

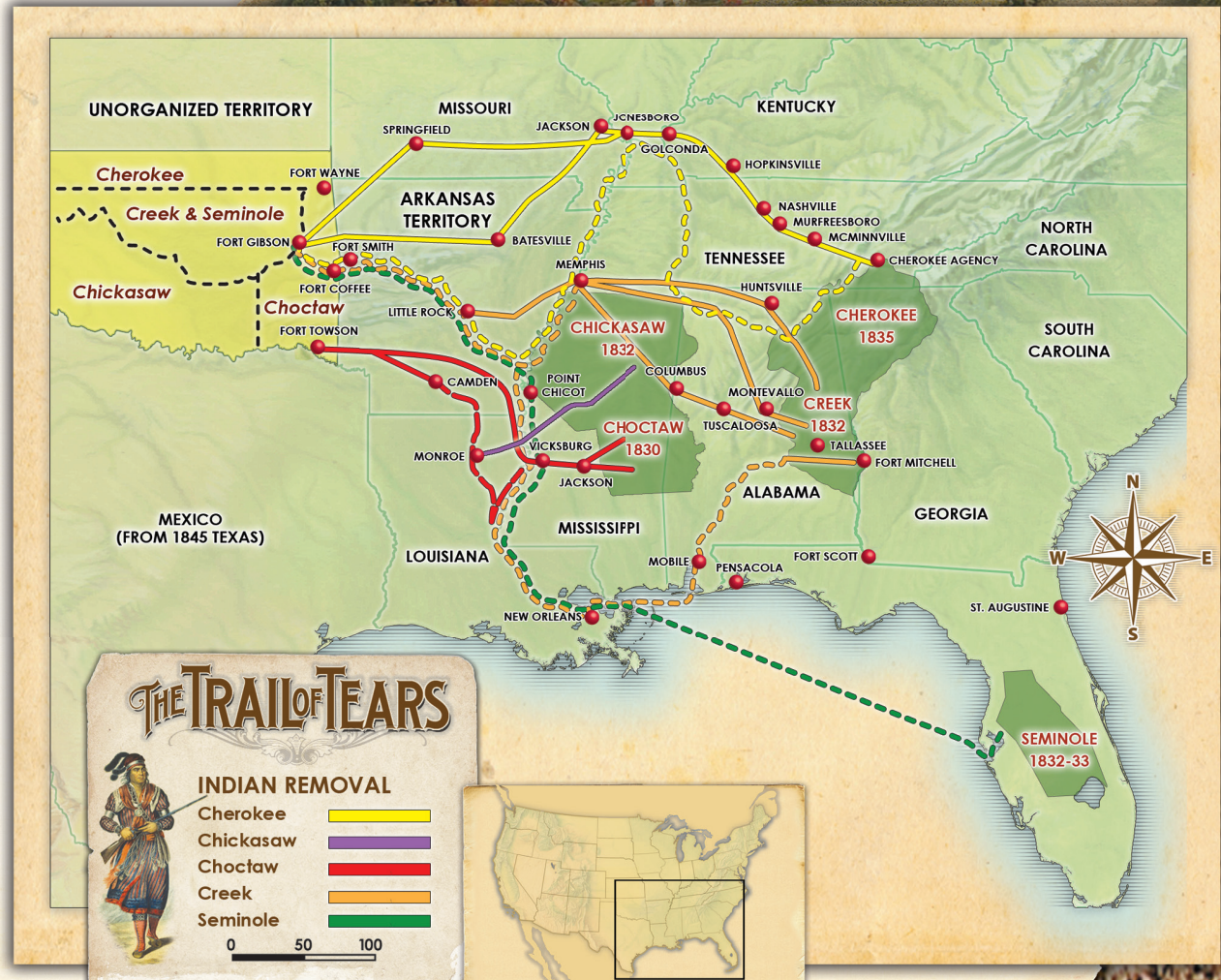
GRADE 4

# News: American Indians Removed!

Welcome to another week of Alabama Studies Weekly. We're glad you're here, but it's too bad we don't have better news this week.

Our top story this week reports on some appetites that were out of control around here about 200 years ago. The early settlers were hungry for land, and they couldn't get enough of it. Now, what's wrong with being land hungry? Nothing really, except that there's a catch. The land they wanted was the land owned by the American Indians living in Alabama at that time. That shouldn't have been a problem. After all, there are lots of fair ways to buy land from people, aren't there? That's all true, of course, and it was even true in the early 1800s. But instead of using any of the fair ways, the government decided to take the land. They convinced the American Indians to sign it all over to them. (Many people believe the government tricked them.) Most tribes didn't want that to happen, but it did. Soon soldiers arrived, packed them up and marched them west. They took them all the way to Oklahoma, way on the other side of the Mississippi River. This "American Indian removal" was called the Trail of Tears. It is an important part of our history—even though it's not very good news.

So, turn the page and learn all about why, when and how the natives of our state were removed and sent to a faraway place.



## Connections

### Motorcyclists Ride Trail of Tears

Did you know that the largest organized motorcycle ride in the world takes place every year right here in Alabama? Well, actually, it starts in Tennessee and ends in Oklahoma, but a large part of it winds through northern Alabama towns like Bridgeport, Scottsboro, Huntsville, Madison and Waterloo. The ride was organized to remember a very sad time in our country's history: the forced removal of American Indians from the Southeastern United States.

Jerry Davis of Scottsboro was researching American Indian history in his area one day. He realized that the Trail of Tears route ran right by where he lived. He felt very bad about what had happened to the American Indians. He asked his friend, Bill Cason, if he had any ideas of what to do to make people aware of the unfair way American Indians were treated so many years ago. Bill, a Harley rider, came up with a great idea. He suggested having a motorcycle ride

along the same route that the American Indians were forced to march. And so, the first Trail of Tears Commemorative Motorcycle Ride took place on Oct. 8, 1994. (A commemorative event is one that reminds people of something that happened earlier.) Only 100 motorcyclists took part in that first ride. Now, over 150,000 riders participate in this event.

For more information, please visit: [al-tn-trailoftears.net](http://al-tn-trailoftears.net)



# American Indian Removal: Trail of Tears

## President Adams Refuses to Take American Indian Land

President John Quincy Adams was in the White House when Chief McIntosh and others signed the Treaty of Indian Springs. By signing this treaty, the natives gave up most of the Creek land in Georgia and Alabama. President Adams might have been glad to have new land for settlers, but when Chief McIntosh was killed, the president found out what the natives really thought about the treaty. He did an interesting thing. He refused to honor the treaty and didn't claim all the native lands, even though he had a treaty that said he could. In fact, it wasn't until seven years later, after Adams was out of office, that the United States claimed all the Creek land in Alabama.

## Chief Menawa Kills Chief McIntosh and Burns His House

Chief William McIntosh of the Lower Creek Nation had a reputation for being friendly with the white settlers. During the Creek War in 1814, he fought alongside Andrew Jackson's men at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, against Menawa, the Red Stick chieftain. Eleven years later, he and other Creek chiefs signed treaties giving up millions of acres of Creek land to white settlers. McIntosh had not counted on one little snag. The year before, the tribal councils had met and decided to decree death for anyone who sold native lands. Soon, the tribes tried and convicted McIntosh—without even inviting him to the trial! Who was chosen to carry out the sentence? Menawa, his old enemy from Horseshoe Bend. Menawa and a raiding party of 200 natives tracked McIntosh down at his home, allowed his white guests to get out safely and then killed McIntosh and burned down his house.

## Fights Over Native Land

You don't have to look very far to find all sorts of unfairness in the way the natives in Alabama were driven from their homes. Here's just one example: The treaty with the Creeks allowed each Creek family to choose to stay in Alabama if they wanted. Each family that chose to stay would be given 320 acres of land. Doesn't that sound fair?

Well, hang on—we're not quite done. The problem was that the white settlers didn't wait for the natives to decide one way or another. Once they heard the land was up for grabs, they rushed in, surveyed the place, built cabins and started planting crops. Some Creek people were angry and fought. Can you blame them? Well, the fighting got out of hand, and federal troops came in. Sometimes they escorted the Creek west, and sometimes they kicked white settlers off Creek land. Is that confusing? You'd better believe it!

## President Jackson Signs the Indian Removal Act

In 1830, U.S. President Andrew Jackson signed a new law called the Indian Removal Act. It was a law that stretched across the whole country, not just in Alabama. The law said the government would do its best to clear out all American Indians in the eastern states and move them west of the Mississippi River. This would

make room for more white settlers. One by one, the chiefs of different tribes signed treaties, like the Choctaw's Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. After signing the treaty, they were escorted west by soldiers. How did they like it? Well, how would you feel if someone moved you from a home you loved to a strange, new place, just so they could live in your old home? In the early 1830s, about 14,000 Choctaw went west to what is now Oklahoma. One-fourth of them died on the journey.

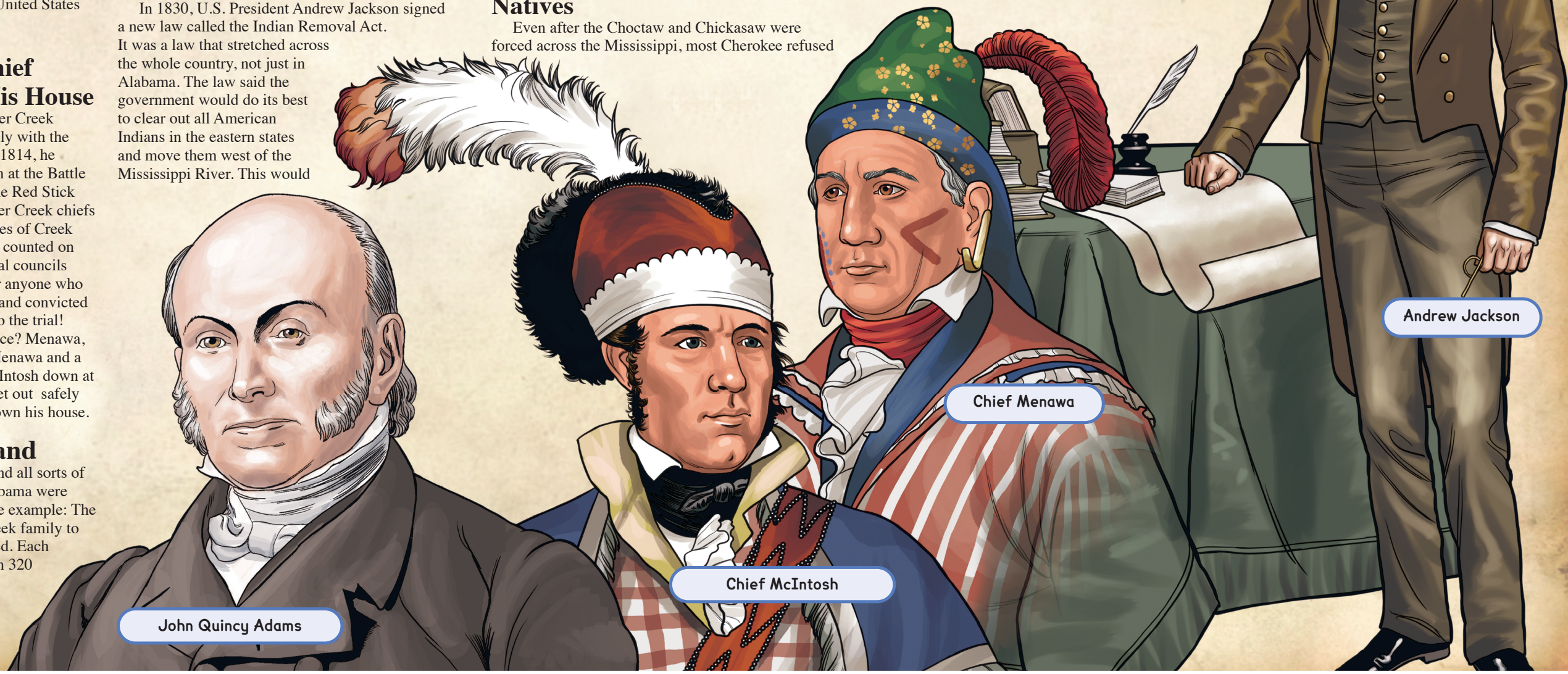
## Supreme Court Declares States Have No Right to Remove Natives

Even after the Choctaw and Chickasaw were forced across the Mississippi, most Cherokee refused

to give up. At first, instead of fighting, they tried to reason with the government. They took their case, called Worcester vs. Georgia, all the way to the Supreme Court, which actually ruled in their favor in 1832. The court ruled that states did not have authority to remove natives from their lands. President Andrew Jackson refused to accept the ruling and allowed Georgia to move the natives west anyway. He even got the federal government to help. The Cherokee were rounded up and placed in stockades, just like cattle. There, they grew weary and sick, before being escorted west by armed soldiers. Fifteen thousand Cherokee left their homes and headed west. They were the last of the American Indians to leave, and they called their westward walk "nuna-da-ut-sun'y," or "the trail where they cried." It's a name that fits, don't you think? You and I call that journey the Trail of Tears.

Most American Indians went west when they were forced to. Some chose to fight or hide instead. In Florida, the Seminole

Tribe fought the government for seven years (1835–1842). By the end of the fighting, most of them had been captured or forced to move west. Some Choctaw hid in the swamps and forests of Alabama. Some of their descendants still live in our state. About 1,000 Cherokee escaped removal and stayed in the Smoky Mountains between Tennessee and North Carolina.



John Quincy Adams

Chief McIntosh

Chief Menawa

Andrew Jackson

## Make a Stamp

### Materials

- Squares and rectangles of wood
- Tempera or poster paints
- A wide brush and large flat tray or cookie sheet
- Pencil
- Thick cardboard
- Glue
- Scissors
- Paper for printing on sheet

### Instructions

1. On the thick cardboard, draw several simple shapes, like a heart, star, square, or triangle, that you want to print. You can draw the same shape several times, or you can alternate shapes to make a pattern.
2. Cut out the shapes and glue them onto your blocks of wood. You can make a long design by gluing your shapes onto a long rectangular piece of wood, or you can make a single design by just gluing one shape onto a small square piece of wood. Let the glue dry.
3. Put a few spoonfuls of paint onto the large tray or cookie sheet. Use a different tray for every color you'd like to use. Spread the paint around with your paintbrush so that it covers the entire tray with a thin layer of paint.
4. To stamp, press your block of wood, with the shape side down, into the tray of paint. Make sure all of your shapes are covered with paint. Press your painted block on your piece of paper. Lift your block up, and there's your design on the paper.
5. Repeat step 4 until you get the design you want. Let the paint on the paper dry. Hang on a wall or fridge when you're finished.

### Extra Activity:

You could make a stamp of your name out of cardboard. Just write your name in block letters on the cardboard, cut them out, and paste them onto a wood block. Use your stamp in the same way you did the shapes. Try using different thick materials for the stamps, such as sponges. They create a different texture.

## Alabama Adventures

### A Letter Home

Most Cherokee could read and write. Though this is not an actual letter written by a Cherokee uncle, it shows some of the feelings the Cherokee did write about during the American Indian removal along the Trail of Tears.

May 1838  
My Dear Family,  
I am not good with this new language, but I will try to write what I feel. It is a sad day when we must say good-bye to everything we know and love. To be forced to move to another place frightens me. The way we have always divided our land between the other tribes and ourselves does not please the pale newcomers. They are full of a grasping spirit that we do not know. They wish to grasp the Earth, the trees and the air. They speak of "titles," pieces of paper that tell us they own the land we love. We do not know where these papers come from, but we have a "title," too. It has been passed down

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Montgomery

## Alabama Regions

One area in Central Alabama is the Black Belt—a prairie of dark soil made of limestone and marl. Marl is a very rich clay dirt full of fossil shells from ancient underwater days. Each of Alabama's three capital cities—Cahaba, Tuscaloosa and Montgomery—is located in the Black Belt and looks out over a major river. For a short time, Montgomery was a double capital. It was the capital of Alabama and the first capital of the Confederate States of America. A few things helped Montgomery grow rich and big—the great soil, the building of the first cotton gin in 1802 and getting connected to Mobile by regular steamboat travel. The Black Belt became rich and famous because of its cotton. England wanted so much cotton that by the time of the Civil War, folks around here were shipping out 30 times as much of the stuff as they had in 1800. But cotton was also Montgomery's downfall. When Union raiders invaded in 1865, retreating Confederate soldiers set the stored-up cotton on fire. The Union soldiers finished the job, fueling the fire until Montgomery was destroyed. It took Montgomery many years to grow back its cotton and return to its beauty and strength.



## Do American Indian reservations still exist?



Fortunately, the days of forcing American Indians to leave their homeland so that white settlers can live there are gone. But because of the American Indian removal, there are still huge areas of our country (called reservations) that are set aside to be owned by American Indian nations. About 50 million acres in nearly 30 states are part of reservations. More than 2 million American Indians live in the United States, and about half of them live on reservations. Many live in or near large cities instead. The biggest of these places, the Navajo reservation, covers about 16 million acres in parts of three states: Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. The Navajo reservation is home to about 180,000 members of the Navajo Nation.

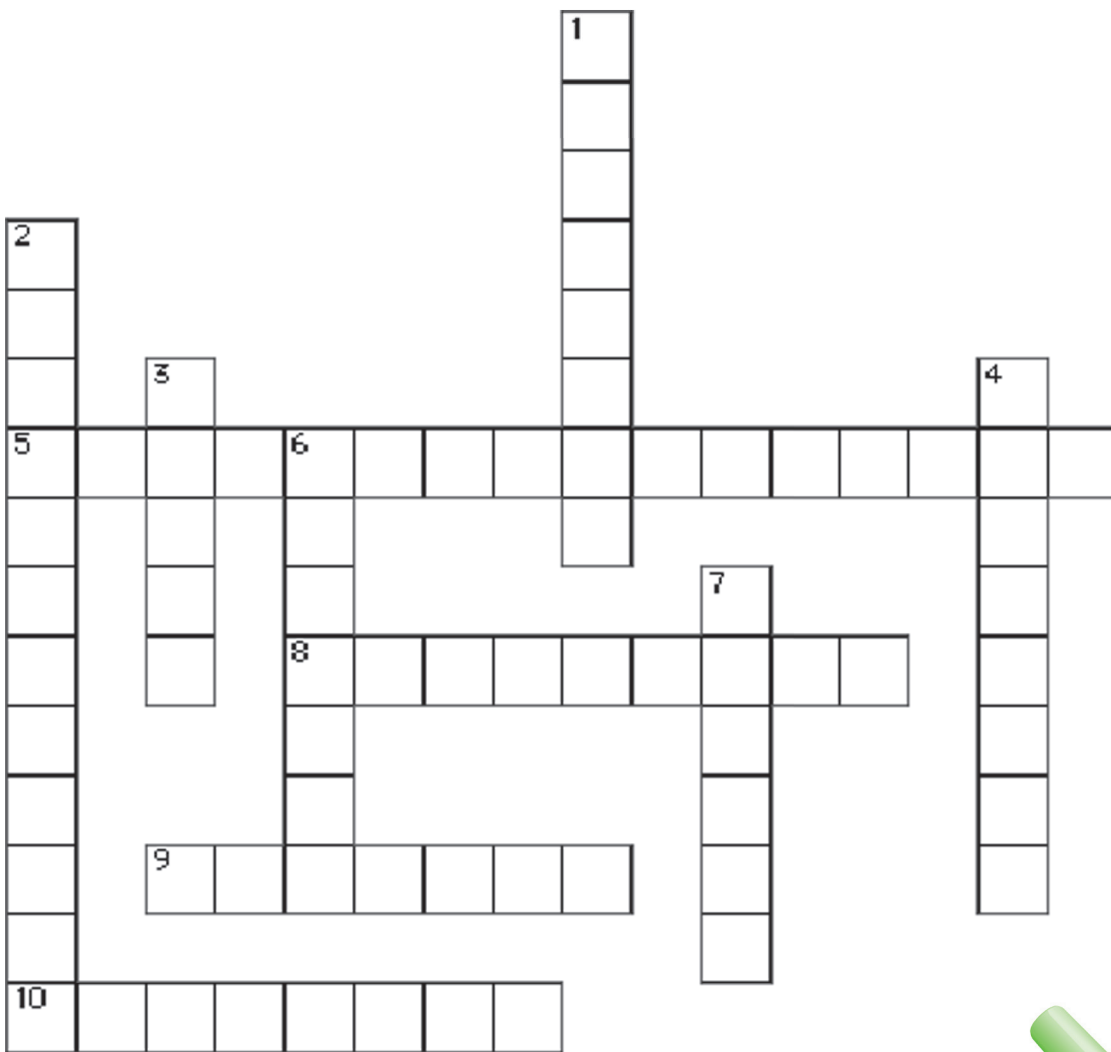
## Gray Fox

## Alabama Wildlife

The gray fox grows to be about 45 inches long. It has a grizzled body and a black stripe down its tail. It is a nocturnal (night) hunter in open forests and shrubby regions throughout most of the United States and Mexico. The gray fox is sometimes called the tree fox because it often climbs trees and jumps from branch to branch.



Name \_\_\_\_\_



**ACROSS**

- 5. the law Andrew Jackson signed in 1830
- 8. a prairie of dark soil made of limestone and marl
- 9. this animal grows to be about 45 inches long.
- 10. one Florida tribe that chose to fight to keep their land

**DOWN**

- 1. the place where about 14,000 Choctaw went in the early 1830s
- 2. the name of the forced journey west that was taken by the Cherokee
- 3. President John Quincy \_\_\_\_\_ was in the White House when the Treaty of Indian Springs was signed.
- 4. the chief who gave up most of the Creek land to President Adams
- 6. with the Treaty of Indian Springs, the natives gave up most of the Creek land in Georgia and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7. an enemy of Chief McIntosh



As you read this week's lesson, circle or highlight all proper nouns with any color pen or highlighter. This will help you find some of the crossword answers and get ready for this week's test.

**A Letter Home** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

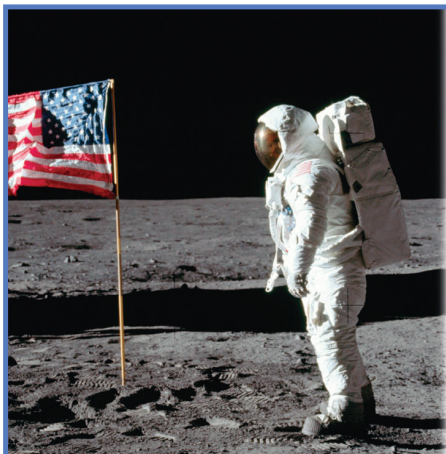
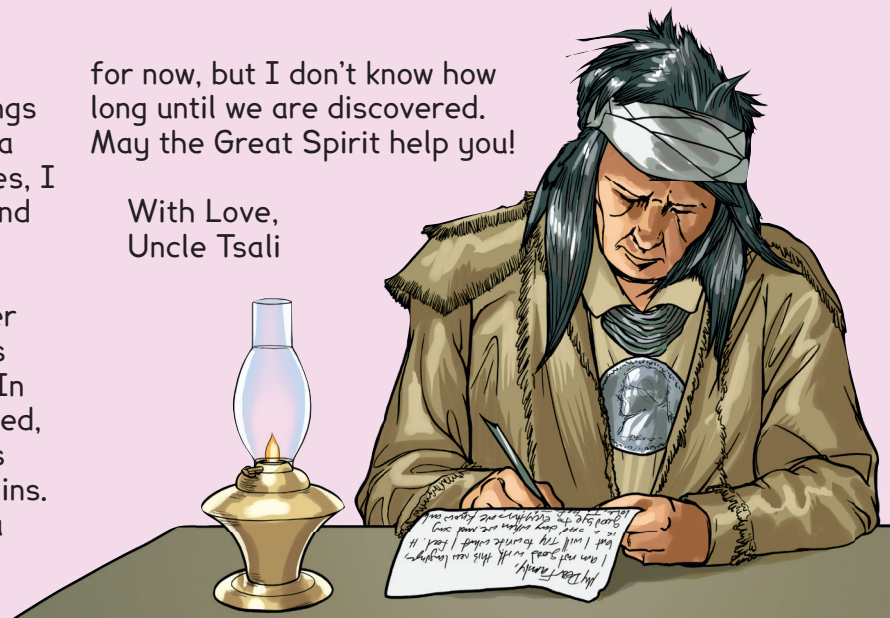
for thousands of years by our ancestors as they have lived here. It is an older title than that of the white settlers. They would organize the land in their own way, and they would have us move far away to live on land they do not want. I wonder if we can live in such a faraway place. Some of us would rather fight. I feared once that some would die if they chose to fight the white people. The soldiers sometimes persuade Cherokee to help hunt other Cherokee who are hiding.

They either kill them or make them move with the rest. Things do not look good for us. It is a dark and hard time. Sometimes, I hear the voices of soldiers, and I am afraid.

But today, I swallowed my fear and convinced a few other warriors to attack the soldiers who were moving us forward. In the battle, one soldier was killed, but the rest fled. The warriors and I are hiding in the mountains. I hope this letter reaches you and finds you safe. I am alive

for now, but I don't know how long until we are discovered. May the Great Spirit help you!

With Love,  
Uncle Tsali



The longest journey begins with one small step.

**ACHIEVEMENT**

Pass It On.

VALUES.COM THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

**Let's Write**

President Andrew Jackson supported the Indian Removal Act. Write a one-page letter to President Jackson outlining reasons why the American Indians are entitled to keep their homelands. Persuade the president not to enact the removal.

**Fun Facts**

California is number one in the population (total number of people) category in the United States with over 38 million people. What state do you think is last? It's Wyoming with around 575,000!

If you'd like to make any editorial comments about our paper, please write to us at [support@studiesweekly.com](mailto:support@studiesweekly.com).