

Chief Joseph



Name: _____

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Joseph the Younger was born on March 3, 1840 in the Wallowa Valley of northeastern Oregon. He was called Joseph the Younger because his father was also named Joseph. During the 1850s, there was an increase in settlers to Oregon, Joseph the Elder and other Nez Perce chiefs signed a treaty with the United States that set aside 7.7 million acres of land in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon for a reservation. This reservation preserved much of the traditional Nez Perce lands, including the area of Wallowa Valley.

As the gold rush surged, the government asked the Nez Perce to accept a new treaty of only 780,000 acres. This new treaty designated an area that surrounded the village of Lapwai in Idaho and it excluded the Wallowa Valley. Even though they were promised financial support for schools and a hospital for the reservation, many of the chiefs were opposed to the treaty. This refusal to sign the treaty, despite the signature of the head chief of the tribe, caused a disagreement between the signers and non-signers. Joseph the Elder refused to leave his lands in the Wallowa Valley.

When Joseph the Elder was dying, he asked that his son keep a promise to never sell the lands of his people to the government. During the years that followed his father's death, the non-treaty Nez Perce continued to live on the lands in the Wallowa Valley, but they were constantly threatened by new settlers to the area. Chief Joseph encouraged his people to remain peaceful, however, fearing reprisals from the military. In 1873 he negotiated with the federal government so that his people could stay in the Wallowa Valley. However, this treaty was revoked in 1877 and General Oliver Howard threatened to attack if Chief Joseph's band did not leave the valley and relocate to Idaho. He reluctantly agreed, but they were unable to find land that suited them. He asked the General for more time, however, the General took this as an act of defiance and told the Chief that he had to be gone within 30 days or it would be a declaration of war. Chief Joseph's band attempted to escape to Canada. Over 200 of Chief Joseph's followers were killed during skirmishes with the pursuing cavalry. Chief Joseph's band surrendered just 40 miles from the Canadian border.

In 1879 Chief Joseph met with President Rutherford B. Hayes. His followers were finally permitted to return to their valley in Oregon. Chief Joseph died in September, 1904.

1. Joseph the Younger was born on _____.
2. Why was he called Joseph the Younger?

3. How many acres of land did the first treaty give?

4. What is the name of the valley the Nez Perce lived in?

5. The new treaty was caused by the gold rush.
 true false
6. The new treaty allowed how many acres to the Nez Perce?
 780,000 500,000 7.7 million
7. What did Joseph the Elder ask of his son before his death?

8. When did the government revoke the treaty of 1873?

9. General _____ threatened to attack the band.
10. Which president did Chief Joseph meet with in 1879?
