

the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers

The Dawes Act of 1887 Worksheet Answers: Understanding Its Impact and Historical Context

the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers often come up when students and history enthusiasts try to grasp the complexities of Native American policies in the late 19th century. This piece of legislation, officially known as the General Allotment Act, played a significant role in reshaping Native American life and land ownership in the United States. If you're working through a worksheet or trying to understand the broader implications of this act, this article will provide detailed explanations and insights to help clarify your answers and deepen your understanding.

What Was the Dawes Act of 1887?

The Dawes Act was a federal law aimed at assimilating Native Americans into American society by breaking up tribal lands into individual allotments. Before this act, Native American tribes collectively owned vast reservations. The government believed that dividing these lands into private parcels would encourage Native Americans to adopt farming and ranching lifestyles similar to European Americans.

This policy, however, was deeply controversial and had lasting consequences. Understanding the Dawes Act's intentions and outcomes is crucial to answering worksheet questions accurately.

Key Provisions of the Dawes Act

When looking for the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers, it's important to highlight the main components of the law:

- **Land Allotment:** Tribal lands were divided into allotments of typically 160 acres for each head of household, 80 acres for single adults, and smaller plots for children.
- **Trust Period:** The allotted land was held in trust by the government for 25 years, after which the Native American owners would receive full title.
- **Citizenship:** Native Americans who accepted allotments and lived separately from their tribes were granted U.S. citizenship.
- **Surplus Land:** After allotments, any remaining "surplus" land was sold to non-Native settlers, which drastically reduced the land held by Native Americans.

Why Was the Dawes Act Enacted?

Understanding the historical context helps clarify many worksheet questions related to the Dawes Act. During the late 1800s, the U.S. government was focused on westward expansion and sought to integrate Native Americans into mainstream American culture.

The Government's Goal of Assimilation

The Dawes Act was rooted in the belief that Native Americans would be better off adopting European-American customs, especially agriculture and private property ownership. The policy was seen by many lawmakers as a way to “civilize” Native peoples and reduce tribal power.

Impact on Native American Communities

While the act's proponents argued it would help Native Americans, the reality was far more complex and often damaging. Tribal communal life was disrupted, and many Native Americans were unprepared for individual land ownership and farming. This led to widespread loss of land and cultural disintegration.

Common Questions and Answers Found in Dawes Act Worksheets

When working through worksheets about the Dawes Act, students are typically asked about its purpose, effects, and historical significance. Here are some common worksheet questions along with clear, concise answers that may help you complete your assignment:

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

The primary goal was to assimilate Native Americans into American society by encouraging them to adopt farming lifestyles and individual land ownership, which was thought to promote self-sufficiency and reduce tribal power.

2. How did the Dawes Act affect Native American land ownership?

It divided tribal lands into individual allotments and opened up surplus land to non-Native settlers, resulting in a significant loss of Native American land over time.

3. What role did citizenship play in the Dawes Act?

Native Americans who accepted land allotments and adopted a settled farming life were granted U.S. citizenship, which was part of the government's assimilation strategy.

4. Why was the Dawes Act considered harmful by many Native Americans?

The act undermined tribal sovereignty, broke up communal lands, led to a loss of Native culture, and resulted in many Native Americans losing their lands due to fraud or inability to farm effectively.

Tips for Answering the Dawes Act Worksheet Effectively

If you're tackling a worksheet on the Dawes Act, here are some tips to help you craft well-rounded and accurate answers:

- **Understand the context:** Familiarize yourself with Native American history during the late 19th century to better grasp why the act was enacted.
- **Focus on cause and effect:** Many questions will ask about the consequences of the act, so be sure to explain both short-term and long-term impacts.
- **Use specific examples:** Mention key details like allotment sizes, the trust period, and citizenship to support your answers.
- **Be critical:** Recognize that while the act was framed positively by the government, it had many negative consequences for Native Americans.

Long-Term Effects of the Dawes Act on Native American Tribes

The Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers often touch on its lasting effects. Over several decades, the act led to a significant reduction in Native-held land. Estimates suggest that Native Americans lost about two-thirds of their reservation lands between 1887 and the early 20th century.

Loss of Land and Cultural Disruption

The sale of surplus land to settlers not only deprived tribes of their traditional territories but also disrupted cultural and social structures that were closely tied to the land. The emphasis on individual land ownership conflicted with many tribes' communal values.

Legal and Political Ramifications

The Dawes Act also affected tribal governance. As tribal lands were fragmented, tribal governments lost influence and control over their people. This fragmentation made it harder for Native Americans to organize politically and resist further encroachments on their rights.

Modern Reassessment and Reversals

In the 20th century, policies began to shift away from allotment, especially with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which aimed to restore tribal self-government and communal landholding. Understanding these shifts is important for a complete answer about the Dawes Act's historical legacy.

Additional Resources for Understanding the Dawes Act Worksheet

If you want to deepen your knowledge beyond just worksheet answers, here are some helpful resources and approaches:

- **Primary documents:** Reading the text of the Dawes Act itself can provide clarity about specific provisions.
- **Historical accounts:** Look for books and articles about Native American history during the late 1800s for context.
- **Educational websites:** Sites like the National Archives, Library of Congress, or Native American history portals offer detailed explanations.
- **Documentaries and lectures:** Visual and audio materials can make the topic more engaging and easier to understand.

By exploring these materials, you'll not only answer worksheet questions correctly but also gain a richer understanding of this complex chapter in American history.

The Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers reveal much about the challenges Native Americans faced during a critical period of U.S. expansion and policy change. Approaching this topic with both factual knowledge and empathy helps us appreciate the deep and lasting effects this legislation had on Native communities and American history as a whole.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Dawes Act of 1887?

The Dawes Act of 1887, also known as the General Allotment Act, was a federal law aimed at assimilating Native Americans into American society by dividing tribal lands into individual allotments for Native American families and individuals.

What was the main goal of the Dawes Act?

The main goal of the Dawes Act was to encourage Native Americans to adopt farming and ranching lifestyles, thereby assimilating them into mainstream American culture and breaking up communal tribal land ownership.

How did the Dawes Act affect Native American land ownership?

The Dawes Act resulted in the division of tribal lands into individual plots, with surplus lands sold to non-Native settlers, which led to a significant loss of Native American land holdings over time.

What were some negative consequences of the Dawes Act?

The Dawes Act caused the fragmentation of tribal communities, loss of tribal land, erosion of Native American culture, and many Native Americans were left with inadequate land to sustain their livelihoods.

How is the Dawes Act addressed in educational worksheets?

Worksheets on the Dawes Act typically include questions about its purpose, effects on Native American communities, key terms like allotment and assimilation, and its long-term impact on Native American land and culture.

Where can I find answers to a Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet?

Answers to Dawes Act worksheets can often be found in history textbooks covering U.S. westward expansion, online educational resources, teacher guides, or by reviewing primary source documents related to the act.

Additional Resources

The Dawes Act of 1887 Worksheet Answers: An Analytical Review

the dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers often serve as essential tools for students and educators aiming to unpack the complexities surrounding this pivotal piece of U.S. legislation. Designed to break up tribal landholdings and assimilate Native Americans into Euro-American society, the Dawes Act has been a subject of considerable historical debate and interpretation. This article seeks to provide a comprehensive exploration of the Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers, contextualizing the act's intentions, implementation, and consequences with a professional and investigative perspective.

Understanding the Dawes Act of 1887

The Dawes Act, officially known as the General Allotment Act, was enacted by the United States Congress with the primary goal of dissolving communal tribal land ownership and promoting individual land ownership among Native Americans. This policy marked a significant shift from collective tribal land tenure to private property concepts, reflecting the prevailing assimilationist attitudes of the late 19th century.

In educational settings, worksheets related to the Dawes Act typically include questions about the act's purpose, its mechanisms for reallocating land, and its social and economic impacts on Native American communities. The dawes act of 1887 worksheet answers usually highlight how the act authorized the federal government to survey tribal lands and allot parcels to individual Native American heads of families, with "surplus" land sold to non-Native settlers.

Key Features and Provisions Addressed in Worksheet Answers

A typical worksheet probing the Dawes Act includes questions on several key features:

- **Allotment of Land:** The act divided tribal lands into allotments of 160 acres for heads of families, 80 acres for single adults, and 40 acres for minors.

- **Trust Period:** Allocated lands were held in trust by the government for 25 years before individuals gained full ownership and citizenship rights.
- **Surplus Land Sales:** Land not allotted to Native Americans was sold to non-Native settlers, significantly reducing tribal landholdings.
- **Citizenship:** Native Americans receiving allotments were granted U.S. citizenship, aiming to integrate them into mainstream society.

These elements often form the basis of worksheet answers, providing a factual foundation that helps students understand the legislative intent and the practical outcomes of the Dawes Act.

Historical Context and Implications

The Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers frequently emphasize the historical context in which the act was passed. The late 19th century was marked by a national policy geared towards the assimilation of Native Americans, reflecting broader efforts to “civilize” indigenous populations by eroding tribal structures and cultural identities.

Assimilation vs. Sovereignty

One analytical angle explored in worksheet responses is the tension between the act’s assimilationist goals and the preservation of tribal sovereignty. While proponents argued that individual land ownership would encourage Native Americans to adopt Euro-American agricultural practices and lifestyles, critics note that the act undermined tribal governments and communal land systems, which were central to Native cultural and political life.

The worksheet answers often note that this policy led to significant loss of tribal land. From approximately 138 million acres held by Native Americans in 1887, tribal lands decreased to about 48 million acres by 1934, illustrating the profound impact of allotment policies.

Economic and Social Effects

In addressing the consequences of the Dawes Act, many worksheet answers highlight how the policy disrupted traditional economies and social structures. Native Americans who received allotments were often ill-prepared for the responsibilities of individual land ownership, such as farming and managing

property taxes. Additionally, the act facilitated land speculation and fraud, resulting in many Native Americans losing their allotted lands.

Educational materials often encourage critical evaluation of these outcomes, prompting students to consider whether the Dawes Act achieved its stated goals or instead contributed to long-term hardship for Native communities.

Common Questions and Answers Found in Dawes Act Worksheets

To provide clarity, it is useful to examine typical questions featured in Dawes Act of 1887 worksheets and their corresponding answers:

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

Answer: To assimilate Native Americans by dividing tribal lands into individual allotments to encourage farming and integration into American society.

2. How did the Dawes Act affect tribal land ownership?

Answer: It broke up communal tribal lands and resulted in the sale of surplus lands to non-Native settlers, drastically reducing the total land controlled by Native Americans.

3. What was the “trust period” in the Dawes Act?

Answer: A 25-year period during which the U.S. government held the land in trust before Native Americans received full ownership and citizenship.

4. What were some negative impacts of the Dawes Act?

Answer: Loss of tribal land, erosion of Native culture and governance, economic hardships, and increased vulnerability to land fraud.

5. How did the Dawes Act relate to U.S. citizenship for Native Americans?

Answer: Native Americans who accepted allotments were granted U.S. citizenship as part of the

assimilation strategy.

These questions and answers are integral to worksheet exercises, providing a structured approach to understanding a complex historical event.

Comparative Insights with Other Policies

Worksheets sometimes encourage students to compare the Dawes Act to other Native American policies, such as the Indian Removal Act of 1830 or the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. This comparative analysis helps highlight the evolution of U.S. government policies from forced removal and assimilation to eventual recognition of tribal sovereignty and self-governance.

Such discussions are important for contextualizing the Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers within broader policy shifts and the changing legal landscape affecting Native American communities.

Integrating the Dawes Act Worksheet in Educational Curricula

The use of worksheets focusing on the Dawes Act of 1887 is a common pedagogical strategy designed to engage students with primary source documents, legislative texts, and historical interpretations. These worksheets typically combine factual recall with critical thinking prompts, asking students to assess the impact and legacy of the act.

Educators often recommend supplementing worksheet activities with primary documents such as excerpts from the text of the Dawes Act, speeches by policymakers, and testimonies from Native American leaders. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the act's multifaceted effects and encourages nuanced discussions around its controversial legacy.

Best Practices for Answering Dawes Act Worksheets

Students tackling the Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers can benefit from the following strategies:

- **Contextualize the Act:** Frame answers within the historical period and the government's assimilation agenda.
- **Use Specific Details:** Cite precise provisions such as land allotment sizes and the trust period.

- **Evaluate Consequences:** Discuss both intended goals and unintended negative outcomes.
- **Incorporate Multiple Perspectives:** Reflect Native American viewpoints alongside government intentions.
- **Compare Policies:** Briefly mention related legislation to provide comprehensive responses.

Applying these principles ensures worksheet answers go beyond rote memorization and demonstrate analytical depth.

The analysis of the Dawes Act through worksheet exercises remains a valuable educational method for exploring the complex interplay between legislation, culture, and identity. By examining the Dawes Act of 1887 worksheet answers in detail, students and educators gain insight into a critical period of Native American history that continues to influence contemporary discussions on land rights and sovereignty.

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