

Narrated Simulation on Menominee Land Cession (1830s-1850s)

Concepts

- Focal period identifies that Wisconsin and Minnesota lands were first populated by American Indian Nations
- Actions reflect changes in land stewardship for the Menominee as a result of US Government actions and white settler encroachment. This led to loss of land and cultural practices, as well as to land organization into reservation and non-reservation lands.

Aims

- to show how much land the Menominee occupied and then lost between the 1830s until today, through land cession treaties with the US Government
- for students to feel a sense of loss and stress by experiencing a sensation of being cramped into a small space

Roles and Representation

Teacher

You will facilitate this narrated simulation/experiential (or train a student to be the facilitator) directing students to engage in different actions.

Space

You will use a portion of your classroom (lunchroom, playground) in which student participants will stand. This area will represent Wisconsin, primarily the Central and Northeastern portions that were inhabited by the Menominee [see page with 3 Maps]

Optional: If you are able to place useful objects in the Menominee lands as a way to represent water and forests, do so in order that students feel the lack of these objects after they have left the ceded areas.

Students

This narrated simulation is written for a class size of about 25 students such that 1 student = 500,000 acres of land.

Alternatively, if you have less students or if you want a group of students to observe the land loss rather than walk it, 1 standing student = 1,000,000 acres of land and 1 crouching = 500,000 acres.

19 students hold placards that represent years in which the Menominee signed land cession treaties with the US Government

5 students	Menominee Lands (side 1) / Treaty of 1831 (side 2)
1 student	Menominee Lands (side 1) / Treaty of 1832 (side 2)
8 students	Menominee Lands (side 1) / Treaty of 1836 (side 2)
5 students	Menominee Lands (side 1) / Treaty of 1848 (side 2)

1 student holds a placard that reads **Menominee Lands (side 1) / Menominee Reservation Today (1854-present) (side 2)**

1 student holds a placard that reads **Chief Oshkosh**

2 students hold placards that read **DAKOTA (of Minnesota)** and **OJIBWE (of Minnesota)**

1 student holds a placard that reads **Crow Wing County**

Optional:

- *1 student holds a placard that reads **Lake Michigan***
- *2 students hold placards that read **Indian Nations of New York (such as Brothertown, Oneida, Stockbridge-Munsee)***

Desks

Optional: the facilitator can move desks into the ceded territories to give students an even greater sense of the loss of space/land. In this scenario, the desks represent white settlers.

Greetings Rounds (Hand-shaking)

These rounds increase students' sense of being asked/forced to do something. It also increases their experience of being cramped as the space they have available to move around decrease with each reading.

Materials

Placards

Tape

String

Procedures

1. Clear out the area you will use for the narrated simulation and use string/tape to mark off the lands that were ceded, by treaty year (see maps). Also mark with string/tape the square area in which the Menominee Reservation exists today. *Note: most students will be squished into this space at the end of the simulation.*
2. Place the placards in the simulation space according to the corresponding treaty years and ares, but flip the placards so that the "**Treaty of ____**" faces down and the **Menominee Lands** faces up.
3. Ask the students who will participate in the Menominee Lands portion to stand where they see a placard, and then pick it up. You should be able to see:

5 students holding **Menominee Lands/Treaty of 1831** placard (representing 2.5 million acres) take their places in the eastern area of the simulation space (Green Bay).

8 students holding **Menominee Lands/Treaty of 1836** placard (representing 4 million acres) take their places in northeastern area of the simulation space).

5 students holding **Menominee Lands/Treaty of 1848** placard (representing 2.5 million acres) stands in central and eastern area of the simulation space).

1 student holding **Menominee Lands/Treaty of 1832** placard (representing 500,000 acres) stands in Central Eastern WI, between the other Treaties.

1 student holding the **Menominee Lands/Menominee Reservation Today (1854-present)** placard

4. Indicate the location of Lake Michigan either by posting a placard on the wall or have a student hold the placard. Ask for students to point to where northern/western/eastern/southern Wisconsin are located.
5. Ask the remaining characters to stand in their positions:
 - a. **Chief Oshkosh** stands anywhere in the Menominee Lands
 - b. **Dakota and Ojibwe of Minnesota and Crow Wing County** stand in the western most portion of the simulation space
6. General note: After everyone has taken their position, you will read out loud the sentences below and direct students to move out of the ceded lands and into the remaining lands. Optional “greetings” rounds occur before each land cession.
 - a. *Optional: give students 1 minute to move around and greet (shake hands, high 5s, kisses on the cheek, etc.) each other. They must stay within the Menominee lands.*
 - b. “In 1831, the Menominee were forced to cede 2.5 million acres of land to the US Government.” Ask students in this group to flip their placards so that everyone can read **Treaty of 1831**. Then ask students to set their placards on the floor and exit that space. They must find a new place to stand within the remaining Menominee Lands.
 - c. *Optional: give students 1 minute to move around and greet (shake hands, high 5s, kisses on the cheek, etc.) each other. They must stay within what remains of the Menominee Lands.*
 - d. “In 1832, the Menominee were forced to cede 500,000 acres of land to the US government. These lands were for American Indian Nations from New York, who were forced to leave their homelands and move west.” Ask this student to flip her/his placard to show **Treaty of 1832**. Then ask her/him to set the placard on the floor and exit that space. S/he must find a new place to stand within the remaining Menominee Lands.
 - e. *Optional: give students 1 minute to move around and greet (shake hands, high 5s, kisses on the cheek, etc.) each other. They must stay within what remains of the Menominee lands.*
 - f. “In 1836, the Menominee were forced to cede 4 million acres of land to the US government. The US government eventually sold these lands to white settlers who moved west.” Ask students to turn their placards so that everyone can read **Treaty of 1836**. Then ask students to set their placards on the floor and exit that space. They must find a new place to stand within the remaining Menominee Lands. *Note: most students will now be standing in what will become the **Treaty of 1848** area.*

- g. *Optional: give students 1 minute to move around and greet (shake hands, high 5s, kisses on the cheek, etc.) each other. They must stay within what remains of the Menominee lands.*
- h. “The US Government wanted the remainder of the Menominee lands for white settlers and in 1848, it forced the Menominee to cede their remaining 2.5 million acres of land. The Government told the Menominee that they need to move to Central Minnesota, now **Crow Wing County**, to live on about 600,000 acres of land.” Direct students holding **Treaty of 1848** to flip their placards in order to show the year **but ask them to remain standing where they are. Then direct students to look west at the student who is holding the Crow Wing County placard.**
 - i. *Option: Refer students to the student who is holding the Treaty of 1852 sign to indicate approximate acreage.*
- i. “The US Government gave the Menominee Nation a two year grace period before they needed to leave.”
 - i. *Option: Elicit definition and examples of a grace period.*
- j. “During this grace period, **Chief Oshkosh** learned that the Menominee’s future Minnesotan lands were located between two warring American Indian Nations, the **Dakota** and the **Ojibwe**.” Direct the students to look at the students holding **Dakota** and **Ojibwe** placards.
 - i. *Option: To show that the nations were at war, you could have students pretend to arm wrestle, shout or something more ingenious and safe.*
- k. Direct **Chief Oshkosh** to react (looking frustrated, exasperated, perplexed, etc.)
- l. Elicit responses to questions such as:
 - i. “What could the Menominee do?” “What could the US Government do?” “What could non-Indian settlers do?”
 - ii. “What do you think happened after the grace period ended?”
- m. “Rather than leave, **Chief Oshkosh** negotiated with the US Government to receive 235,000 acres of land along the Wolf River. This happened between 1850 and 1854.”
- n. Then ask the student holding the **Menominee Lands/Menominee Reservation Today (1854-present)** placard to flip the placard so that **Menominee Reservation Today (1854-present)** faces outward. Following this, direct all students with **Treaty** placards to move toward the **Menominee Reservation Today**. *Note: at this point, students will be cramped into a small space. This does not perfectly mirror what happened as the Menominee were not living on top of one another. However, relative to how had lived previously, they were challenged to adapt to such a tiny area of land.*
- o. Elicit responses to questions such as:
 - i. What has changed?
 - ii. How do you feel?
 - iii. What might this mean for the Menominee Nation?

7. Debrief

Close the simulation with an open-ended, reflective conversation. Make sure to ask students to drop their roles prior to this debrief. Students may want to remain standing or move to their seats. You may pose questions such as:

- What are your reactions to the US Government's actions?
- What kind of impact do you think this land loss had on the Menominee?
- Did the people who moved into these lands, many of whom were immigrants from Western Europe, have a responsibility to form relationships with the Menominee?
- Have you ever moved from a larger home or classroom to a smaller home or classroom?

