



## Battle of Red Buttes: A Story of Broken Promises

**Description** Students will explore differing views of the Battle of Red Buttes and create depictions of the event.

### Directions

1. Students can be assigned the texts to be read independently or with a partner.
2. **Page 3** - Read and discuss. **Why are so many people moving West? What might they need on their way to Oregon or California? Who was living in these areas (OR and CA) already and how might they have felt about the newcomers?**
3. **Page 4**- Read and discuss the Sand Creek Massacre page. **How was the massacre a catalyst for other Indian battles that followed including the Battle of Red Buttes?**
4. **Page 5**- Watch the BLM Battle of Red Buttes documentary (27 min).
5. **Page 6**- Read aloud the summary of the two battles that took place on July 26, 1865.
6. **Page 7**- Read directions to students. Students will create two comic strips, using information from the presentation and video. One comic should be the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes' viewpoint prior to the battle. The other strip should be from the viewpoint of the frontier army assigned to protect the telegraph wires and travelers. Each should include characters, dialogue, and conflict.
7. Allow time for students to share their comic strips with the class.

### Essential Curriculum

SS5.2.4 Identify and describe positive and negative interactions (e.g., withholding of Native American U.S. citizenship until 1924), the tensions between among cultural groups, social classes and/or significant individuals in Wyoming and the United States.

SS8.2.4 Explain the cultural contributions of and tensions between groups in Wyoming, the United States, and the World (e.g., racial, ethnic, social and institutional).

SS8.2.4.a Explain the cultural contributions of and interactions between Native Americans and immigrant groups in Wyoming and the United States.

### Materials

Texts for each reader  
YouTube video [Battle of Red Buttes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98Ss5D8ZOe8&feature=youtu.be)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98Ss5D8ZOe8&feature=youtu.be>  
2 Comic Strips templates per student





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## A Nation Expands

By 1864, hundreds of thousands of emigrants had left wagon tracks and many graves along the road to Oregon and California in the great migration to expand a nation. A few traders who had married Indian women remained in along the North Platte. The frontier army was also in the region with a two-fold mission to protect people and property.



## The Singing Wire

As Civil War loomed between the North and the South, the nation was connected first by riders with the Pony Express, and then with a transcontinental telegraph. This line, called the singing wire by native people, was a vital link as the nation established communication between the East and West.

Illustration by the Western Museum Lab 1936 nps.gov. Text from NHTIC exhibit.



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## Sand Creek Massacre

After years of turmoil caused by the western expansion by the American Colonists, the Cheyenne and Arapaho people suffered greatly from reduced hunting grounds. The 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie began the process of limiting how much land Native Americans would have in the Great Plains. It was the encampment by the Big Sandy Creek of Arapaho and Cheyenne people who were hoping to find peace between the American Colonist' military and the tribes who lived on the plains for many generations.

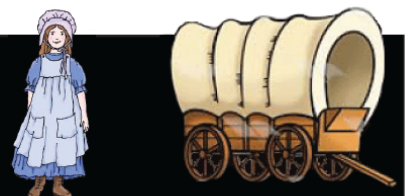


Image: <https://www.nps.gov/sand/learn/historyculture/index.htm>

However, on November 29th, 1864, Colonel Chivington and the US Infantry arrived just southwest of the Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment. Colonel Chivington was never given orders to leave Denver, and at around 6:30 a.m., the soldiers opened fire amongst the lodges of the innocent and unaware Arapaho and Cheyenne civilians. Over the course of eight hours the American troops killed around 230 Cheyenne and Arapaho people composed mostly of women, children, and the elderly.



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## Battle of Red Buttes Video

# Battle of Red Buttes



America's westward expansion in the mid-1800s unfolded rapidly, challenging Native American cultures and tribes with the impacts brought by emigrants, soldiers and fortune seekers. The 1864 Sand Creek Massacre heightened tensions even more and led to a summer offensive by an alliance of Native American Tribes. The warriors' 1865 campaign to drive emigrants, settlers, and soldiers out of Platte River country culminated in the Battle of Platte Bridge Station and Battle of Red Buttes in July 1865. "The Battle of Red Buttes" film explores planning, execution and aftermath of these two battles that occurred on the doorsteps of present-day Casper, Wyoming.

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## The Battle of Platte Bridge

Early on the morning of July 26, 1865, Lieutenant Caspar Collins led a troop of men from the 11th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry to reinforce army supply wagons coming into Platte Bridge Station. Only a mile west of the post, the group was ambushed by members of the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe nations. Four Troopers and Lieutenant Caspar Collins were killed in the army's retreat to the bridge.

The Native Americans were anxious to avenge the losses they sustained at the Sand Creek Massacre the previous year. They hoped to destroy Platte Bridge Station and the bridge in this attack. This attack was part of a larger planned attack to harass the army after Sand Creek.



## The Battle of Red Buttes


Just a few hours after the Battle at Platte Bridge the army supply wagons and men from the 11th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, led by Sergeant Amos Custard, came into view of Platte Bridge Station. A large group of Native Americans attacked Custard's men. The soldiers battled behind the wagons for four hours before their position was overrun. Three of the five men riding in advance of the supply wagons were the only soldiers to survive.






**Create two  
comic strips.**

You can use the worksheets or draw your own comic strip on paper. Make sure to include each side of the battle's motivations, ideas, and actions. Each should contain characters, dialogue, and conflict.



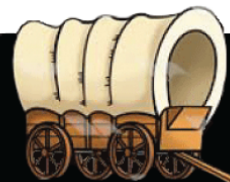
**1) DEMONSTRATE THE  
LAKOTA, CHEYENNE,  
AND ARAPAHO TRIBES'  
ACTIONS PRIOR TO THE  
BATTLE OF RED  
BUTTES.**



**2) NEXT, CREATE A  
COMIC STRIP  
DEMONSTRATING THE US  
CALVARY'S ACTIONS  
PRIOR TO THE BATTLE.**

**Make sure to show:**

- Conflict**
- Dialogue**
- Reasons for the upcoming battles**





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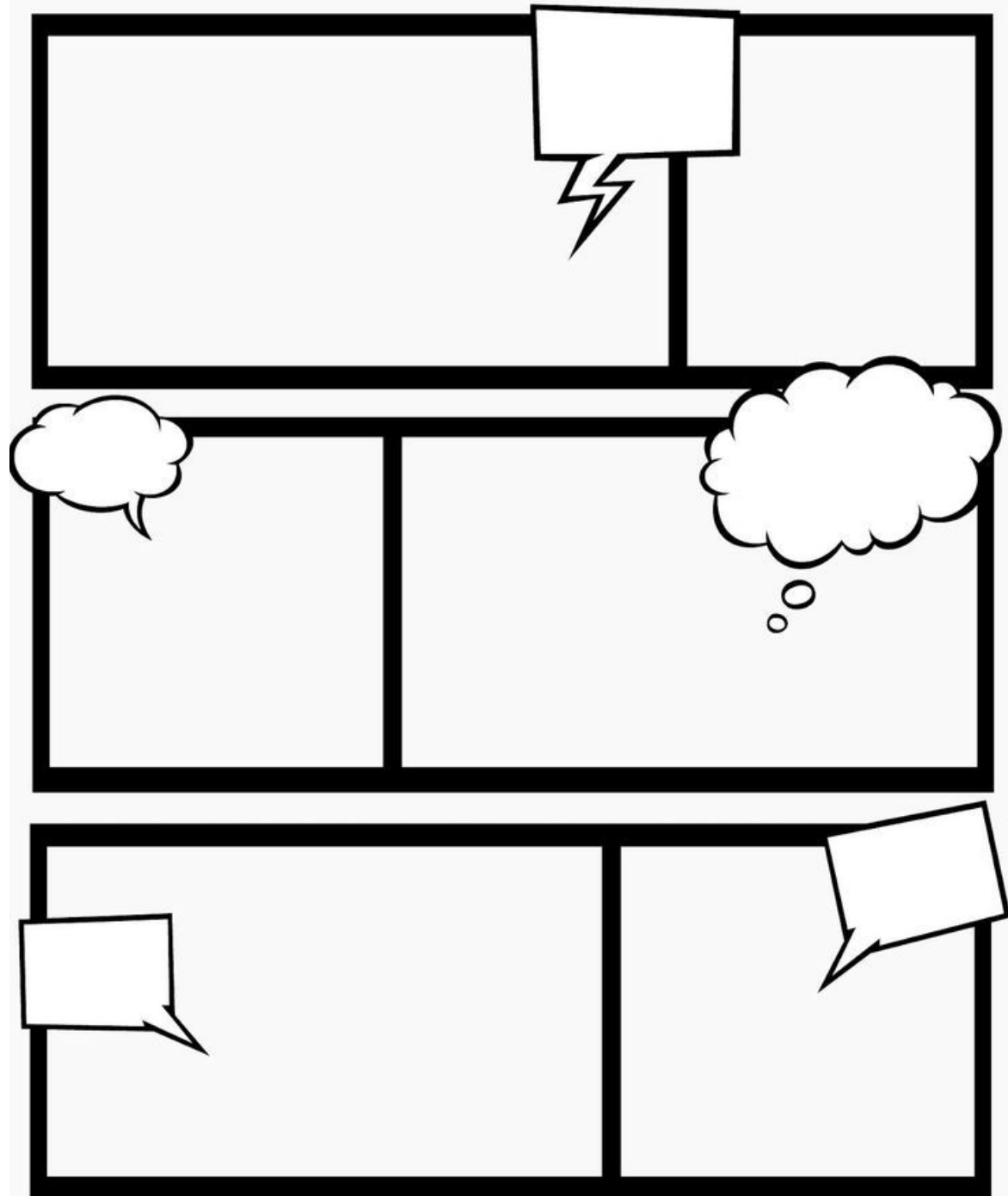



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