

Reign of Terror: the Osage Indian Murders

Review Questions



VOCABULARY

A. communal	G. guardian	M. coroner	R. accomplice
B. mineral rights	H. ward	N. death certificate	S. life insurance
C. headright	I. incentive	O. collusion	T. diaspora
D. royalty	J. corruption	P. bribery	U. depravity
E. boom town	K. embezzlement	Q. prosecute	
F. oil & gas lease	L. fraud		

1. **E** a town that experiences a sudden growth in business and population
2. **M** an official who investigates violent, sudden, or suspicious deaths
3. **N** official statement signed by a physician of the cause, date, and place of a person's death
4. **C** each Osage's inheritable right to an ownership share of mineral interest (oil income)
5. **B** the right to mine or produce underground minerals such as oil and gas, and rocks
6. **S** insurance that pays out a sum of money at the end of the life of the insured person
7. **D** regular payment to mineral right owner based on volume of oil extracted
8. **Q** institute legal proceedings against (a person or organization)
9. **R** a person who helps another commit a crime
10. **T** the scattering or dispersion of people from their homeland
11. **F** legal agreement giving an oil and gas company (lessee) and its crew access to drill for oil and gas on the property of the lessor.
12. **G** the person who has the legal authority and duty to care for the property interests of another person, called his/her ward.
13. **H** a person who has a guardian appointed by the court to manage his/her property
14. **J** generally, the use of a position of power for dishonest or criminal purposes
15. **L** using deception, a trick or dishonest means to deprive another of their money or property
16. **K** taking of money or property by someone to whom it was entrusted
17. **U** moral corruption; wickedness
18. **P** paying an official to influence his actions (i.e. not prosecute, falsify a document, etc.)
19. **A** a community co-owning property without individual private ownership
20. **I** a motivation or encouragement, almost an invitation- to do something
21. **O** secret or illegal cooperation together, especially in order to cheat or deceive others

Source of Wealth: Reserved Mineral Rights

1. The Osage kept communal ownership of their mineral rights so the right would not be **sold** or **lost**.

Oil Boom - Million Dollar Elm

2. Tell one fact or result from the Oil Boom era: (answers vary) Osages very wealthy, thousands of workers, boom towns, 8579 oil wells, \$27 m year, Million Dollar Elm lease auctions, etc.

License to Steal - Corrupt Guardians

3. Why did the government create the guardianship system for the Osage? To “protect” the Osage since they were inexperienced with their new wealth
4. How did this system “backfire”? many of the guardians became corrupt and took the Osages’ money themselves
5. Tell one way guardians stole from their wards: (answers vary) embezzlement, fraud -i.e. making wards go into debt and then give up their assets

Murders - the Reign of Terror

6. Why did the killers murder the Osage?
To inherit their headrights, life insurance or other assets
7. How were the murders covered up?
Coroner’s office falsifying death certificates, claiming suicides
8. What were some of the methods of murder?
Poisoning, bombing, shooting

Lack of Justice

9. Why weren’t the murderers prosecuted?
Due to collusion and bribery of local officials
10. Who were three kinds of officials who got “blood money”? lawmen
prosecutors judges
11. What happened to local white people who tried to stop the murders?
They were threatened or even killed
12. Who finally helped bring a few of the murderers to justice? The FBI
13. How do you think the Osage people felt during this time?
(answers vary) terrible, shocked, frightened, dispirited, depressed, suspicious of all white people, etc.
14. Write a short personal response essay on this topic: What can we learn from seeing what happened to the Osage during this time?
(answers vary) be careful of greed and government corruption, some people will do anything for money, don’t set up government programs without close outside oversight, evils of racial discrimination, etc.