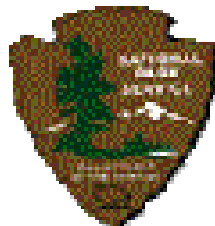


Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail

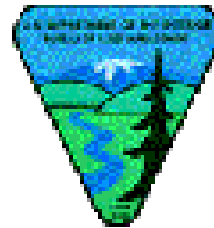
Educational Guide



Forest Service



**National
Park Service**



**Bureau of
Land Management**

Introduction to Using This Guide

This Education Resource Teachers Guide is designed for use by teachers and other educators who are teaching Nez Perce Trail history. It is to be used in conjunction with the 20 minute video, *Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail Landscape of History*. The guide includes information for viewing the video, a trail map, an Education Guide, Brochure, *Nez Perce National Historic Trail*, and the Auto Tour Brochures. The map of the trail is a great tool if used as a visual aid for the class.

The guide is broken out into subject areas with **units** identified as **Language Arts, Science, Cultural Resources, Social Studies, Visual Arts, Math, and Life Skills**. Each unit will cover either elementary school (4th-6th grade), middle school (5th-8th) or high school (9th-12th) activities. A code will appear on each activity page to assist the educator in addressing age appropriateness and subject matter. For example:

EL1=Elementary (4-6)

MID=Middle School (5-8)

HIG=High School (9-12)

LA=Language Arts

SC=Science

CR=Cultural Resources

SS=Social Studies

VA=Visual Arts

MA=Math

LS=Life Skills

Feel free to make copies of any portion of the guide for classroom use.

The Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail also has a website that will be of some assistance to you when working with this material. The address is
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/nezpercenht/nezperce.htm>

Questions?

If you have any questions or suggestions concerning the guide and video, please contact Sandi McFarland at (208) 476-8334. Or if you prefer write to Sandi McFarland, Clearwater National Forest, 12730 Highway 12, Orofino, ID 83544.

Landscape of History Education Guidebook

The 1,170 mile flight of Nez Perce bands during the Nez Perce War of 1877 symbolizes the dramatic collision of Native and Euro-American cultures. Retrace the route and learn its story. Use the video, *Landscape of History The Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail* and the reference guide, as tools to your discovery of the events of 1877.

This project initially began as an effort to create an educational guide to accompany the existing video. It is hoped that schools will benefit from the activities outlined in this guide and facilitate learning after viewing the video, fold out map, *Nez Perce National Historic Trail* Brochure, and Auto Tour brochures. We live in a wide and varied world of cultures. Differences and commonalities are beautiful once we begin to understand one another. The study of culture is crucial in everyone's education, and it is important that we learn how to engage in discussions and learn from other people. This guide provides a unique opportunity for students to learn more about the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail and the people whose lives were touched by this event in history.



Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail History

Congress passed the National Trails System Act in 1968 establishing a frame work for a nationwide system of scenic recreational, and historic trails. The Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) Trail, extending approximately 1,170 miles from the vicinity of Wallowa Lake, Oregon, to the Bears Paw Battlefield near Chinook, Montana, was added to this System by Congress as a National Historic Trail in 1986.

The Nez Perce, composed originally of a number of independent villages and bands, were long known as friends of the whites. They had welcomed Lewis and Clark, fur trappers, and missionaries to their homeland in the mountains, valleys, and along the rivers of southeastern Washington, northeastern Oregon, and north central Idaho. In 1855, Washington Territorial Governor, Isaac I. Stevens, responding to increasing white expansion, negotiated a treaty with the Nez Perce chiefs, recognizing their peoples' right to their traditional homeland and establishing it as a reservation of some 5,000 square miles.

In 1860, prospectors, encroaching on Nez Perce lands, struck gold. In the ensuing rush, thousands of miners, merchants, and settlers, disregarding Steven's treaty, overran large parts of the reservation, appropriating the Indians' lands and livestock and heaping mistreatment and injustices on the Nez Perces. To cope with the crisis, the United States Government engaged the angered Nez Perce in new treaty talks that culminated in a large treaty council in 1863. Nearly all tribal bands were represented. When the Government tried to get some of the bands to cede all or most of their lands, they refused to do so and left the council. In their absence, other chiefs, without tribal authority to speak for the departed bands, did just that, ceding the lands of those who had left the council. Their act resulted in a division of the tribe. Those who had signed were praised by the whites as "treaty" Indians, those who did not sign became known as the "nontreaty" Nez Perce.

For some years, the nontreaty bands continued to live on their lands, insisting that no one had the right to sell them. But conflicts with the growing white population increased, particularly in the Wallowa country of northeastern Oregon, the homeland of Chief Joseph's band. In May, 1877, the government finally ordered the nontreaties to turn over their countries to the whites and move onto a small reservation. Rather than risk war, the nontreaty chiefs decided to move onto the reservation near Lapwai, Idaho. Pent-up emotions, stemming from years of high-handedness and mistreatment by whites and the orders to leave their homelands, moved several embittered young warriors to ride out to the Salmon River and kill some whites to avenge past murders of tribal members. The peaceful move to the small reservation at Lapwai, ended and the flight of the Nez Perce began on June 15, 1877.

Pursued by the Army, the nontreaties left Idaho, intending initially to seek safety with their Crow allies on the plains to the east. When this failed, flight to Canada became their only hope. Their long desperate and circuitous route, as they traveled and fought to escape pursuing white forces, is what we now call the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.

This route was used in its entirety only once; however, component trails and roads that made up the route bore generations of use prior to and after the 1877 flight of the nontreaty Nez Perce. Trails and roads perpetuated through continued use often became

portions of transportation systems, though some later were abandoned for more direct routes or routes better suited for modern conveyances. Most abandoned segments can be located today but are often overgrown by vegetation, altered by floods, powerlines, and other manmade structures. Much of the trail crosses a variety of ownerships.

General William Tecumseh Sherman called the saga of the Nez Perce, "the most extraordinary of Indian wars." Precipitated into a fight they did not seek by the impulsive actions of the few revengeful young men, some 750 nontreaty Nez Percés - only 250 of them warriors, the rest women, children, and old or sick people, together with their 2,000 horses - fought defensively for their lives in some 20 battles and skirmishes against a total of more than 2,000 soldiers aided by numerous civilian volunteers and Indians of other tribes. Their route through four states, dictated by topography and their own skillful strategy, covered over 1,170 miles before they were trapped and forced to surrender at Montana's Bear Paw Mountains, on October 5, 1877 just short of the Canadian border and safety.

There is irony in the tragic fate of the Nez Percés. In addition to having been loyal friends and allies of the whites for almost three quarters of a century, their conduct during the war was free of traits which whites usually associated with Indian warfare. Following what the whites regarded as a civilized code of conduct, the Nez Percés refrained from scalping, mutilating bodies, or torturing prisoners, and generally avoided attacks on noncombatant citizens. Nevertheless, the defeated Nez Percés were sent to eight years of exile in present-day Oklahoma before they were allowed to return to reservations in the Northwest.