

## **DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE UNIT: RESOURCE SET 2: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. The reservation system was harmful to the American Indian community. Many people in the US government knew this but decided to establish reservations anyway.
  - What did the American government gain from the displacement of American Indians?
    - Did those benefits justify the reservation system? Why or why not?
2. After being displaced to reservations, American Indians were told they would be able to make their own laws and not be subjected to U.S. federal or state law. However, U.S. officials often interfered with American Indians lives.
  - Given that American officials did not follow agreed upon guidelines, should Americans Indians have continued to try to compromise with U.S. government officials? Why or why not?
  - Would the American Indians have been in the right to no longer compromise or go along with the U.S. Government? How come?
3. During Westward Expansion, American Indians provided many important goods and services to White settlers. This relationship was understandably negatively affected by the reservation system.
  - Do you think White people's decision to make a reservation system worked against their own interests? Why or why not?
4. In the “Long Hair Letter,” the Commissioner says that if American Indian men refuse to cut their hair, an important part of their culture, then they should lose their jobs and their food rations.
  - How did rules like this impact American Indians?
  - Should American Indians have followed the rules even through it went against their culture norms.
    - Why or why not?

### Writing Prompt

The US government continued to interfere with American Indians independence within reservations. Many American Indians were unhappy with this, but the U.S. government had vastly more resources, military and otherwise, to enforce these policies. Given the American Indians limited resources, should they have resisted or complied with American policy? Why or why not? Please use evidence from the readings and documents to support your position.

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