

Overall, did trade make life better or worse for American Indians?

In some ways, **trade with Europeans was GOOD for the American Indians:**

- Having valuable furs desired by Europeans gave the Indians power in the trading relationship.
- Trading gave Indians steady and reliable access to manufactured goods, such as knives with steel blades, iron cooking kettles, hoes with metal blades, etc.
- These tools saved Indians time and labor in nearly all aspects of life.
- Indians obtained access to new goods to create beautiful new forms of art, such as satin ribbon for ribbon-work, trade cloth, glass beads for beadwork, etc.
- Trade helped the Indians modernize, preparing them for the change that was to come.

In other ways, **trade with Europeans was BAD for the American Indians:**

- Traders often unintentionally brought deadly diseases which killed huge numbers of Indians
- Trade made native people dependent on trade goods; some lost the knowledge of how make their own tools
- Though the new tools saved time in some ways, the Indians had to spend much more time obtaining the furs to trade for the tools: men hunting, women cleaning and stretching animal pelts
- Increased hunting for the fur trade put pressure on animal populations
- Trade competition caused conflicts with other tribes; Indians were drawn into European conflicts
- Indian women sometimes chose to marry European traders. Though some marriages were successful, others were short-lived and violent. Sometimes life was difficult for mixed-blood children.
- Though some traders were respectful, others used liquor to cheat Indians, often leading to violence.
- Fur traders gathered information about Indian country that drew farmers, miners, and railroads to the northern Plains. These people did not want Indians as trading partners, and instead wanted to take the Indians land from them, and eventually they did.

WHICH VIEW IS MOST ACCURATE? WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

Overall, did trade make life better or worse for American Indians?

WRITE A PARAGRAPH in which you take a stand on this question. **REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Decide your position, and begin your paragraph with a clear statement of your claim. i.e.
“Overall, trade with Europeans made life better for American Indians.” OR “Overall, trade with Europeans made life worse for American Indians.”
2. Then, to support your claim, choose at least two of the arguments (reasons) given above. Put them in your own words and explain how they are true. Think of examples to give.
3. Then, choose one counter-argument (reason from the other side), and explain why it is not correct. i.e. *Though some might say..., this is not correct because....*
4. Write a conclusion sentence wrapping up your ideas. i.e. *For these reasons, ...*

Grade yourself: after you finish your paragraph, check boxes at right	Yes	No
1 st (topic) sentence - clear states your claim		
Reason 1 - explain, give example(s)		
Reason 2 - explain, give example(s)		
Counter-argument - why it is not right		
Conclusion-wrap-up sentence		

