

Document A

Source: Jefferson's confidential letter to Congress, Jan 1803

"The Indian tribes residing within the limits of the United States, have, for a considerable time, been growing more and more uneasy at the constant diminution of the territory they occupy, although effected by their own voluntary sales: and the policy has long been gaining strength with them, of refusing absolutely all further sale, on any conditions; insomuch that, at this time, it hazards their friendship, and excites dangerous jealousies and perturbations in their minds to make any overture for the purchase of the smallest portions of their land. A very few tribes only are not yet obstinately in these dispositions. In order peaceably to counteract this policy of theirs, and to provide an extension of territory which the rapid increase of our numbers will call for, two measures are deemed expedient. First: to encourage them to abandon hunting, to apply to the raising stock, to agriculture and domestic manufacture, and thereby prove to themselves that less land and labor will maintain them in this, better than in their former mode of living. The extensive forests necessary in the hunting life, will then become useless, and they will see advantage in exchanging them for the means of improving their farms, and of increasing their domestic comforts. Secondly: to multiply trading houses among them, and place within their reach those things which will contribute more to their domestic comfort, than the possession of extensive, but uncultivated wilds. Experience and reflection will develop to them the wisdom of exchanging what they can spare and we want, for what we can spare and they want. In leading them to agriculture, to manufactures, and civilization; in bringing together their and our settlements, and in preparing them ultimately to participate in the benefits of our governments, I trust and believe we are acting for their greatest good. At these trading houses we have pursued the principles of the act of Congress, which directs that the commerce shall be carried on liberally, and requires only that the capital stock shall not be diminished. We consequently undersell private traders, foreign and domestic, drive them from the competition; and thus, with the good will of the Indians, rid ourselves of a description of men who are constantly endeavoring to excite in the Indian mind suspicions, fears, and irritations towards us...

While the extension of the public commerce among the Indian tribes, may deprive of that source of profit such of our citizens as are engaged in it, it might be worthy the attention of Congress, in their care of individual as well as of the general interest, to point, in another direction, the enterprise of these citizens, as profitably for themselves, and more usefully for the public...

The interests of commerce place the principal object within the constitutional powers and care of Congress, and that it should incidentally advance the geographical knowledge of our own continent, cannot be but an additional gratification...

The appropriation of two thousand five hundred dollars, "for the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States," while understood and considered by the Executive as giving the legislative sanction, would cover the undertaking from notice, and prevent the obstructions which interested individuals might otherwise previously prepare in its way."

Document A Questions:

- 1) What major obstacle must the United States overcome in order to implement their plans in the Louisiana Territory?
- 2) How does Jefferson plan to address the Natives' unwillingness to part with land in the territory?
- 3) Ultimately, what are Jefferson's economic goals for the United States in the territory?
- 4) What evidence illustrates Jefferson's desire for complete Federal control of trade with the Natives devoid of individuals trading with them?
- 5) What is the amount of money Jefferson asks of Congress and what is the purpose why he needs it?

## Document B

Source: Jefferson's letter to Meriwether Lewis, June 1803

"Your situation as Secretary of the President of the United States has made you acquainted with the objects of my confidential message of Jan. 18, 1803, to the legislature. You have seen the act they passed, which, tho' expressed in general terms, was meant to sanction those objects, and you are appointed to carry them into execution...

The object of your mission is to explore the Missouri river, & such principal stream of it, as, by it's course & communication with the water of the Pacific ocean may offer the most direct & practicable water communication across this continent, for the purposes of commerce...

The commerce which may be carried on with the people inhabiting the line you will pursue, renders a knolege of these people important. You will therefore endeavor to make yourself acquainted...with the names of the nations & their numbers; the extent & limits of their possessions; their relations with other tribes or nations; their language, traditions, monuments; their ordinary occupations in agriculture, fishing, hunting, war, arts, & the implements for these; their food, clothing, & domestic accommodations; the diseases prevalent among them, & the remedies they use; moral and physical circumstance which distinguish them from the tribes they know; peculiarities in their laws, customs & dispositions; and articles of commerce they may need or furnish, & to what extent...

And considering the interest which every nation has in extending & strengthening the authority of reason & justice among the people around them, it will be useful to acquire what knolege you can of the state of morality, religion & information among them, as it may better enable those who endeavor to civilize & instruct them, to adapt their measures to the existing notions & practises of those on whom they are to operate...

In all your intercourse with the natives treat them in the most friendly & conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit; allay all jealousies as to the object of your journey, satisfy them of it's innocence, make them acquainted with the position, extent, character, peaceable & commercial dispositions of the U.S., of our wish to be neighborly, friendly & useful to them, & of our dispositions to a commercial intercourse with them; confer with them on the points most convenient as mutual emporiums, & the articles of most desirable interchange for them & us..."

- 1) What does Jefferson feel is the ultimate purpose for Lewis' exploration?
- 2) In conjunction with the confidential letter to Congress, what is the significance of Jefferson's instructions to Lewis of studying all manners of the Natives' lives and manners of culture?
- 3) Why is it so important that Lewis is to make friends with the Natives and explain the "innocence" of his expedition?

Document C

Source: An Act for Establishing Trading Houses with the Indian Tribes, April 1806

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, to establish trading houses at such posts and places on the frontiers, or in the Indian country, on either or both sides of the Mississippi river, as he shall judge most convenient for the purpose of carrying on a liberal trade with the several Indian nations, within the United States, or their territories...

**SEC. 6.** *And be it further enacted,* That the superintendent of Indian trade, the agents, their clerks, or other persons employed by them, shall not be, directly or indirectly, concerned in exporting to a foreign country, any peltries or furs belonging to the United States, or interested in carrying on the business of trade or commerce, on their own, or any other than the public account, or take or apply to his or their own use, any emolument or gain for negotiating or transacting any business or trade, during his or their appointment, agency or employment, other than provided by this act, or excepting for or on account of the United States. And if any such person shall offend against any of the prohibitions aforesaid, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall, upon conviction thereof, forfeit to the United States a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars, and shall be removed from such office, agency or employment, and forever thereafter, be incapable of holding any office under the United States...

**SEC. 11.** *And be further enacted,* That if any agent or agents, their clerks, or other person employed by them, shall purchase or receive from any Indian, in the way of trade or barter, any gun, or other article commonly used in hunting; any instrument of husbandry or cooking utensil, of the kind usually obtained by Indians in their intercourse with white people, or any article of clothing, excepting skins or furs, he or they shall respectively forfeit the sum of one hundred dollars for each offense, to be recovered by action of debt...

1) What evidence can you point to that conveys the message of the United States' intent to control any and all trade with Natives?

2) What evidence shows the United States will not tolerate individuals engaging in trade with the Natives for personal gain?

## Document D

Source: Jefferson's letter to Seneca leader Handsome Lake, Nov 1802

"...You remind me, brother, of what I said to you, when you visited me the last winter, that the lands you then held would remain yours, and shall never go from you but when you should be disposed to sell. This I now repeat, and will ever abide by. We, indeed, are always ready to buy land; but we will never ask but when you wish to sell; and our laws, in order to protect you against imposition, have forbidden individuals to purchase lands from you; and have rendered it necessary, when you desire to sell, even to a State, that an agent from the United States should attend the sale, see that your consent is freely given, a satisfactory price paid, and report to us what has been done, for our approbation...

...Nor do I think, brother, that the sale of lands is, under all circumstances, injurious to your people. While they depended on hunting, the more extensive the forest around them, the more game they would yield. But going into a state of agriculture, it may be as advantageous to a society, as it is to an individual, who has more land than he can improve, to sell a part, and lay out the money in stocks and implements of agriculture, for the better improvement of the residue. A little land well stocked and improved, will yield more than a great deal without stock or improvement. I hope, therefore, that on further reflection, you will see this transaction in a more favorable light, both as it concerns the interest of your nation, and the exercise of that superintending care which I am sincerely anxious to employ for their subsistence and happiness. Go on then, brother, in the great reformation you have undertaken. Persuade our red brethren then to be sober, and to cultivate their lands; and their women to spin and weave for their families. You will soon see your women and children well fed and clothed, your men living happily in peace and plenty, and your numbers increasing from year to year. It will be a great glory to you to have been the instrument of so happy a change, and your children's children, from generation to generation, will repeat your name with love and gratitude forever. In all your enterprises for the good of your people, you may count with confidence on the aid and protection of the United States, and on the sincerity and zeal with which I am myself animated in the furthering of this humane work. You are our brethren of the same land; we wish your prosperity as brethren should do. Farewell."

- 1) What examples can you find of Jefferson using specific words or phrases to connect with Handsome Lake in order to assuage any feelings of ill will?
- 2) What evidence can you use to align this document to Jefferson's economic plan from Documents A and B?
- 3) What promises does Jefferson give to Handsome Lake in order to further his own agenda?

## Document E

Source: Jefferson's letter to the Choctaw Nation, Dec 1803

"We have long heard of your nation as a numerous, peaceable, and friendly people... Born in the same land, we ought to live as brothers, doing to each other all the good we can, and not listening to wicked men, who may endeavor to make us enemies. By living in peace, we can help and prosper one another; by waging war, we can kill and destroy many on both sides; but those who survive will not be the happier for that. Then, brothers, let it forever be peace and good neighborhood between us. Our seventeen States compose a great and growing nation. Their children are as the leaves of the trees, which the winds are spreading over the forest. But we are just also. We take from no nation what belongs to it. Our growing numbers make us always willing to buy lands from our red brethren, when they are willing to sell. But be assured we never mean to disturb them in their possessions. On the contrary, the lines established between us by mutual consent, shall be sacredly preserved, and will protect your lands from all encroachments by our own people or any others. We will give you a copy of the law, made by our great Council, for punishing our people, who may encroach on your lands, or injure you otherwise. Carry it with you to your homes, and preserve it, as the shield which we spread over you, to protect your land, your property and persons...

...I rejoice, brothers, to hear you propose to become cultivators of the earth for the maintenance of your families. Be assured you will support them better and with less labor, by raising stock and bread, and by spinning and weaving clothes, than by hunting. A little land cultivated, and a little labor, will procure more provisions than the most successful hunt; and a woman will clothe more by spinning and weaving, than a man by hunting. Compared with you, we are but as of yesterday in this land. Yet see how much more we have multiplied by industry, and the exercise of that reason which you possess in common with us. Follow then our example, brethren, and we will aid you with great pleasure."

- 1) What words or phrases does Jefferson use to connect with the Native's on a personal level? Why would he want to do this?
- 2) What evidence reflects Jefferson's intent to portray the United States as an ally instead of an enemy?
- 3) How does Jefferson incorporate his intentions for the Louisiana Territory and the inhabiting Natives in this letter?

## Document F

Source: Jefferson's letter to the Cherokee Nation, Jan 1806

"...You are becoming farmers, learning the use of the plough and the hoe, enclosing your grounds and employing that labor in their cultivation which you formerly employed in hunting and in war; and I see handsome specimens of cotton cloth raised, spun and wove by yourselves. You are also raising cattle and hogs for your food, and horses to assist your labors. Go on, my children, in the same way and be assured the further you advance in it the happier and more respectable you will be...

...Our brethren, whom you have happened to meet here from the West and Northwest, have enabled you to compare your situation now with what it was formerly. They also make the comparison, and they see how far you are ahead of them, and seeing what you are they are encouraged to do as you have done. You will find your next want to be mills to grind your corn, which by relieving your women from the loss of time in beating it into meal, will enable them to spin and weave more. When a man has enclosed and improved his farm, builds a good house on it and raised plentiful stocks of animals, he will wish when he dies that these things shall go to his wife and children, whom he loves more than he does his other relations, and for whom he will work with pleasure during his life. You will, therefore, find it necessary to establish laws for this. When a man has property, earned by his own labor, he will not like to see another come and take it from him because he happens to be stronger, or else to defend it by spilling blood. You will find it necessary then to appoint good men, as judges, to decide contests between man and man, according to reason and to the rules you shall establish. If you wish to be aided by our counsel and experience in these things we shall always be ready to assist you with our advice...

...Tell all your chiefs, your men, women and children, that I take them by the hand and hold it fast. That I am their father, wish their happiness and well-being, and am always ready to promote their good. My children, I thank you for your visit and pray to the Great Spirit who made us all and planted us all in this land to live together like brothers that He will conduct you safely to your homes, and grant you to find your families and your friends in good health."

1) What evidence shows Jefferson's desire for the Cherokee to progress in production even more so than what they have already achieved?

2) What evidence can you show Jefferson's desire for the Cherokee to progress politically and socially?

Document G

Source: Jefferson's letter to the Wolf and People of the Mandan Nation, Dec 1806

"...We consider ourselves no longer of the old nations beyond the great water, but as united in one family with our red brethren here. The French, the English, the Spaniards, have now agreed with us to retire from all the country which you and we hold between Canada and Mexico, and never more to return to it. And remember the words I now speak to you, my children, they are never to return again. We are now your fathers; and you shall not lose by the change...My children, I thank you for the services you rendered him [Capt. Lewis], and for your attention to his words. He will now tell us where we should establish trading houses to be convenient to you all, and what we must send to them.

I have already told you that you and all the red men are my children, and I wish you to live in peace and friendship with one another as brethren of the same family ought to do. How much better is it for neighbors to help than to hurt one another; how much happier must it make them. If you will cease to make war on one another, if you will live in friendship with all mankind, you can employ all your time in providing food and clothing for yourselves and your families...My children, I have given this advice to all your red brethren on this side of the Mississippi; they are following it, they are increasing in their numbers, are learning to clothe and provide for their families as we do. Remember then my advice, my children, carry it home to your people, and tell them that from the day that they have become all of the same family, from the day that we became father to them all, we wish, as a true father should do, that we may all live together as one household, and that before they strike one another, they should go to their father and let him endeavor to make up the quarrel."

- 1) How does Jefferson assure the Natives that they "shall not lose by the change" with the United States gaining their lands?
- 2) What role is Jefferson offering to the Natives that he and the United States government will play in their lives?
- 3) What evidence can you show where Jefferson persuades the Natives why they should assimilate into white culture and production?