Grades: 8th and 11th
Subjects: Social Studies/U.S. History, English/Language Arts
Time Required: 2 class periods
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OVERVIEW
This lesson examines the Indian Wars of the late nineteenth century and the idea of Manifest Destiny through multiple visual, written, and oral history sources by Turner, Custer, Tecumseh, Crazy Horse, and more.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL
Students will understand the credo of Manifest Destiny and, through analysis of images and text-based sources, will learn and discuss the Indian Wars from both the Federal and Native American perspectives.

OBJECTIVES
Students will critically examine images depicting the ideal and reality of Manifest Destiny. Through the analysis of diverse texts, students will compare, contrast, and evaluate the Federal and Native American positions.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS
What is Manifest Destiny? How was this doctrine used to justify war with Native Americans and their removal to reservations?

American progress  Also known as Westward the course of destiny Westward ho! Manifest destiny [1873]

MATERIALS
- PowerPoint
- Discussion Questions Worksheet (p. 5 below)
- Primary Source Analysis Tool (student worksheet)
- Analyzing Photographs & Prints (Teacher’s Guide)

PRIMARY SOURCES
IMAGES
- American progress
- People escaping from the Indian massacre of 1862 in Minnesota, at dinner on a prairie
- Scalped on the plains incidents in Mormon history.
- The Kidder murder
- Lieut. J. J. Crittenden, 20th Infantry, fell here in Custer Battle, June 25, 1876  Courtesy of the Denver Public Library
- Big Foot’s camp three weeks after the Wounded Knee Massacre (Dec. 29, 1890), with bodies of several Lakota Sioux people wrapped in blankets in the foreground and U.S. soldiers in the background

Primary source texts on p. 2...
PRIMARY SOURCES, continued

TEXTS
- “Sleep Not Longer” speech by Tecumseh (Shawnee)
- “Chief Red Cloud on Indian Rights” speech by Red Cloud (Oglala Lakota)
- “Crazy Horse Speaks from His Deathbed” speech by Crazy Horse (Oglala Lakota)
- My life on the plains. Or, Personal experiences with Indians by George A. Custer, “Excerpt of Chapter one”
- “What treaty that the whites have kept has the red man broken?” speech by Sitting Bull (Hunkpapa Lakota)
- The Frontier in American History by Frederick Jackson Turner, chapter I: “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

8th grade U.S. History
8.49 Analyze the concept of Manifest Destiny and its impact on the development of the nation, and describe the economic incentives for westward expansion.

English/Language Arts
Key Ideas and Details 11-12.RL.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing and synthesizing relevant textual evidence from multiple sources.

Writing: Text Types and Protocol 11-12.W.TTP.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to analyze and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection and organization of content

Reading: 11-12.RL.KID.2 Determine multiple themes or central ideas of a text or texts and analyze their development; provide a critical summary.

Reading: 11-12.RL.CS.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings and language that is stylistically poignant and engaging.

Reading: 11-12.RL.CS.5 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning the structure of specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure, meaning, and aesthetic impact.

Craft and Structure: 11-12.RL.CS.6 Analyze how point of view and/or author purpose requires distinguishing what is directly stated in texts and what is implied.
PROCEDURE

Day 1

Step 1 Teacher will lead brief discussion: What do you think when you hear the term Indian Wars? General Custer? Sitting Bull? Little Big Horn? Wounded Knee? Students will speculate on the meaning of Manifest Destiny and the characters of Custer, Tecumseh, Sitting Bull, etc. How have both history and popular culture portrayed these figures?

Step 2 Students will view PowerPoint depicting the idealization of Manifest Destiny and the realities of westward expansion from the perspectives of civilians, soldiers, and Native Americans. Students will complete the Primary Source Analysis Tool. A good way to do this is to write the questions from the Teacher’s Guide on the board and remind the students of these questions as you display the PowerPoint. Students should do their best to record their thoughts individually in order to contribute to discussion in the following step.

Step 3 Teacher will lead a discussion of the Primary Source Analysis Tool. As teacher explains context and purpose of images, discuss whether student speculations were accurate. What do the images reveal? What are your feelings about Manifest Destiny? How would today be different if European Americans had treated Native Americans differently?

Step 4 Discuss and speculate in informal writing: What do you expect our readings to reveal about the American attitude toward Native Americans? How do you expect the civilian attitude to differ from the military? What do you expect the readings to reveal about the character of Native American leaders?

Step 5 Students will complete assigned readings (see Primary source texts, p. 2) and answer discussion questions for homework. At his or her discretion, teacher assigns readings from the list on page 2 to students. All readings should be covered, and students will answer all questions as they are able. For example, all students can address the first part of questions 2 & 3, but only students who have done the appropriate readings can answer the second part.

Day 2

Step 6 Teacher will begin class by leading a discussion of assigned readings and Discussion Questions Worksheet. What stood out in the readings?

Step 7 Discuss and take notes: What, from the images studied and the words of Turner, Custer, Tecumseh, et al., did you find significant? Has your perception of any of these people or the events that surrounded them changed?
Step 8  Discuss and take notes: What have we learned? What is the significance of these events historically? What is their impact and significance today? What new ideas or observations can we take from this lesson?

Step 9  Reflect on the Investigative Questions and prepare a short essay (3-5 paragraphs): What do you imagine the subjects of these images and documents thought and felt as they experienced these events? What can we apply from these sources today?

EVALUATION
Students are evaluated with a small participation grade. Active engagement in the learning process is essential, and students who demonstrate attentiveness and thoughtfulness earn their participation grade. (In my class, 2 points each day, totaling roughly 90 points [approximately one test grade] in a nine-week term.)

Student work (Day 1’s homework) will be collected and graded for thoughtful completion. This lesson will be assessed on a unit test, in the form of multiple choice and a brief essay open response.

EXTENSION
Divide students into two groups and allow them to prepare points for a debate on the topic of Native American removal to reservations. Conduct a debate. This can be as formal or informal as you like, and can conclude Day 2 or take up a third day.
Discussion Questions Worksheet

Name: ______________________________________________

1. What is meant by Manifest Destiny? What was this ideology used to justify?

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2. How is George Armstrong Custer portrayed in popular history? Has reading his own words changed your view of him? Explain.

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3. How are Native Americans portrayed in popular history? Has reading their words changed your view of them? Explain.

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4. Make a case for the removal of Native Americans from the Western Plains to reservations.

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5. Make a case for the Native Americans’ right to remain on the Western Plains.

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