

Prompt: Evaluate the relative importance of the causes of conflict among Europeans and Native Americans from 1500 to 1763.

Essay:

One of the first European countries that sent explorers overseas were the Spaniards. Columbus set sail in 1492 and eventually reached regions of South America. When resources such as gold and silver were found in South American mines, that was when significant Spanish influence started to grow. The conquistadors in these regions conquered, enslaved, and converted the natives, ending their sovereign presence in South America. Later, around 1607, when Jamestown was founded, other European nations began inhabiting North America. With significant amounts of European immigrants coming onto native lands, this caused significant problems. Some causes that resulted in conflict were religious conversions, stealing of crops from the natives, but most importantly, land encroachment, which caused significant conflict.

After the Seven Years' War between the French and British on American soil, the French were forced to give up most of their prominence in Canada, as well as a few small islands. The Native Americans were impacted greatly as a result of this. The natives and French had a good relationship, as the French tried to respect them and treat them fairly. On the other hand, though, the English, who never got along with the natives, had a rude awakening when they moved onto this native land. Pontiac's rebellion resulted when the English ceased paying rent.

Pontiac's rebellion supports a major cause of conflict between English settlers and the natives as it highlights how land encroachment led to a gruesome fight between the Europeans and the natives.

One other example of how land encroachment caused conflict among Europeans and Native Americans was King Philip's War. This war resulted when Europeans forced themselves onto land that was unwelcome to them, which resulted in conflict. Metacom was able to raise a militia to put down encroaching troops, and it was successful, up until the point when Metacom died from dysentery. Even though this war was not won by the natives, it demonstrates great resistance and strength that Native Americans gathered to try and stop land encroachment done by the Europeans.

One result that changed from land encroachment was how the status of Native Americans on their homeland was significantly diminished. Europeans were able to slyly come onto this native land, claim it, and cultivate and construct upon it. This resulted in less Native American influence on American land. The status of Native Americans did change due to land encroachment during 1500 to 1700s, however, that status has remained consistent throughout history. European land encroachment paved the way

towards Indian Reservations. Land encroachment has been a significant player in shaping the American lands throughout history, as the need to build and construct on more and more land has led to Native Americans having less and less land.

Feedback:

A. Thesis/Claim: 1 The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim. The final sentence of the first paragraph argues that “forced religious conversions, stealing of crops from the natives, but most importantly, land encroachment” were all causes of conflict between Europeans and Natives.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1 The response earned 1 point for successfully providing information relevant to the prompt that contextualizes the reasons for Spanish involvement in the New World. Specifically, the description of Columbus’s expeditions leading to the discovery of precious metals that drove further colonization efforts clearly situates the conflict between Natives and Europeans in a broader historical context. The response also includes contextual information on the formation of the Jamestown colony as a way of introducing British colonization efforts in North America.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2 The response earned 2 points for using evidence. The response earned the first point for providing specific examples of evidence relevant to the prompt such as the French and Indian War, and Pontiac’s War. The response earned the second point for supporting an argument using relevant pieces of evidence. The response identifies and explains the French and Indian War as a source of change leading to the French abandoning control of territory. This change then brought Native nations into closer contact with the British, which the response argues caused conflicts such as Pontiac’s War, used here as an example of English land encroachment driving violence.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1 The response earned 1 point for historical causation to structure an argument addressing the prompt, namely that land encroachment was the most significant cause of conflict between Europeans and Natives. In the first page, the response asserts that the French and Indian War led to violent conflict between Native Americans and British colonists. The second page elaborates that Native Americans attempted to resist land encroachment through actions such as Metacom’s War. The response did not earn the point for complex understanding. The final sentences are a clear attempt to explain a connection across time periods, arguing that “European land encroachment paved the way toward Indian Reservations.” However, the response does not offer evidence to support this assertion

and insufficiently explains how European encroachment on Native American land contributed to the later forced removal of Native peoples to reservations.

Total Score: 5