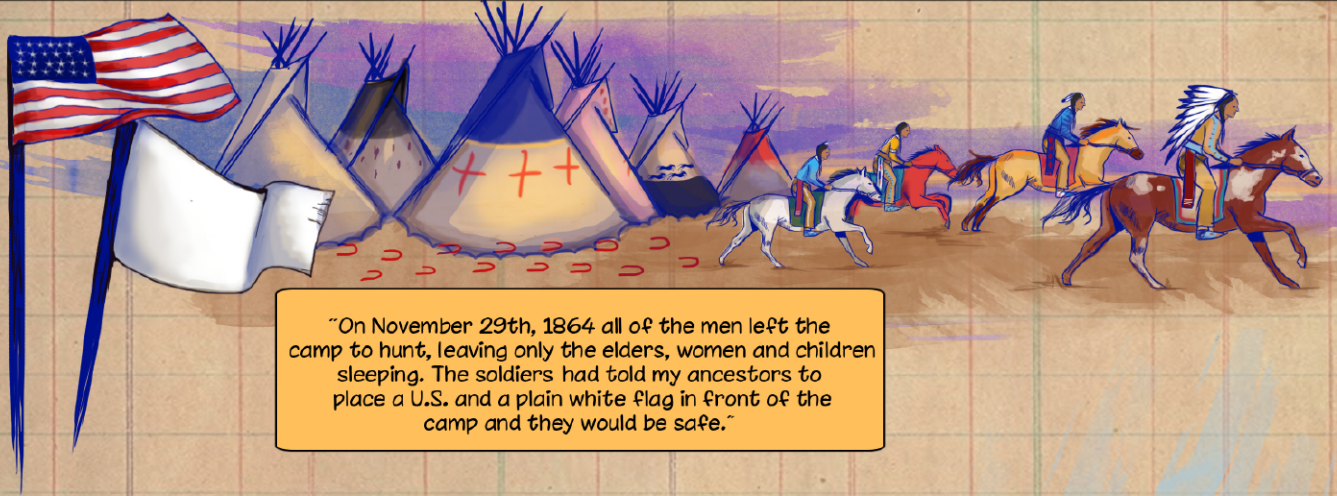


# A Tale of Sand Creek

Told by Kristina Bad Hand



"On November 29th, 1864 all of the men left the camp to hunt, leaving only the elders, women and children sleeping. The soldiers had told my ancestors to place a U.S. and a plain white flag in front of the camp and they would be safe."



"Just before sunrise, the camp was awakened by the rushing sound of 700 horses that made the ground quiver. Gun shots rang through the silence."



"Panicked, my grandmother's mother grabbed her son and made for her family's horses."




"She placed her son in the saddle bag of a horse, while her friend placed her daughter in the saddle bag of another."




"They whipped the horses so that they would run as far and fast away from the camp as possible. The soldiers slaughtered and made trophies of every elder, woman and child in the camp that morning."







"The men returned to the desecrated village and searched for survivors. They found the horses."



"They heard weak cries, and opened the saddle bags to find the infants barely alive."



"Miraculously the infants survived and grew to have families of their own. The girl was called Red Dust. The boy, John Meat, was the great grandfather of Virginia Allrunner, who passed this story to me. She has made a large impact on the Native community and has lived a full life of adventure. Traveling the world, pursuing higher education and in turn becoming a grandmother herself."



"Although we will never forget the pain and the anger that comes with hearing this history, it is important to focus on the hope and the strength of the survivors."



"They not only survived. They thrived."

"They birthed children, who grew, told their stories and accomplished inspirational feats. Their descendants are alive today creating new stories and expectations."



*Handwritten signature*



# Teacher Guide



## A Tale of Sand Creek

By Kristina Bad Hand

### Background Information

This comic is about a historical event that can be difficult to address with students. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- The Sand Creek Massacre was perpetrated on the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes—mostly elderly men, women, and children—who believed they were under the protection of the military. You can learn more about the event at the website for the [Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site](#). Be aware that some of the accounts, particularly letters written by objecting soldiers, are shockingly graphic.
- This event is only one in the history of European conquest of the Americas. In what is now the United States, American Indians lost more than 97 percent of their land over the course of the American conquest.
- There is no single American Indian culture or language. In the United States, there is vast cultural diversity among more than 500 tribes. American Indians make up just over one percent of the U.S. population, but represent half of the nation's languages and cultures. It is important for students to understand the diversity of American Indian cultures and learn to use respectful language and avoid stereotypes.

### Discussion Questions

#### MS-HS

- Winston Churchill said, “History is written by the victors.” Much of what we know about American history has been told from the point of view of people in power. Do you think it is important to include the stories of other people and groups when studying history? Why?
- This story is painful and difficult to hear. Why is it important that stories like this continue to be told?
- Kristina Bad Hand writes that Virginia Allrunner passed the story of Sand Creek to her. Many cultures around the world have an oral tradition of storytelling and teachings that preserve their history. Do you have family history that has been passed from generation to generation? In what other ways can history and culture be preserved and passed on?
- The soldiers promised the tribes safety if they displayed a white flag, which means truce or surrender, and a U.S. flag. What other symbols do you know that people display to send a message? How much trust do you put in those symbols?

## **Study and Research Topics**

- On November 29, 1864, about 675 volunteer U.S. soldiers, commanded by Colonel John M. Chivington, attacked a village of about 750 Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians along Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado Territory. Research the complicated cultural, environmental, economic, and political events leading to the Sand Creek Massacre.
- The Sand Creek Massacre has been referred to as “Seven hours that changed American history.” Research and report on the distrust that the event caused, and the long-term effects of the massacre on Colorado and the country as a whole.
- The Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes were victims of the Sand Creek Massacre. Research the history and culture of one or both of these tribes, the myriad effects that the massacre had on them, the “hope and strength of the survivors,” and how they not only survived, but thrived.
- American Indian history is one of cultural persistence, creative adaptation, renewal, and resilience in the face of great and often devastating change. Explore some American Indian tribes’ adaptations to different types of external influences—treaties, court decisions, government schools, religious missionaries—and the cultural shifts caused by these adaptations.
- American Indians played influential and powerful roles in trade and exchange economies with partners in Europe during the colonial period. How did these activities also support the development and growth of the United States? What were the reasons in the change in attitude toward and mistreatment of the native tribes?
- As U.S. citizens, American Indians have often been denied the same rights and privileges as other U.S. citizens. Tribes still struggle with land treaties, water and basic human rights that continue to threaten and change their way of life. Research and report on the movements formed to gain equitable rights and privileges.

## **Creator Notes**

The symbols used are Northern Cheyenne Mountain Design. It symbolizes the Nowahus, the Cheyenne Sacred Mountain where Sweet Medicine got the teachings from the spirits. It signifies that the people are sacred and have that power and knowledge within them at all times. The stars are common among plains peoples; we are descendant from them. The red line represents a lifeline and the continuous birth of generations.

## **Additional Resources**

- Essential Understandings from the National Museum of the American Indian: <http://nmai.si.edu/nk360/understandings.cshtml#eublock1>
- Lessons and resources from the National Museum of the American Indian’s *Native Knowledge 360* program: <http://nmai.si.edu/nk360/resources.cshtml>
- Sand Creek National Historic Site: <https://www.nps.gov/sand/index.htm>
- Primary documents related to the Sand Creek Massacre from PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/sandcrk.htm>