

Tecumseh Reading Comprehension

Tecumseh was born into a Shawnee Indian village sometime around 1768 in Ohio. His name is said to mean “A panther crouching for his prey” and is derived from his family clan. Tecumseh was exposed to war from a very early age. In 1774, Pukeshinwah, his father, was killed in Lord Dunmore’s War (a war between Indians and settlers in Ohio). In the Revolutionary War, many Shawnee villages were raided and plundered by American frontiersmen. After the death of his father, Tecumseh accompanied his brother, a Shawnee war leader, to battles in Ohio and Kentucky against white settlers. Tecumseh also fought among the Cherokee against white settlers in Georgia.

Tecumseh settled in Ohio with his younger brother Tenskwatawa (“The Prophet”). Together, the brothers led a resistance against white settlers trying to clear them from the land. The Shawnee chief, Black Hoof, however, favored establishing a peaceful relationship with the settlers and the U.S. Government. Because of this disagreement, Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa moved west and founded the village of Prophetstown near the confluence of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers. Soon, Native Americans throughout the country came to Prophetstown. After various Native Indian leaders sold over 2.5 million acres of land to the U.S. Government in the Treaty of Fort Wayne, Prophetstown became a center of resistance. Tecumseh led the resistance with his powerful speeches and leadership qualities. He traveled to Native American groups throughout the land and called for the union of all. He urged individuals to abandon chiefs if they accommodated the White settlers, and join the resistance at Prophetstown. Tecumseh also warned prospective settlers not to settle on Indian land, and that the Treaty of Fort Wayne was illegitimate.

During one of Tecumseh’s recruiting trips to southern lands, American General William Henry Harrison and about 1,000 soldiers marched from Vincennes, Indiana, to Prophetstown for the purposes of intimidating the Indians. That night, Tenskwatawa sent his warriors to attack the encampment of American soldiers. The Battle of Tippecanoe ensued, and American forces held their ground and sent the warriors into a full-scale retreat. Prophetstown was subsequently burned to the ground. As a result of the burning of Prophetstown, and because the United States and Great Britain had begun the War of 1812, Tecumseh and his followers joined forces with the British against their common enemy – The Americans.

Tecumseh and his warriors participated in many major battles of the War of 1812, and helped General Isaac Brock take the American stronghold at Detroit. In October of 1813, however, Tecumseh was killed in the Battle of Thames in present day Ontario, Canada. After his death, the Indian resistance quickly fell apart. Today, several towns in the United States and Canada are named after him.

1. **“Tecumseh” means...**
 - a. the Prophet
 - b. a Tiger Waiting for his Prey
 - c. the Great Spirit
 - d. a Panther Crouching for his Prey

2. Tecumseh and his brother joined forces to...

- a. raid and plunder American frontiersmen.
- b. lead a resistance against white settlers trying to clear them from the land.
- c. negotiate peace with the US Government.
- d. determine if lands should be sold to settlers.

3. Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa moved west and founded the village of:

- a. Prophetstown in Indiana
- b. Pukeshinwah, named for their late father
- c. Prophetstown near the confluence of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers.
- d. Fort Wayne

4. What question is answered in the second paragraph?

- a. Why did Black Hoof favor establishing peace with the US Government?
- b. Was resistance the only option for the Native Americans?
- c. When did General William Henry Harrison and his 1,000 soldiers march from Vincennes, Indiana to Prophetstown?
- d. Did Tecumseh support the Treaty of Fort Wayne?

5. Review the sentence. Which of the choices below could replace the underlined word?

Tecumseh also warned prospective settlers not to settle on Indian land, and that the Treaty of Fort Wayne was illegitimate.

- a. Legal
- b. Invalid
- c. Timely
- d. Fair

6. What is NOT true about Tecumseh?

- a. His father was killed in a battle over an Ohio settlement.
- b. He trusted the US Government.
- c. He organized a union of Native Americans.
- d. He sought an alliance with the British army.

7. Why are several towns in the United States and Canada named after Tecumseh?

- a. He was part of the Shawnee resistance in the Revolutionary War.
- b. His bravery and courage were inspirational
- c. Because of the burning of Prophetstown
- d. Because after he died, Indian resistance fell apart