why you think you performed as you did”. (Pause for reflection.)

- ✓ **Do a group assessment of the social and intellectual goals of the seminar.**

“Now I would like us to talk together about how we did in relation to the group goal we set for ourselves (insert your group goal). On a scale of one to five, five being perfect, how would you say we did? Why?” (Pause for discussion.)

“Now, would someone be willing to (volunteer) to share your personal self-assessment and reflection?”

- ✓ **Note reminders for the next seminar.**

Post Seminar Content:

- ✓ **Transition to Writing:**

Have participants take notes to brainstorm ideas that they heard, said, and thought during the seminar related to the ideas under discussion. In addition, suggest that they refer back to the writing on Citizenship they did as part of the *Launch Activity*.

- ✓ **Writing Task:**

Did the U. S. Government have the right to remove the Cherokee people from their traditional lands in 1838? After reading and discussing General Winfield Scott’s “Orders # 25,” write an essay for the Museum of the Cherokee Indian in which you discuss whether or not the Cherokee were U.S. citizens and evaluate the legal right of the government to remove them. Support your position with evidence from the text.

- ✓ **Brainstorm:**

Invite participants to talk in pairs for two minutes to share thoughts about what the writing task is asking and how they might respond.

- ✓ **Structure the Writing:**

Allow a few minutes for all to create designs (paragraph outlines) for their arguments. Have students draft their designs on paper and use them to refine their thinking.

✓ **First Draft:**

Challenge all to draft their arguments by writing the paragraphs defined by their outlines. Remind students to refer to their notes from the *Launch Activity* (on citizenship). Refer to the original Orders in order to illustrate key points.

✓ **Collaborative Revision:**

Have participants work in pairs to read their first drafts aloud to each other with emphasis on reader as creator and editor. Listener says back one point heard clearly and asks one question for clarification. Switch roles. Give time for full revisions resulting in a second draft.

✓ **Edit:**

Once the second draft is complete, have participants work in groups of three-four and this time take turns reading each other's second drafts slowly and silently, marking any spelling or grammar errors they find. (Have dictionaries and grammar handbooks available for reference.) Take this opportunity to clarify/reteach any specific grammar strategies you have identified your students needing. Give time for full revisions resulting in a third and final draft.

✓ **Publish:**

Publish the collection of argumentative essays both online (on the class website) and on paper. Send a copy of the essays, with a cover letter from the class, to the Museum of the Cherokee Indian (589 Tsali Blvd, Cherokee, NC 28719) for the museum reference library.

This Paideia Lesson Plan was created by:

Name: Terry Roberts

Organization: National Paideia Center

***Text is attached if open sourced.**

***Text is cited if it needs to be procured.**

Orders No. [25] Head Quarters, Eastern Division.

Cherokee Agency, Ten. May 17, 1838.

The Cherokees, by the advances which they have made in christianity and civilization, are by far the most interesting tribe of Indians in the territorial limits of the United States. Of the 15,000 of those people who are now to be removed--(and the time within which a voluntary emigration was stipulated, will expire on the 23rd instant--) it is understood that about four fifths are opposed, or have become averse to a distant emigration; and altho' none are in actual hostilities with the United States, or threaten a resistance by arms, yet the troops will probably be obliged to cover the whole country they inhabit, in order to make prisoners and to march or to transport the prisoners, by families, either to this place, to Ross' Landing or Gunter's Landing, where they are to be finally delivered over to the Superintendent of Cherokee Emigration.

Considering the number and temper of the mass to be removed, together with the extent and fastnesses of the country occupied, it will readily occur, that simple indiscretions--acts of harshness and cruelty, on the part of our troops, may lead, step by step, to delays, to impatience and exasperation, and in the end, to a general war and carnage--a result, in the case of those particular Indians, utterly abhorrent to the generous sympathies of the whole American people. Every possible kindness, compatible with the necessity of removal, must, therefore, be shown by the troops, and, if, in the ranks, a despicable individual should be found, capable of inflicting a wanton injury or insult on any Cherokee man, woman or child, it is hereby made the special duty of the nearest good officer or man, instantly to interpose, and to seize and consign the guilty wretch to the severest penalty of the laws. The Major General is fully persuaded that this injunction will not be neglected by the brave men under his command, who cannot be otherwise than jealous of their own honor and that of their country.

By early and persevering acts of kindness and humanity, it is impossible to doubt that the Indians may soon be induced to confide in the Army, and instead of fleeing to mountains and forests, flock to us for food and clothing. If, however, through false apprehensions, individuals, or a party, here and there, should seek to hide themselves, they must be pursued and invited to surrender, but not fired upon unless they should make a stand to resist. Even in such cases, mild remedies may sometimes better succeed than violence; and it cannot be doubted that if we get possession of the women and children first, or first capture the men, that, in either case, the outstanding members of the same families will readily come in on the assurance of forgiveness and kind treatment.

Every captured man, as well as all who surrender themselves, must be disarmed, with the assurance that their weapons will be carefully preserved and restored at, or beyond the Mississippi. In either case, the men will be guarded and escorted, except it may be, where their women and children are safely secured as hostages; but, in general, families, in our possession, will not be separated, unless it be to send men, as runners, to invite others to come in.

It may happen that Indians will be found too sick, in the opinion of the nearest Surgeon, to be removed to one of the depots indicated above. In every such case, one or more of the family, or the friends of the sick person, will be left in attendance, with ample subsistence and remedies, and the remainder of the family removed by the troops. Infants, superannuated persons, lunatics and women in a helpless condition, will all, in the removal, require peculiar attention, which the brave and humane will seek to adapt to the necessities of the several cases.

All strong men, women, boys & girls, will be made to march under proper escorts. For the feeble, Indian horses and ponies will furnish a ready resource, as well as for bedding and light cooking utensils--all of which, as intimated in the Treaty, will be necessary to the emigrants both in going to, and after arrival at, their new homes. Such, and all other light articles of property, the Indians will be allowed to collect and to take with them, as also their slaves, who will be treated in like manner with the Indians themselves.

If the horses and ponies be not adequate to the above purposes, wagons must be supplied.

Corn, oats, fodder and other forage, also beef cattle, belonging to the Indians to be removed, will be taken possession of by the proper departments of the Staff, as wanted, for the regular consumption of the Army, and certificates given to the owners, specifying in every case, the amount of forage and the weight of beef, so taken, in order that the owners may be paid for the same on their arrival at one of the depots mentioned above.

All other moveable or personal property, left or abandoned by the Indians, will be collected by agents appointed for the purpose, by the Superintendent of Cherokee Emigration, under a system of accountability, for the benefit of the Indian owners, which he will devise. The Army will give to those agents, in their operations, all reasonable countenance, aid and support.

White men and widows, citizens of the United States, who are, or have been intermarried with Indians, and thence commonly termed, *Indian countrymen*; also such Indians as have been made denizens of particular States by special legislation, together with the families and property of all such persons, will not be molested or removed by the troops until a decision, on the principles involved, can be obtained from the War Department.

A like indulgence, but only for a limited time, and until further orders, is extended to the families and property of certain Chiefs and head-men of the two great Indian parties, (on the subject of emigration) now understood to be absent in the direction of Washington on the business of their respective parties.

This order will be carefully read at the head of every company in the Army.