

The Sizzling Southwest

Forced Migrations

a Lesson on the Disappearance of Anasazi, the Navajo Long Walk, and the Mormon Trail

INTRODUCTION: The Southwest is a harsh and unforgiving environment. Plants and animals need special adaptations to survive there. The environmental pressures are just as important for human communities, too. Sometimes this has forced groups of people to move to other locations. In some cases, groups have migrated into the desert, to avoid persecution from other people. You will be looking at three case studies: the Anasazi, the Navajos, and the Mormons. Look for common themes. Why were they on the move? What did they hope to find? What sacrifices did they need to make to live in the Southwest?

PART ONE: *What's a Forced Migration?*

People emigrate from their home country to another place all the time. It is often totally voluntary. Occasionally, however, large groups of people leave the places of their birth and travel long distances to start a new life in a completely foreign location. They don't want to go, but they feel as though there is no other alternative. This is a **forced migration**.

List here some reasons why groups of people have undertaken forced migrations: _____

Three forced migrations are important in your study of the Southwest: *the Anasazi, the Navajo, and the Mormons*. Describe briefly who these people were (and still are):

Anasazi: _____

Navajo: _____

Mormons: _____

Let's take a closer look on the sad histories of these people. We'll look at life before they were forced to migrate, the crisis that made them leave their homes, the problems faced on the "road", and how they resettled successfully.

PART TWO: *Before They Took to the Road...*

It's time for a little research! Visit the following websites to find out more about the successful life of these three groups of people before their forced migration began.

ANASAZI: Go to this website: <http://www.he.net/~mine/anasazi/index.html>

From the main page, visit one or two of the archeological sites in the slide show. The Anasazi, or the "Ancient Ones", apparently had a very advanced culture around 1200 AD. List here some of the evidence that supports this theory: _____

Look at the satellite image of Chaco Canyon, an important religious center of the Anasazi. They show roads built by these people. What do they tell us about the Anasazi? _____

NAVAJO: The Diné, as they prefer to call themselves settled in the Four Corners region (where Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico meet) after the Anasazi left. Apparently, they did not force the Anasazi out, but they filled the vacuum.

Go the website <http://www.nps.gov/nava/nav.htm>

List here some information you found about the culture of the Navajo around 1850, before they came into conflict with U.S. Army. They were not pueblo people. What was the basis of their lifestyle that led to problems later? _____

MORMONS: The Latter Day Saints are better known to us as the Mormons. This religious group had its origins in Palmyra, New York, where the founder Joseph Smith lived. They came into conflict with the people of that region and eventually ended up in the town of Nauvoo, Illinois. For a short period of time, they prospered there. Visit the website www.omaha.org/trails/history.htm

What was life like for the Mormons in Nauvoo around 1840? _____

In summary, all three groups were doing fine just a few years before they were forced to leave. They didn't want to go anywhere, but conditions became untenable. They faced a crisis and they either had to escape on their own, or they were driven out. That is the focus of the next section.

PART THREE: *Crisis and Migration*

The forced migrations of the Anasazi, the Navajo, and the Mormons have some similarities and many differences (due to the time they occurred and the culture of the people).

Your teacher will assign you some readings to do for research. To help you organize the information, record notes on the comparison chart below:

TOPIC	ANASAZI 1250-1300 AD	NAVAJO 1864-1866	MORMONS 1846-1847
What was the crisis that led to the forced migration?	Two theories:		
What was the method of migration?			
What problems did they face while on the road?			
Describe the process of resettlement when the migration ended?			
The people today: how are they doing? Where do they live and how?			

List below three ways that the three migrations are similar to each other:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List below three ways that the three migrations are different to each other:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

PART FOUR: Routes of Migration

1. Use references available to you (textbooks, atlases) and draw the routes of migration taken by the Anasazi, the Navajo, and the Mormons on the outline map of the United States. Label on the maps important sites:

ANASAZI

- Chaco Canyon
- Aztec Nat. Mon.
- Mesa Verde Nat. Pk.
- Navajo Nat. Mon.
- Hopi Reservation

- Zuñi Pueblo
- Casas Grandes, Mexico

NAVAJO

- Canyon de Chelly
- Fort Defiance
- Albuquerque
- Fort Union
- Fort Sumner
- (Bosque Redondo)
- Window Rock

MORMONS

- Nauvoo, IL
- Mount Pisgah
- Winter Quarters (Florence)
- Mormon Crossing
- Chimney Rock

- Fort Laramie
- Echo Canyon
- Salt Lake City

2. The routes crossed some very difficult terrain, including deserts, mountains, canyons, rivers to ford. To help you see this better look at the satellite image of the Four Corners region. It has the boundaries of the states drawn on them. This is a *real color* image, with no computer enhancements or changes.

What do the colors indicate?

green: _____

brown: _____

red: _____

blue/black: _____

You will receive a black and white copy of these images. Trace the routes of the three migrations on the photo. Note any major obstacles that the routes cross: deserts, wide rivers, mountains, etc. List them here:

Anasazi route: _____

Navajo route: _____

Mormon route: _____

Also look at the satellite image of Salt Lake City. See if you can locate the route into the valley known as *Emigration Canyon*.

WRAP UP:

People, like all living things, must *adapt* to their environment, or they must *modify* the environment to fit their needs. The Anasazi (and their descendents, the Pueblos), the Navajo, and the Mormons have not only survived their forced migrations, but they are have succeeded in taming the desert.

Describe here how each group has modified or adapted to the desert environment:

ANASAZI (PUEBLO): _____

NAVAJO: _____

MORMONS: _____
