Lesson Title: Historical Perspective and the Sand Creek Massacre
Unit # 2 (11th Grade US History - Birth of Modern America)
Lesson # 1 of 1

Lesson Overview:

Students will investigate historical sources pertaining to the Sand Creek Massacre in Eastern Colorado in an effort to assess A) what happened and B) the importance of acknowledging perspective when performing historical inquiry.

Inquiry Questions:

Why is it important to acknowledge perspective when investigating historical events?
What does it mean that "History is written by the victors"?
What is lost when citizens do not ask questions about their past?

Colorado Academic Standards:

SS.HS.1.1: 1. Apply the process of inquiry to examine and analyze how historical knowledge is viewed, constructed, and interpreted.
SS.HS.1.3: 2. Analyze historical time periods and patterns of continuity and change, through multiple perspectives, within and among cultures and societies.

Materials:

- Google Slides to Facilitate teaching of lesson:
  - Historical Perspective and the Sand Creek Massacre Slides
- Student Handout:
  - Sand Creek Massacre - Student Handout
- Cheyenne and Arapaho Oral History Sources:
  - Sand Creek Massacre - Sources

Background Knowledge/Contextual Paragraph for Teachers:

Teachers should introduce this lesson within a unit that assesses the Westward expansion of the United States. At FFCHS we would teach this in the second unit of American History called "Birth of Modern America" which examines industrialization as well as westward expansion. This is a standalone lesson that could be taught in a day without any special prep work. This could also be taught in conjunction with a larger analysis of the extreme challenges that faced indigenous populations in present day America as the United States expanded westward. We do a lesson that investigates the Carlisle Indian School which could pair well with this as the aftermath of events like the Sand Creek Massacre once the frontier was "closed".

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Building Background Knowledge for the Student:

Background knowledge will be vital for successful student outcomes in this lesson. Students should have context relating to:

- Westward expansion of the United states in the 19th century
- Early interactions with indigenous peoples of the Americas and settlers from the United States
- Push/Pull factors that dictated the movement of people in Western States like Colorado
- Attempts at coexistence and the tumultuous history behind such attempts (Treaty of Fort Laramie is one good example)

Instructional Procedures and Strategies:

This lesson can be taught in groups, partners, or individually as your class dictates.

I. Warmup:
   A. **Why is it important to study different perspectives when examining past events in US History?** The warmup question should be addressed as a group. Students should be prompted to turn and talk to brainstorm a response that can then be discussed with the class.

II. PART I - American Source Analysis:
   A. Using the warm up as a bridge to get students thinking about perspective, display the next slide on the screen titled “The Battle of Sand Creek”. Prompt students to read the description of what happened at Sand Creek according to an American perspective. Allow 2 minutes for students with different reading abilities.
   B. Ask if any student needs more time to read the source and assess with a thumbs up/down if they are ready to move to the questions. Leave the source on the screen so all students can still reference the text but direct them to answer the three questions in their “Part I” box on the student worksheet. This can be done individually, in partners, or at table groups. Instruct students to quote pieces of the article in their answers. Allow for 3-5 minutes to complete the questions based on the need of the group. Walk around to ensure all students have a, b, and c answered then switch your slide to the questions slide. You should then work through a, b, and c together as a class wherein you can write quality student answers on the board for all students to reinforce answers for any who may be confused.
      1. Students should be able to identify the clear anti-Indigenous bias that is apparent in the language throughout the article that indicates a clear point of view. Students should be able to assess a possible audience as being an American settler who is coming to the region, a rancher who lives nearby, or an American soldier reading the article. Students should be able to identify the word “Battle” as clearly being chosen by the article’s author. The “Why?” is the much more important part as students need to identify that it is clearly defined as a conflict between

two armed groups that had set up defenses or launched assaults. The article indicates that both sides were heavily armed.

III. Part II: Introductory Reading
   A. Direct students to read the short excerpt below the Part II questions on the student handout. This can be read aloud (Popcorn read, etc.) or individually. After finishing the reading, prompt students to again think about perspective by directly addressing the last part about what perspective they are going to be reading (only Cheyenne and Arapaho). Ask students why they think the Museum chose to do that in their exhibit. Ask students how they think their understanding of the event may change when they get an additional perspective.

IV. Part III: Source Analysis
   A. For Part III you will need to have either posted a digital copy of the Sources on a digital platform that all students can access (in our case schoology) or have printed paper copies.
   B. Direct students to turn to the back side of their handout. Show them the sourcing instructions on the slides.
      1. Give students around 15-20 minutes based on the abilities and efficiency of the group. This also can be assigned individually, in partners, or in groups to discuss what each source is saying.
      2. Be sure that students are adding quality notes to their handout and not rushing through the sourcing.
      3. Pre-teaching words like “dehumanization” will be crucial here if that word is new to your students.
   C. At the end of the sourcing period you should bring the students together to review at least three of the six sources together - gathering responses from the students to assess their level of understanding and give feedback for others to hear. Allow some time for discussion on findings here. You could either assign different groups to respond for each source or choose students/take volunteers.

V. Analysis Questions (End of Lesson)
   A. After source discussions, show the comparison question to students and instruct them to respond at the bottom of their sheet. “What are two similarities and/or differences you notice between the American source and the Cheyenne/Arapaho sources?”. These are individual assessments on student understanding so should be completed individually. You can either review answers on this or move to the exit ticket depending on desired timing.
   B. Exit Ticket: In a similar style to the above, prompt students to Based on the different perspectives you read today: What word best describes the events at Sand Creek? **Battle or Massacre? Why?** Their response to this question will be your best check for understanding for our inquiry questions.

Formative Assessment Options:

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- Assessing student responses to the warmup
- Assessing student answers to the Part I sourcing question
- Checking in with students as they work on sources, keeping in mind which ones may be more difficult and asking about those sources specifically when visiting with working students.
- Assessing student responses to the analysis questions.

Resources:
History Colorado - Sand Creek Massacre Exhibit:
https://www.historycolorado.org/story/2022/12/09/sand-creek-massacre-syllabus

Texts for Independent Reading or for Class Read Aloud to Support the Content	
Informational/Nonfiction	**Fiction**
Marjane Ambler, et. al, *We, the Northern Cheyenne People: Our Land, Our History, Our Culture* (2008)	N/A - Not as appropriate in this case when we can study direct testimony from indigenous sources.
Jerome A. Greene and Douglas A. Scott, *Finding Sand Creek: History, Archaeology, and the 1864 Massacre Site* (2004)	
History Colorado, *The Sand Creek Massacre: The Betrayal that Changed Cheyenne and Arapaho People Forever* (2022)	
Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (1974)	

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Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek* (2015)	