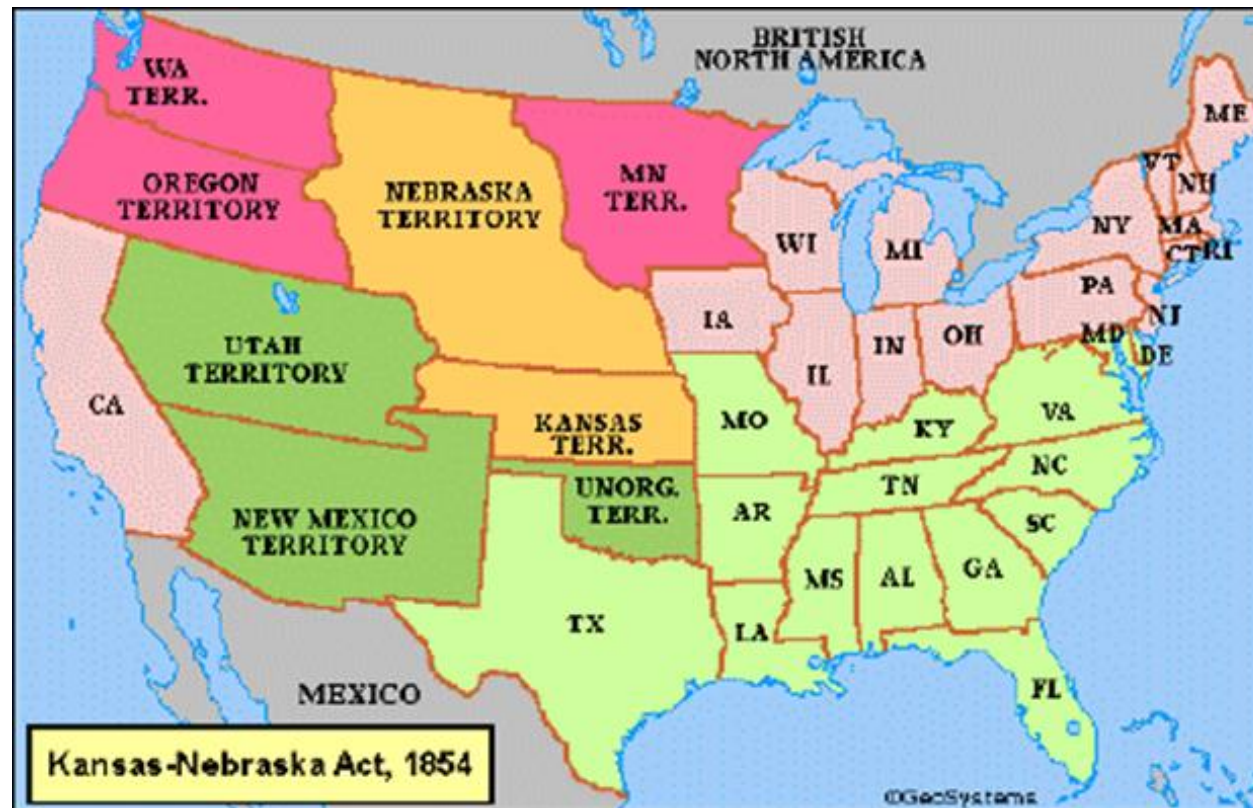


Moving onto and Farming the Plains - 1840 -1850s

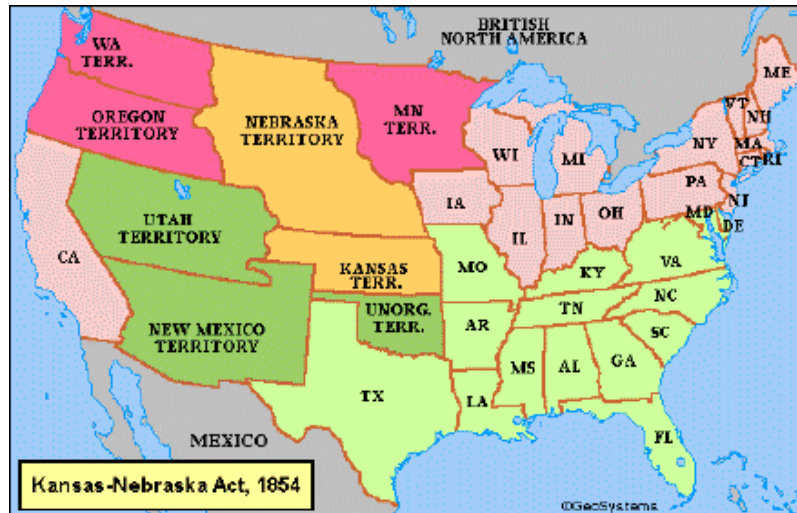
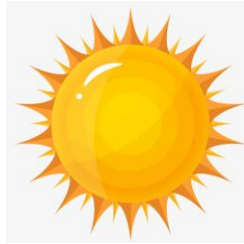
Lesson Objectives:

- To understand how land on the Great Plains was encroached upon by settlers in the 1850s after the creation of Nebraska and Kansas
- To explain the difficulties of farming on the Great Plains
- To assess the tensions that existed between the settlers and the Plains Indians by the 1850s



Moving onto and Farming the Plains - 1850s

The fertile lands of California and Oregon had attracted many settlers. Thousands of disappointed miners found that they could turn to farming due to the mild climate and fertile soils. By the 1850s, settlement had also begun on the Great Plains (a major cause of tension with the Indians). This was promoted by the new government who had created two new huge territories – Kansas and Nebraska. These territories were behind the Permanent Indian Frontier, the government now opened them up for white settlers, showing how little they respected the previous treaties and promises made to the Indians. However, no white Americans had ever farmed the Great Plains. They faced major difficulties.



[Grasshopper swarm](#)

Early Farming on the Plains - problems

Problem	Consequence for Plains Farming	Solutions	Limitations to the Solutions
Low Rainfall Less than half the rainfall farmers were used to Few rivers/streams			
Few Trees Away from rivers, the land was too dry for trees Plains Indians set fires to promote grass growth but killed saplings			
Climate Extremes V hot summers V cold winters Hailstorms, thunderstorms			
Unploughed soil Deep tangled grass roots broke ploughs			
Usual crops failed Crops that grew in the east would not grow on the Plains			
Prairie fires Long grass after a hot summer burnt easily			
Grasshoppers Swarms in some years could be devastating			

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Use pages 25- 26
to complete this
table



Examples of Sod Houses from the 19th century Plains

What problems have such houses overcome?

What problems did building houses from this material create?



Review – Early Settlement of the West c.1830s – 1850s

Tension between
settlers and Plains
Indians

Add ideas of your own then check pages 27 – 28 in the textbook too.

Review – Early Settlement of the West c.1830s – 1850s

The Oregon Trail being established and particularly the Gold Rush of 1849 meant many more people crossing the Plains.

Disrupted buffalo herds and hunting leading to mistrust and anger from Indians

Plains Indians rarely attacked but they did sometimes steal cattle when food was short. They also watched the white migrants which unnerved them as they thought they were planning to attack them.

Tension between settlers and Plains Indians

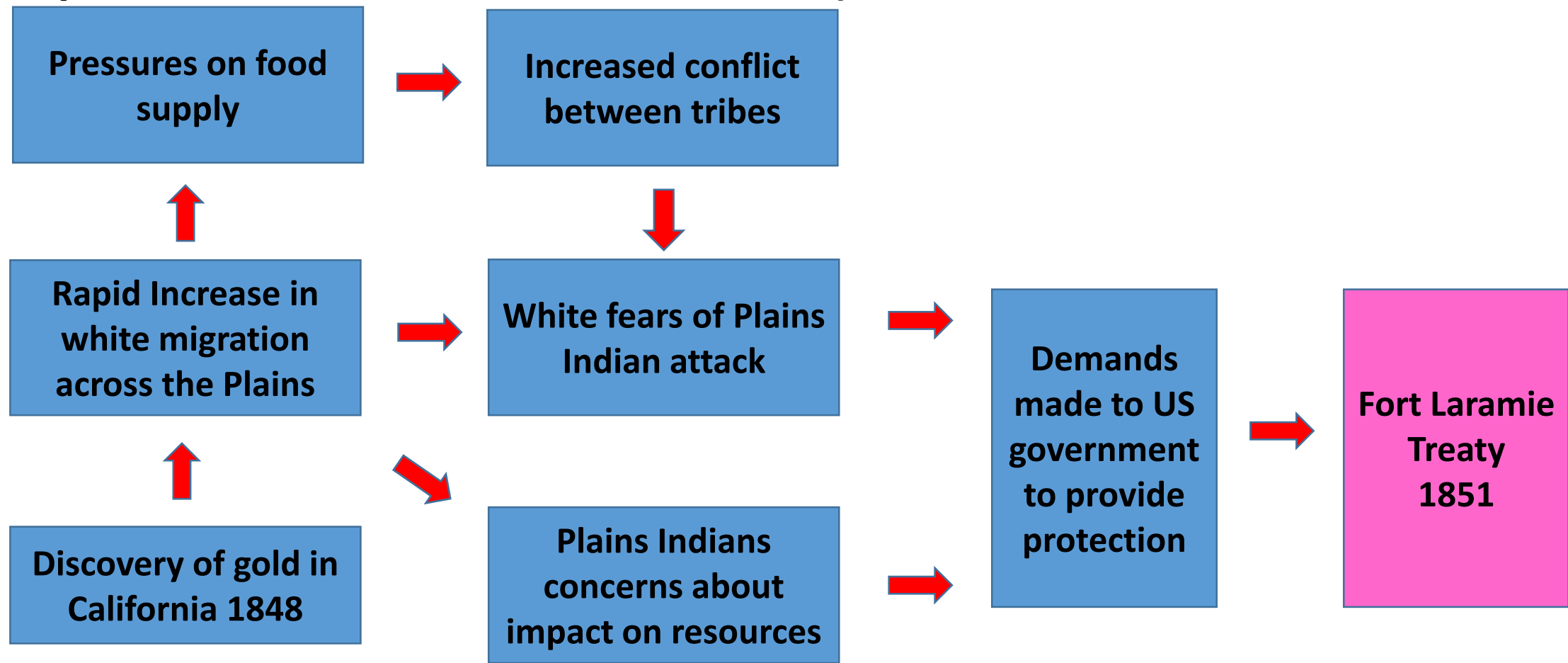
'White' diseases were contracted by Indian populations

Increased white Americans racism and hostility to Plains Indians – believed they were superior to them and they should be swept aside (Manifest Destiny).

Too much competition for scarce resources. Settlers cattle eating the grass, competition over water sources. Settlers also hunted and killed buffalo.

Add ideas of your own then check pages 27 – 28 in the textbook too.

Key Events leading to new Government action: The Fort Laramie Treaty 1851 (Remember the 1851 Appropriations Act had already set up the principle of Reservations – this was the first treaty that set out specific territories for certain tribes)



Problems:

- The government organised a council and asked the Plains Indians from each tribe to send a chief to represent them. Some tribes did not send anyone and even those who did, the chief did not represent the wishes of the whole tribe - each band would decide whether to follow their chief or not.
- There were translation problems – not all chiefs understood what they were signing.
- The different attitudes towards land meant the consequences were not fully understood by the Indians.

The Fort Laramie Treaty 1851 Sept

The Plains Indians agreed to:

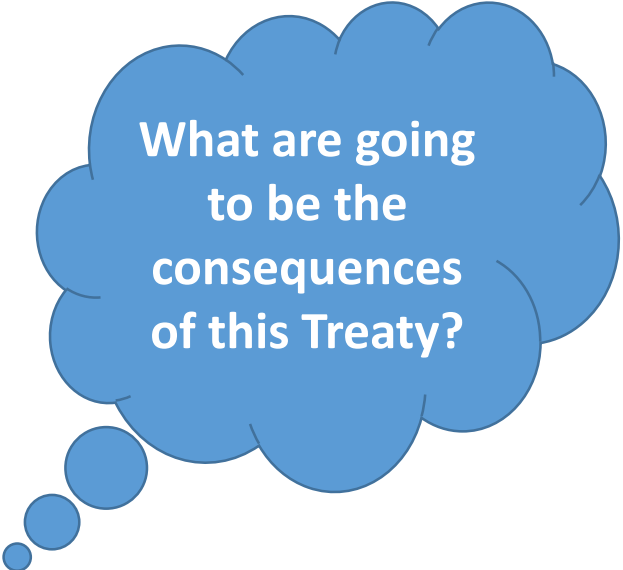
- End fighting among the tribes
- Allow migrants to travel safely.
- Permit railroad (railway) companies to survey the land (railways were coming).
- Allow the government to build roads through their lands and build army posts.
- Pay compensation if individuals from their tribe broke the treaty terms.

The US government agreed to:

- Protect Plains Indians from white Americans.
- Pay the tribes a yearly payment of \$50,000 (in goods mostly) as long as the terms of the treaty were kept to.
- Manage the territories the Indians agreed to move onto.

Problems:

- The treaty wanted to pin down precise areas for each tribe to use but Plains Indians did not use land in that way. They travelled huge distances and even enemy tribes used the same areas of land.
- For some Americans this treaty did not go far enough. Americans known as 'the exterminators' saw the native Americans as savages and wanted a military solution to wipe them out. (Genocide)



What are going to be the consequences of this Treaty?

One consequence was that....

This was because....

The Fort Laramie Treaty 1851 (Sept)

The Plains Indians agreed to:

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A second consequence was that....

This was due to the fact that....

Quick Questions - Review

1. Give three ways in which the buffalo were important to the Plains Indians
2. Explain why the Plains Indians' attitude to land will clash with the white Americans and lead to possible conflict.
3. What was the Oregon Trail?
4. Give one push factor in moving west.
5. Which country lost a war with America in 1848 and large chunks of territory as well?
6. Who were the two brothers that led a disastrous expedition to the West?
7. Who was the founder of the Mormon religion?
8. Give two ways in which Brigham Young was important to the successful migration of the Mormons to the Great Salt Lake?
9. Which new territory was created with Brigham Young as its first Governor?
10. What was the Permanent Indian Frontier – when was it created?
11. What was polygamy?
12. Give three reasons why settlers went to the West coast.
13. Why was farming on the Plains difficult for the white settlers - give three reasons.
14. Give three reasons why there were law and order problems in California.
15. Give two new states that were created in the 1850s which meant much more settlement on the Plains?

Quick Questions - Review

1. Give three ways in which the buffalo were important to the Plains Indians (food, hide -skin used for tipis, clothing etc, bones for sledge runners, tongue for hairbrushes, dung for fuel, intestines for buckets etc)
2. Explain why the Plains Indians' attitude to land will clash with the white Americans and lead to possible conflict. Don't believe people can own land just like you can't own sky.
3. What was the Oregon Trail? The first route west across the Plains and the Rocky Mountains
4. Give one push factor in moving west. Economic depression in East, Mormon Persecution
5. Which country lost a war with America in 1848 and large chunks of territory as well?
Mexico
6. Who were the two brothers that led a disastrous expedition to the West? Jacob and George Donner
7. Who was the founder of the Mormon religion? Joseph Smith
8. Give two ways in which Brigham Young was important to the successful migration of the Mormons to the Great Salt Lake? Built base camps, winter quarters, checked out the route in advance, organised the building of irrigation channels for snow melt from the mountains etc

9. Which new territory was created with Brigham Young as its first Governor? Utah
10. What was the Permanent Indian Frontier – when was it created? 1834, it was the border between the USA and Indian Territory which they said was the land west of the Mississippi river
11. What was polygamy? Having more than one wife
12. Give three reasons why settlers went to the West coast. Gold!, Oregon Trail provided a route there, USA gained territory from Mexico and Britain, encouraged people to settle there, fertile lands of California etc
13. Why was farming on the Plains difficult for the white settlers - give three reasons. Lack of rainfall/drought, lack of timber for building, fencing and fuel, extreme weather, plagues of insects
14. Give three reasons why there were law and order problems in California. Mostly young men who had gone to find gold – no families so lots of drinking, gambling, prostitution etc, few found gold disillusioned and with no money left, many turned to crime(gangs etc), mining camps/settlements remote and a long way from the law and the authorities.
15. Which two new states were created in the 1850s which meant much more settlement on the Plains? Nebraska and Kansas

The Fort Laramie Treaty 1851 Sept

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