**European Expansion and Native Americans**

European settlement in the Americas had a negative impact on native populations across the country. Natives were exposed to many things that they had never encountered before such as new weapons (guns), diseases such as small pox and pneumonia, and forced removal from their homelands to allow the White settlements to grow.

When the Europeans first came to the New World, they had two main effects.  First, they brought germs that spread through Indian populations, killing large numbers of them.  The germs even killed Indians who had never seen whites because they passed from Indians who had been in contact with whites to others.  Second, they brought new technologies and they brought horses.  These things changed the Native American ways of life tremendously.  For example, we think of the Plains Indians as horse people, but they of course had no horses until Europeans came to the Americas. Horses allowed Natives to travel and communicate between one another in faster ways than they had ever experienced before.

There were many positives and negatives of the European arrival in America. Three positive things they were introduced to were doctors, medicine, and education. This is important because doctors had treatments for illnesses that Native herbal remedies could not cure. Two negative things Natives were introduced to were guns and alcohol. These factors changed the way their societies functioned dramatically. It either got rid of the old Native way of life or forced Natives to assimilate or become more like Europeans, adapting to their lifestyle and society. Either way, life as Native Americans knew it, was gone.

As European settlement expanded, they were taking land that belonged to the Natives. They pushed the Indians farther and farther west.  Some fought wars to try to prevent this and were killed as Indian weapons such as spears was not as powerful as the guns Europeans were using.  Those who were not killed were eventually put on reservations, typically on land the Americans did not want. In these ways, European settlement had a tremendous, and often devastating, effect on Native Americans.