**Westward Expansion Essential Knowledge Study Guide**

**USII.2a – *Physical Features/Climate of Great Plains***

• Flatlands that rise gradually from east to west.

• Land eroded by wind and water

• Low rainfall

• Frequent dust storms

Because of new technologies, people

saw the Great Plains not as a “treeless

wasteland” but as a vast area to be

settled.

***Inventions and Adaptations***

• Barbed wire • Railroads

• Steel plows • Windmills

• Dry farming • Wheat farming

• Sod houses • Beef cattle raising

***Reasons for Increased Westward Expansion***

• Opportunities for land ownership

• Technological advances, including the

Transcontinental Railroad

• Possibility of obtaining wealth, created by the

discovery of gold and silver

• Desire for adventure

•Desire for a new beginning for former slaves



***Impact on American Indians***

• Opposition by American Indians to westward

expansion (Battle of Little Bighorn, Sitting Bull,

Geronimo)

• Forced relocation from traditional lands to reservations

(Chief Joseph, Nez Percé)

• Reduced population through warfare and disease

(Battle of Wounded Knee)

• Assimilation – attempt to blend Native Americans into

American culture by changing their lifestyle (teach

them to farm instead of hunt buffalo, cut hair, etc.)

• Reduced their homelands through treaties that were

broken

***Influential Native Americans***

• Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse – Sioux

-Defeated Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn

• Chief Joseph – Nez Percé

-Tried to lead his people to freedom by escaping to

Canada, but was forced to surrender 30 from border

• Geronimo – Apache

-Last Indian to formally surrender to the U.S. Army



