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Just as in any war, there was land lost and gained, and some tribes forced other tribes to move from their traditional homelands. For example, the Shawnees of Ohio moved to Missouri, and the Iroquois League split in two: one side lived in New York; the other in Ontario, Canada.

The sad truth is that it did not matter who Indian nations fought for: the outcome of the American Revolution for the many independent Northeastern tribes was a massive destruction of **tribal sovereignty**—an end to the freedoms they had known since **time immemorial**.

Stop reading here and respond to the following: Do you think that whoever lives in a place first should make a difference in their right to remain there? Why? In the case of the Indian Nations who lived in Colonial America long before anyone else, what do you think would have been fair for the Colonists to do—especially when they were fighting for their own freedom?

References:

Calloway, Colin G. *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities*. Cambridge University Press: New York, 1995.

Calloway, Colin G. *Stories From the Revolution*

http://www.nps.gov/revwar/about_the_revolution/american_indians.html

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Study Questions:

Directions: After reading the article “The Fight for Freedom for the First Nations of North America,” answer the following questions as completely as you can. If you have questions, be sure to include them in your answers, too.

- 1. In addition to the fight for independence, what were the English, Americans, and the many Tribal Nations fighting for during the American Revolution?** (Land)
- 2. Why might Indian nations in North America feel sad or angry about the Declaration of Independence—even today?** (The document calls them “merciless Indian savages.” The new Americans did not consider them people, and therefore Indians had no rightful claim to their homelands. Tribes lost their freedom to practice their lifeways and live where they wanted.)
- 3. Why did some Indian Nations side with the British? The Americans?** (Tribes sided with whatever side gave them the best chance of maintaining their lifeways and homelands).
- 4. Why did tribes begin fighting with each other during the American Revolution?** (From a behavioral perspective, the option available to Indian tribes was fight or flight. It is natural that desperate tribes would look for other ways to protect their people and homelands—even at the expense of neighboring tribes and their own tribal members who did not agree with them. Remember that each tribe was a distinct nation who fought against other tribes well before colonization of North America. Just like countries in Europe, they had enemies, allies, and military strategy for the purposes of expansion as well as self-preservation.)
- 5. Why was the fight for independence just beginning after the American Revolution ended?** (The American victory over the British ensured that borders would be secured for American, French, and British inhabitants alone. Though the US treated with individual tribes as sovereign nations after the war, most treaties were ignored. The Northwest Ordinance of 1789, for example, declared that no Indian land would be taken without consent.
- 6. Imagine that others are threatening your way of life. They want to force you and your family to leave your home and region forever. Friends and other family are being treated the same way. How would you feel?** (Answers will vary and allow students to express emotions regarding fairness, disregard, etc.)

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Vocabulary:

1. Time Immemorial:
2. Tribal Sovereignty:
3. Tumultuous (tumult):
4. Liberation (liberate)
5. Threat:
6. Futile:
7. Civil War:
8. Alliances (ally):
9. Misperception:

DRAFT