

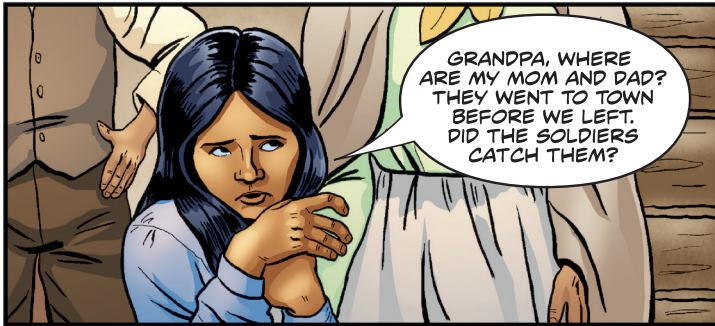
**THE NEXT DAY...**

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON CONVINCED MOST EVERYBODY THAT WE MUST MAKE WAY FOR WHITE SETTLERS.

THEY TAKE OUR HOMES AND MOVE US OUT WEST. IT'S NOT JUST CREEKS...THE CHOCTAW, CHICKASAW, CHEROKEE AND SEMINOLE ARE BEING REMOVED.

THEY CALL IT THE INDIAN REMOVAL ACT.

HOW IN THE WORLD DO YOU KNOW THIS? WHEN DO WE LEAVE THIS PLACE? MY FIELDS NEED HARVESTING!

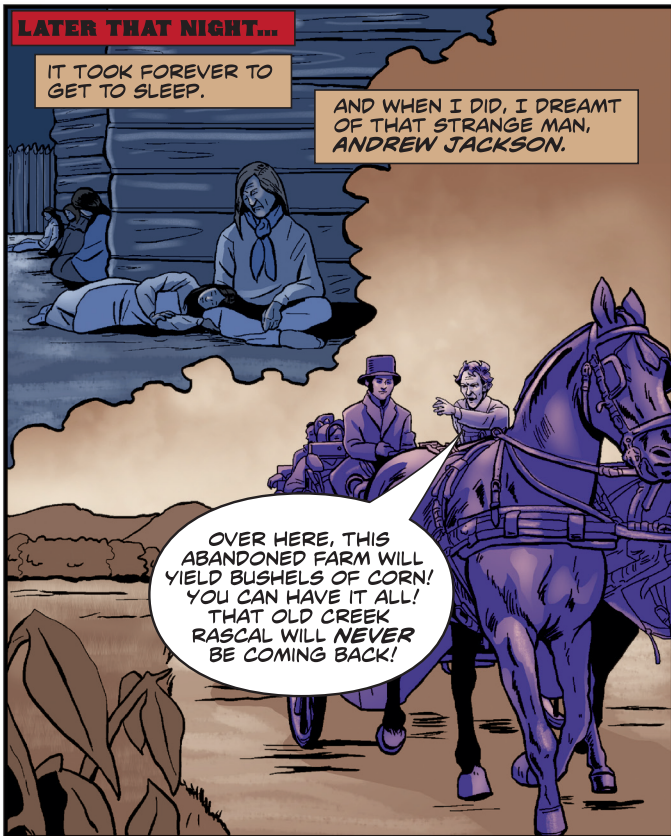


GRANDPA, WHERE ARE MY MOM AND DAD? THEY WENT TO TOWN BEFORE WE LEFT. DID THE SOLDIERS CATCH THEM?



EFFIE, YOUR FOLKS ARE HERE SOMEWHERE. LOOK AT ALL THESE \*\*ESTE CATVLKE. THERE'S OUR NEIGHBOR MARY AND HER BOYS -- WE CAN ASK THEM.

\*\*CREEK WORD FOR INDIAN PEOPLE.

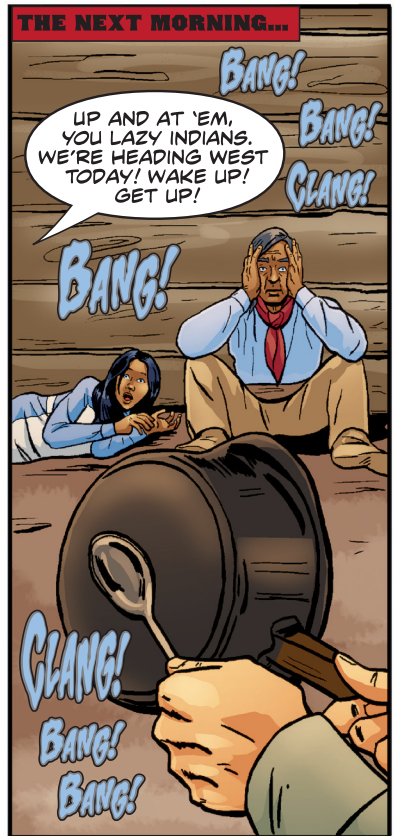


**LATER THAT NIGHT...**

IT TOOK FOREVER TO GET TO SLEEP.

AND WHEN I DID, I DREAMT OF THAT STRANGE MAN, ANDREW JACKSON.

OVER HERE, THIS ABANDONED FARM WILL YIELD BUSHELS OF CORN! YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL! THAT OLD CREEK RASCAL WILL NEVER BE COMING BACK!



**THE NEXT MORNING...**

UP AND AT 'EM, YOU LAZY INDIANS. WE'RE HEADING WEST TODAY! WAKE UP! GET UP!

BANG!  
BANG!  
CLANG!  
BANG!  
CLANG!  
BANG!  
CLANG!

WE HAD BEEN WALKING FOR DAYS, WITH HARDLY ANY REST OR FOOD. I'M GLAD ME AND GRANDPA WILLIE HAD SHOES. A NICE LADY GAVE US A BLANKET TO SHARE. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE WE WERE GOING. WE HAD TO KEEP MOVING.



OUR PEOPLE SANG THE SADDEST SONG.

ESPOKETIS OMES KERRESKOS  
ESPOKETIS OMES KERRESKOS  
PUMVPVLTAKE VPEYVNNÄ  
ESPOKETIS OMES KERRESKOS

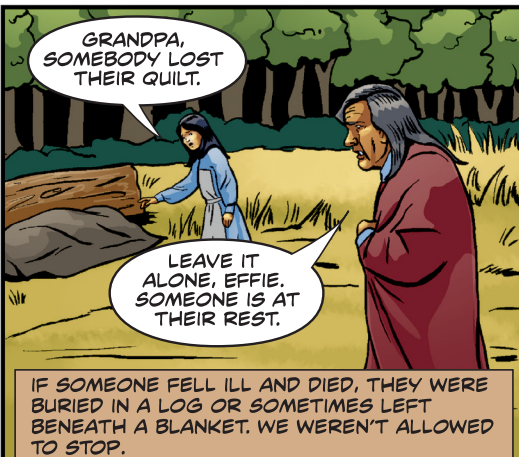
\*\*THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME WE DON'T KNOW  
THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME WE DON'T KNOW  
OUR OTHERS HAVE GONE ON,  
THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME WE DON'T KNOW.



GRANDPA,  
SOMEBODY LOST  
THEIR QUILT.

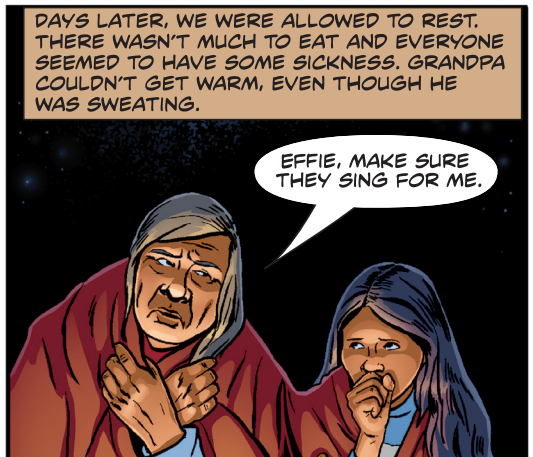
LEAVE IT  
ALONE, EFFIE.  
SOMEONE IS AT  
THEIR REST.

IF SOMEONE FELL ILL AND DIED, THEY WERE  
BURIED IN A LOG OR SOMETIMES LEFT  
BENEATH A BLANKET. WE WEREN'T ALLOWED  
TO STOP.



DAYS LATER, WE WERE ALLOWED TO REST.  
THERE WASN'T MUCH TO EAT AND EVERYONE  
SEEMED TO HAVE SOME SICKNESS. GRANDPA  
COULDN'T GET WARM, EVEN THOUGH HE  
WAS SWEATING.

EFFIE, MAKE SURE  
THEY SING FOR ME.



**THE NEXT MORNING...**

"This will enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rule institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers."

President Andrew Jackson, from the Indian Removal Act.

HELELUYEN YVHIKVRES HELE-HELELUYVN  
HELELUYEN YVHIKVRES HELE-HELELUYVN



\*\*HALLELUJAH, THEY WILL SING HALLEH-HALLELUJAH HALLELUJAH, THEY WILL SING HALLEH-HALLELUJAH

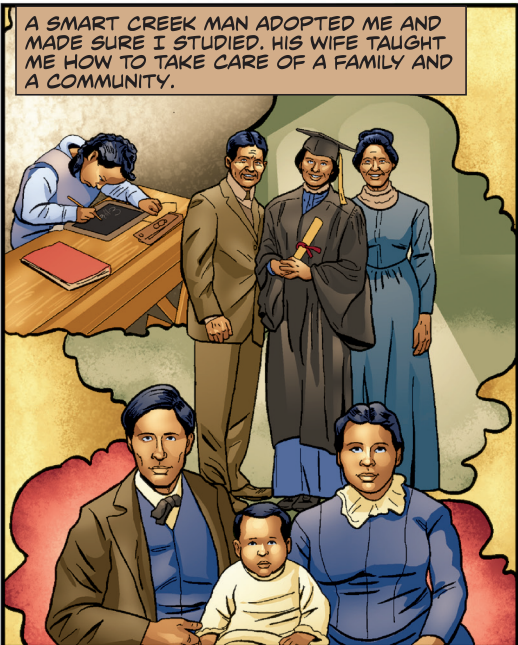
**MANY WEEKS LATER...**

I LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS AFTER GRANDPA PASSED, AND I NEVER FOUND MY PARENTS.

WE FINALLY GOT TO ANOTHER PLACE CALLED FORT GIBSON.



A SMART CREEK MAN ADOPTED ME AND MADE SURE I STUDIED. HIS WIFE TAUGHT ME HOW TO TAKE CARE OF A FAMILY AND A COMMUNITY.



OUR MUSCOGEE CREEK PEOPLE ARE ALL OVER EASTERN OKLAHOMA. MVTO FOR THIS QUILT, VM OSOSWV. TELL MY STORY TO YOUR CHILDREN.



IT'S ESTIMATED OVER 21,000 MUSCOGEE CREEKS LIVED IN THE AREA NOW KNOWN AS GEORGIA AND ALABAMA. TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE REMOVAL, ONLY 13,500 CREEK PEOPLE REMAINED IN OKLAHOMA. TODAY, THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION HAS THEIR OWN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY. THEIR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ARE STILL THRIVING. \*\*MVTO MEANS 'THANK YOU.'

## OVERVIEW

This comic tells the story of the Trail of Tears, the Indian Removal Act, and their impact on indigenous populations for centuries to come. Set in the mid-1800s in Alabama, the comic follows a young Muscogee native and her family as they are forced to march hundreds of miles from their ancestral homes to a government-created reservation in Oklahoma. Battling freezing conditions, hunger, disease, and violence, their harrowing journey exposes the cruelty of the Indian Removal Act and its long-term impact on indigenous people across the United States.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you already know about American Indian history? What do you know about the different American Indian tribes and cultures?
- Why do you think Starr uses English and Creek language together in the comic?
- Why did President Jackson order the removal of American Indians living east of the Mississippi River, including states like Georgia, Alabama, and Florida?
- Why do you think so many people got sick and died on the way to Oklahoma? What do you think it would be like to walk from Alabama to Oklahoma without adequate rest, food, or water?
- On page 4, text from the Indian Removal Act, signed by President Andrew Jackson, reads “This will enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers.”
  - What does “retard” mean in this context?
  - What is meant by “rude institutions?”
  - What do you think President Jackson thinks of the American Indian people?
- On page 4, Starr juxtaposes actual text from the Indian Removal Act with tragic images of Effie’s grandfather’s death. Why do you think Starr made this decision?
- What do you think happened to the main character’s parents?
- Does this make you think of any other stories throughout American or World history?
- Do you think something similar to the Trail of Tears could be possible today in the United States? What about the rest of the world? Why or why not?
- What immediate impact do you think The Road to Disappearance, or the Trail of Tears, had on American Indian tribes?
- The Indian Removal Act was signed in 1830. Do you think this event has impacted modern life for many American Indians? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the main character asks her granddaughter to tell this story to her children? Do you think this is an important story to tell and learn about? Why or why not?
- The main character, Effie, is introduced first as the grandmother, then flashes back to her childhood experience during the Trail of Tears. Why do you think the writer chose this storytelling technique for this comic?
- Because this story is told in a comic format, the reader can see many different types of images. How does this help you understand the Trail of Tears experience? How would this be different from reading a journal entry, watching a video, or reading a textbook?
- For centuries, oral storytelling has been a central way of passing along information, history, and lessons for indigenous people. How does this show up in the comic, and why?
- The writer and artist of this story, Arigon Starr, is of Cherokee and Muscogee (aka Creek) descent – and the comic is based on oral stories passed down in her family for generations. Does knowing this change your reading of this story?



# Teacher Guide



## PROJECT IDEAS

- **Create a Timeline** – Instruct students to create a timeline, complete with drawn images or images found through research, that shows the impact that European settlers had on a specific American Indian tribes before, during, and after the Indian Removal Act.
- **Write a letter** – Ask students to imagine themselves as a child, forced to walk from Georgia to Oklahoma. Have students write a journal entry, or a series of journal entries, that show what they might be feeling, thinking, and experiencing on their journey.
- **Practical Art** – Many American Indian tribes work beautiful artistic qualities into everyday items, such as quilts, clothing, or pottery. These items combine artistry with practical usefulness. In this comic, quilts are used for warmth and protection. As we can see throughout the comic, items like these can also hold great sentimental value. For this project, ask students to conceptualize or create an item that combines artistry and practical functionality, meant to be given to a loved one. What is the meaning behind the art? What would they like the recipient to feel when receiving the gift?
- **Library Research** – Almost all indigenous tribes have faced some sort of forced removal from their ancestral homes. Using books found in your school’s library, ask students to conduct research about the history and cultures of the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole, Cherokee, or other tribes prior to and after these forced removals. Students should create a visual presentation (such as a poster, PowerPoint, YouTube-style video, etc.) that shows what they learned about that tribe and the impact of the forced removal on their people. Encourage students to use their creativity when conceptualizing their presentation.
  - Before creating presentations, the class should discuss cultural sensitivity, and what sort of projects would and would not be appropriate. For example, children who do not identify as American Indian should not dress in American Indian attire. However, they should feel comfortable speaking about their research.

## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The reading of this comic in combination with a thoughtful analysis through writing, presentation, or discussion, (such as the projects within this guide) can promote the teaching or reinforcement of the following Reading: Informational Text and History/Social Studies Common Core Standards, as well as various Reading, Writing, and Speaking & Listening Common Core standards.

GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6
<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1</u> Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2</u> Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.3</u> Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4</u> Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 4 topic or subject area</i>.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.5</u> Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.6</u> Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.</p>	<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.1</u> Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.2</u> Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.3</u> Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.4</u> Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 5 topic or subject area</i>.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.5</u> Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.6</u> Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.</p>	<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1</u> Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2</u> Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3</u> Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.5</u> Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.6</u> Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.7</u> Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g.,</p>



# Teacher Guide



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9

Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.9

Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic





# Teacher Guide



## COMIC SOUNDTRACK

The tracks below can be listened to and/or watched in conjunction with the comic:

- “Espoketis Omes Kerreskos/This May Be The Last Time” (video) – <https://vimeo.com/326497446>
- Folk Music of the United States: Delaware, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek (album) – [https://archive.org/details/lp\\_delaware-cherokee-choctaw-creek\\_various-amanda-wesley-charlton-l-wilson-ch/disc1/02.08](https://archive.org/details/lp_delaware-cherokee-choctaw-creek_various-amanda-wesley-charlton-l-wilson-ch/disc1/02.08)

## FURTHER READING

- The Trail of Tears: A Story of Cherokee Removal – <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/The-Trail-of-Tears-A-Story-of-Cherokee-Removal>
- National Park Service’s Trail of Tears: A Journey of Injustice – <https://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm>
- PBS Learning Media: Trail of Tears – <https://rmpbs.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/akh10.socst.ush.exp.trail/trail-of-tears/>
- Cherokee Preservation Society – <http://cherokeepreservation.org/>
- National Trail of Tears Association – <https://nationaltota.com/>
- Library of Congress’s Indian Removal Act: Primary Documents in American History – <https://guides.loc.gov/indian-removal-act/digital-collections>
- Encyclopedia Britannica – <https://www.britannica.com/event/Trail-of-Tears>
- Muscogee Creek Nation website – <https://www.mcn-nsn.gov/>
- Oklahoma History Society: Removal of Tribes to Oklahoma – <https://www.okhistory.org/research/airemoval>
- National Museum of the American Indian: <https://americanindian.si.edu/online-resources/trail-of-tears-removal>
- *Mary and the Trail of Tears: A Cherokee Removal Survival Story* by Andrea L. Rogers (Novel)
- *White Bird* by R.J. Palacio (Graphic Novel)
- *How I Became a Ghost – A Choctaw Trail of Tears Story* by Tim Tingle (Novel)

## SOURCES

- *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians* (Angie Debo, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941).
- *Nations Remembered: An Oral History of the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles in Oklahoma 1865-1907* (by Theda Perdue, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993)
- *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States (For Young People)* (by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese, Beacon Press, 2019)

**PAGE 1: Four Panels**

Panel one:

Panel Description: Wide Panel. Title Treatment, plus credits and the Colorful Colorado/Pop Culture Classroom Logo. Exterior vista of a hill alongside the Arkansas River in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The year is 1908, so there are a few buildings, some river traffic. There are some other Native folks in the background, talking, sitting. We also see a substantial Oak Tree (known as The Council Oak, which has been standing in Tulsa since the founding of the city by the first Creek people who arrived following the Trail of Tears.) An older woman, Effie, holds a homemade quilt. The quilt was presented as a gift by her granddaughter, Sallie, who looks at her grandmother with much love.

1	NARRATION:	My Grandma Effie tells the best stories. It's her eighty-third birthday in the year of 1908. Our family lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma near the Arkansas River. My mama and I made her a quilt, but I never thought a gift would make someone cry.	1
2	SALLIE:	Do you like it, Grandma? .....	2
	SALLIE:	Are you crying?	
3	EFFIE:	Hotke, it's beautiful. It makes me think of my Grandpa....and the road to disappearance....some people call it "The Trail of Tears." [**Hotke is the Creek word for daughter. I will add an asterisk and explanation in a text box at the bottom of the same panel.]	3

Panel two:

Wide Panel: A vista shot of corn growing, people working in the fields, with scattered buildings. An older Native man talks with another younger Native man, while Effie plays in the background.

NARRATION:

Alabama, 1833.

4

EFFIE:

4

(Narration Box)

Our family had always lived in Alabama. We never knew anywhere else. In 1833, I was eight years old and my world was about to change.

GRANDPA WILLIE:

But, Charley, We're just about to harvest the corn. We can't just --

Panel three:

Small Panel. In quick succession, we see armed soldiers shout orders to Grandpa Willie, their cousin Charley and Effie. The soldiers are cruel, without humanity.

SOLDIER 1:

Get your things. Get moving, Old Man.

SOLDIER 2:

Andrew Jackson done run y'all out.

Panel four :

Small panel. The soldiers stand behind Grandpa Willie, Charley and Effie. The Creeks carry only small bundles with them.

Panel five:

Small Panel. We see the walls of a wooden fort. The gate is open and there are many, many people inside. All of them Creek Indians.

NARRATION:

(The box runs over panel four and five)

Those soldiers were mean and didn't give us time to pack. We walked for a long way until we came to a big wooden house. There were already a lot of other Creek people there.

**PAGE 2: Five Panels**

Panel one.

Medium Panel. Exterior, Fort Day. A child's eye view of the holding fort/stockade. We see the lower half of Uncle Willie and the smart looking pants of another Creek man. There is also a long skirt next to them. We see Effie's face, looking forward, trying to understand what the old folks are talking about. The smart man talking to Uncle Willie is a sophisticated Creek man, Ira.

IRA:

Andrew Jackson, the president of these United States, convinced a majority of people that we needed to make way for white settlers. They call it the Indian Removal Act. They take our land and give us another place to live out west. It's not just Creeks, mind you. The Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees and Seminoles are also on the move.

GRANDPA WILLIE:

How in the world do you know this? When do we leave this place? My fields need harvesting!

Panel two:

Medium Panel: Close up of Effie, she's clinging to the skirt of the woman standing next to her Grandpa. She's scared.

EFFIE:

Grandpa, where are my Mom and Dad? They went to town before we left. Did the soldiers catch them?

Panel three:

Medium panel. Grandpa Willie leans down to be face-to-face with Effie.

GRANDPA WILLIE:

Hokte, your folks are here somewhere. Look at all these Creek folks. There's our neighbor Mary and her boys -- we can ask them.

Panel four:

Medium: Exterior of the fort, night. Effie sleeps on the ground, as Grandpa Willie snoozes nearby. Her eyes are closed, but we see what's she's dreaming about. In a dream bubble, we see President Andrew Jackson driving a wagon with a bunch of settlers in the bed behind him. Jackson gives the air of a tour guide, leading tourists through a vacation world.

NARRATION:

It took forever to get to sleep and when I did, I dreamt of that strange man, Andrew Jackson.

JACKSON:

Over here, this abandoned farm will yield bushels of corn! You can have it all! That old Creek rascal will never be coming back!

Panel five:

Medium. Early dawn -- Effie starts awake. Off panel, we hear the voice of one of the mean soldiers.

SFX:

BANG, CLANG, BANG!

SOLDIER 1:

Up and at 'em, you lazy Indians. We're heading west today! Wake up! Get up!

**PAGE 3: Four Panels**

Panel one:

Wide panel. We see a long line of Creek Indians walking along a wooded trail. The weather is cold and only the soldiers are dressed for it. If people have blankets, they are draped over their soldiers. Some of the people are barefoot. There's a wagon in the distance.

NARRATION:

We had been walking for days, with hardly any rest or food. I'm glad me and Grandpa Willie had shoes. A nice lady gave us a blanket to share. We didn't know where we were going. We had to keep moving.

Panel two:

Wide: We see some Creek men and women with their mouths open in song. They are solemn, but they sing loud. The words of the song are surrounding them. Place a Creek hymn of the Trail here. The words in the frame are Creek. The translation is a text box to the side. Effie narrates.

NARRATION:

Those people sang the saddest song.

TEXT BOX:

IN CREEK:

Espoketis Omes Kerreskos  
Espoketis Omes Kerreskos  
Pumvpvltake vpeyvna  
Espoketis Omes Kerreskos

IN ENGLISH:

This maybe the last time we don't  
know  
This maybe the last time we don't  
know  
Our others have gone on,  
This maybe the last time we don't  
know.

Panel three:

Medium: Exterior, along the trail. There is a bumpy log and next to it, a brightly patterned quilt. There is a body beneath the quilt.

EFFIE:

Grandpa, somebody lost their quilt.

GRANDPA WILLIE:

Leave it alone, Hotke. Someone is  
at their rest.

NARRATION:

I learned later that there if  
someone fell ill and died, they  
were buried in a log. Sometimes,  
they were only left beneath a  
blanket, left to die. We weren't  
allowed to stop.

Panel four:

Medium: Exterior, along the trail at night. Grandpa Willie and Effie huddle together under their shared blanket. Grandpa looks poorly. He's tired and sweaty.

NARRATION:

Days later, we were allowed to rest. There wasn't much to eat and everyone seemed to have some sickness. Grandpa couldn't get warm, even though he was sweating.

GRANDPA WILLIE:

Effie, make sure they sing for me.

**Page Four: Four panels**

Panel one:

Wide panel. Another long line of Creek people walking. Straggling behind the group is Effie. She is alone and shivering. The group in front of her sings another Creek song. We see their quilt on the side of the road, covering a body. The words of the hymn are within the panel.

NARRATION:

[Quote Box - Different Font] "This will enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers." - President Andrew Jackson, from the Indian Removal Act.

NARRATION:

CREEK SONG  
{in Creek Language}  
Heleluyen Yvhikvres Hele-Heleluyvn  
Heleluyen Yvhikvres Hele-Heleluyvn

[In English]  
Hallelujah, they will sing  
Halleh-Hallelujah  
Hallelujah, they will sing  
Halleh-Hallelujah

Panel two:

Medium Panel:Exterior, Day. Fort Gibson, on the border of Arkansas and Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Effie and a smaller group of Creek people are outside of another wooden fort. There are soldiers around them, making sure they go inside.

NARRATION:

I lost count of the days after Grandpa passed. We finally got to another wooden place called Fort Gibson.

Panel three:

Medium. A montage of Effie maturing, studying, marrying, having her own children.

NARRATION:

That smart Creek man Ira adopted me and made sure I studied. His wife helped me learn how to take care of a family and a community.

Panel four:

Medium panel. We see a detail of the quilt. Within the design is the seal of the Muscogee Creek Nation. Holding the quilt are Effie's old, weathered hands.

NARRATION:

Your Muscogee Creek people settled all over eastern Oklahoma. Take care of this quilt and tell the story to your children.

NARRATION:

[Different font] It's estimated over 21,000 Muscogee Creeks lived in the area now known as Georgia and Alabama. Twenty years after the Removal, only 13,500 Creek people remained in Oklahoma. Today, the Muscogee Creek Nation has their own tribal government and economy. Their language and culture are still thriving.



# THE TRAIL OF TEARS

MY GRANDMA EFFIE TELLS THE BEST STORIES. IT'S HER EIGHTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY IN THE YEAR OF 1908. OUR FAMILY LIVES IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA NEAR THE ARKANSAS RIVER. MY MAMA AND I MADE HER A QUILT, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT A GIFT WOULD MAKE HER CRY.



DO YOU LIKE IT, GRANDMA?

ARE YOU CRYING?

\*\*HOTKE, IT'S BEAUTIFUL. IT MAKES ME THINK OF MY GRANDPA...AND THE ROAD TO DISAPPEARANCE... SOME PEOPLE CALL IT "THE TRAIL OF TEARS."

WORDS & ART BY  
ARIGON STARR

\*\*HOTKE IS THE CREEK WORD FOR DAUGHTER.

## ALABAMA, 1833.

OUR FAMILY HAD ALWAYS LIVED IN ALABAMA. WE NEVER KNEW ANYWHERE ELSE. IN 1833, I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD AND MY WORLD WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE.



BUT, CHARLEY, WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO HARVEST THE CORN. WE CAN'T JUST...



GET YOUR THINGS. GET MOVING, OLD MAN.

ANDREW JACKSON DONE RUN Y'ALL OUT.



THOSE SOLDIERS WERE MEAN AND DIDN'T GIVE US TIME TO PACK. WE WALKED FOR A LONG WAY UNTIL WE CAME TO A BIG WOODEN HOUSE. THERE WERE ALREADY A LOT OF OTHER CREEK PEOPLE THERE.

**THE NEXT DAY...**

ANDREW JACKSON, THE PRESIDENT OF THESE UNITED STATES, CONVINCED A MAJORITY OF PEOPLE THAT WE NEEDED TO MAKE WAY FOR WHITE SETTLERS

THEY CALL IT THE **INDIAN REMOVAL ACT.**

THEY TAKE OUR LAND AND GIVE US ANOTHER PLACE TO LIVE OUT WEST. IT'S NOT JUST CREEKS, MIND YOU. THE CHOCTAWS, CHICKSAWS, CHEROKEES AND SEMINOLES ARE ALSO ON THE MOVE.

HOW IN THE WORLD DO YOU KNOW THIS? WHEN DO WE LEAVE THIS PLACE? MY FIELDS NEED HARVESTING!

HOKTE, YOUR FOLKS ARE HERE SOMEWHERE. LOOK AT ALL THESE CREEK FOLKS. THERE'S OUR NEIGHBOR MARY AND HER BOYS -- WE CAN ASK THEM.

GRANDPA, WHERE ARE MY MOM AND DAD? THEY WENT TO TOWN BEFORE WE LEFT. DID THE SOLDIERS CATCH THEM?

**LATER THAT NIGHT...**

IT TOOK FOREVER TO GET TO SLEEP AND WHEN I DID, I DREAMT OF THAT STRANGE MAN, ANDREW JACKSON.

OVER HERE, THIS ABANDONED FARM WILL YIELD BUSHELS OF CORN! YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL! THAT OLD CREEK RASCAL WILL **NEVER** BE COMING BACK!

**THE NEXT MORNING...**

**BANG! BANG!**

**CLANG!**

UP AND AT 'EM, YOU LAZY INDIANS. WE'RE HEADING WEST TODAY! WAKE UP! GET UP!

COVER LOGO AREA

WE HAD BEEN WALKING FOR DAYS, WITH HARDLY ANY REST OR FOOD. I'M GLAD ME AND GRANDPA WILLIE HAD SHOES. A NICE LADY GAVE US A BLANKET TO SHARE. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE WE WERE GOING. WE HAD TO KEEP MOVING.



OUR PEOPLE SANG THE SADDEST SONG.



GRANDPA, SOMEBODY LOST THEIR QUILT.

LEAVE IT ALONE, HOTKE. SOMEONE IS AT THEIR REST.



I LEARNED LATER THAT THERE IF SOMEONE FELL ILL AND DIED, THEY WERE BURIED IN A LOG. SOMETIMES, THEY WERE ONLY LEFT BENEATH A BLANKET, LEFT TO DIE. WE WEREN'T ALLOWED TO STOP.

DAYS LATER, WE WERE ALLOWED TO REST. THERE WASN'T MUCH TO EAT AND EVERYONE SEEMED TO HAVE SOME SICKNESS. GRANDPA COULDN'T GET WARM, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS SWEATING.



THE NEXT MORNING...

*"This will enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers."  
- President Andrew Jackson, From the Indian Removal Act.*

HELELUYEN YVHIKRES HELE-HELELUYVN  
HELELUYEN YVHIKRES HELE-HELELUYVN



\*\*HALLELUJAH, THEY WILL SING HALLEH-HALLELUJAH  
HALLELUJAH, THEY WILL SING HALLEH-HALLELUJAH

MANY WEEKS LATER...

LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS AFTER GRANDPA PASSED. WE FINALLY GOT TO ANOTHER WOODEN PLACE CALLED FORT GIBSON.



THAT SMART CREEK MAN IRA ADOPTED ME AND MADE SURE I STUDIED. HIS WIFE HELPED ME LEARN HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, A FAMILY AND A COMMUNITY.



YOUR MUSCOGEE CREEK PEOPLE SETTLED ALL OVER EASTERN OKLAHOMA. TAKE CARE OF THIS QUILT AND TELL THE STORY TO YOUR CHILDREN.



IT'S ESTIMATED OVER 21,000 MUSCOGEE CREEKS LIVED IN THE AREA NOW KNOWN AS GEORGIA AND ALABAMA. TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE REMOVAL, ONLY 13,500 CREEK PEOPLE REMAINED IN OKLAHOMA. TODAY, THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION HAS THEIR OWN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY. THEIR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ARE STILL THRIVING.