

Indiana Territory Timeline

1783:

The future Indiana was part of the Northwest Territory ceded from the United Kingdom to the newly formed United States at the end of the Revolutionary War.

1794:

Tecumseh led the Shawnee Indians in battle near the rapids of the Maumee River. Gen. Anthony Wayne overwhelmed the Indians, establishes Ft. Wayne to control the territory.

1799:

William Henry Harrison elected territorial representative to Congress from Indiana Territory where he had served as second in command to Gen. Wayne.

1800:

Indiana Territory was established from the Northwest Territory in a bill sponsored by William Henry Harrison, who is then named the first Governor of the Territory.

1803:

The Senate ratified the Louisiana Treaty giving the United States the Louisiana Purchase territory, extending the western territories far beyond Indiana's borders.

1803-1809:

Harrison negotiates numerous treaties with the Potawatomie, Miami, and other tribes, ceding control of more and more of the Indiana Territory to the United States and out of Native American hands, including the 1809 Treaty of Ft. Wayne which hands over possession of territory up to the Wabash river.

1810:

Tenskwatawa, a Shawnee who has gathered a large following teaching a new religion, founds Prophetstown on the banks of the Tippecanoe River, a tributary of the Wabash.

Indiana Territory Activity Directions

Hand students the maps of the Indiana Territory. Tell them to compare the territorial claims represented on the two maps. Who could claim ownership of the Wabash River Valley in 1810? Who could claim ownership over Southwestern Indiana?

Say “What we are going to explore is the converging roles of the conceptualization of religion and ownership, and of the desire for westward expansion in the early history of the United States. The question you will be asked to answer using historical sources is ‘*What led to violence in the contest over land in the Indiana Territory in the early 1800’s?*’”

Hand out the Indiana Territory timeline and the two primary sources, one by Tecumseh and the other by William Henry Harrison. Tell them to answer the following questions on their paper:

1. What evidence of *compromise* over land ownership can you identify from these documents?
2. What evidence of *conflict* over land ownership can you identify?
3. How does Harrison claim the United States came to legally and rightfully possess the territory in dispute in the Indiana Territory?
4. On what basis does Tecumseh dispute these claims?
5. How does Harrison regard Tecumseh and Tenskawatawa’s definition of ownership?
6. What other issues seem to be at play in the conflict?

After students have had time to discuss and answer these questions in their teams, debrief them as a class, then ask them to formulate a response to the guiding question for the activity:

What led to violence in the contest over land in the Indiana Territory in the early 1800’s?