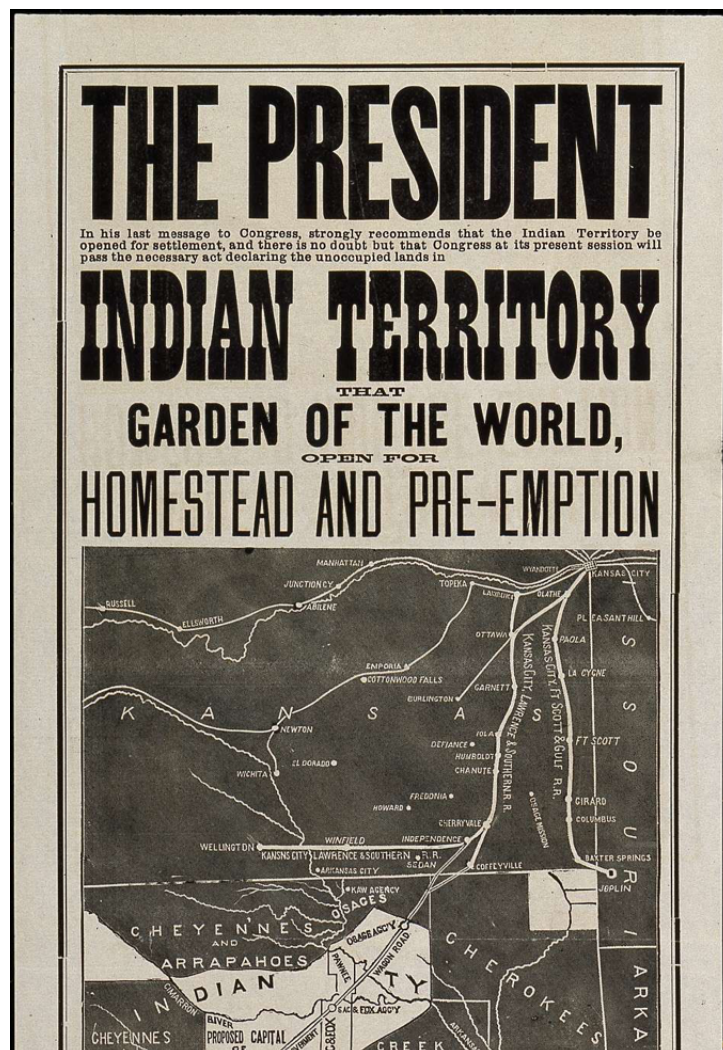


# DOCS*Teach*

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## Poster Advertising 'Indian Territory That Garden of the World, Open for Homestead and Pre-Emption'

ca. 1889



The Homestead Act passed on May 20, 1862. It greatly accelerated settlement of the western United States, providing 160 acres of free land to qualified citizens, very often at the expense of displaced American Indians.

Beginning in the 1800s, the Federal government resettled several American Indian tribes into Indian Territory. But then in the late



1800s, Congress adopted a policy of giving individual farms to American Indians on reservations and opening the remaining Indian lands to settlers. The most famous opening was the "land rush" in Oklahoma Territory.

This poster advertises railroad travel for

"immigrants to the Indian

Territory." It presumes that land in current-day Oklahoma would soon be open to settlement. It says that, in his last message to Congress (President Grover Cleveland's annual message to Congress on December 3, 1888), the President strongly recommended "that the Indian Territory be opened for settlement, and there is no doubt but that Congress...will pass the necessary act declaring the unoccupied lands in Indian Territory...open for homestead and pre-emption." The Indian Appropriations Act of 1889 officially opened "unassigned lands" in Oklahoma Territory to white settlers under the guidelines of the Homestead Act.

The advertisement includes a "map of Indian Territory showing the Lands that will be subject to Homestead Entry and How to Reach Them...of which there will be over 10,000,000 Acres" and says "The rush will be great, and early comers will have every advantage."

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This primary source comes from the Records of U.S. Army Continental Commands.

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## Activities that use this document

### Evaluating Perspectives on Westward Expansion

Created by the National Archives Education Team

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### The Impact of Westward Expansion on Native American Communities

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