



Chief Joseph, leader of the Nec Perce Wal-lam-wat-kin band of the Chute-pa-lu (1840?-1904) was known to his people as "Thunder Traveling to the Loftier Mountain Heights." He led his people in an attempt to resist the takeover of their lands in the Oregon Territory by white settlers. In 1877, the Nez Perce were ordered to move to a reservation in Idaho. Chief Joseph agreed at first. But after members of his tribe killed a group of settlers, he tried to flee to Canada with his followers, traveling over 1500 miles through Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Along the way they fought several battles with the pursuing U.S. Army. Chief Joseph spoke these words when they finally surrendered on October 5th, 1877.

I WILL FIGHT NO MORE **Forever** 1877

I am tired of fighting.
Our chiefs are killed.
Looking Glass is dead.
Toohulhulsote is dead.
The old men are all dead.
It is the young men who say no and yes.
He who led the young men is dead.
It is cold and we have no blankets.
The little children are freezing to death.
My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food.
No one know where they are--perhaps they are freezing to death.
I want to have time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find.
Maybe I shall find them among the dead.
Hear me, my chiefs, I am tired.
My heart is sad and sick.
From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.

BROKEN PROMISES

From 1879, by Chief Joseph, as an attempt to achieve justice for his people by political means on a visit to Washington D.C.

At last I was granted permission to come to Washington... I am glad I came. I have shaken hands with a good many friends, but there are some things I want to know which no one seems able to explain... I cannot understand why so many chiefs are allowed to talk so many different ways, and promise so many different things. I have seen the Great Father Chief [President Rutherford B. Hayes]; the Next Great Chief [Secretary of the Interior]; the Commissioner Chief; the Law Chief; and many other law chiefs [Congressmen] and they all say they are my friends, and that I shall have justice, but while all their mouths talk right I do not understand why nothing is done for my people. I have heard talk and talk but nothing is done. Good words do not last long unless they amount to something. Words do not pay for my dead people. They do not pay for my country now overrun by white men. They do not protect my father's grave. They do not pay for my horses and cattle. Good words do not give me back my children... It makes my heart sick when I remember all the good words and all the broken promises... All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it... When I think of our condition, my heart is heavy.

Chief Joseph Question Set

*On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions after having carefully read **I Will Fight No More Forever**, Chief Joseph's Surrender Speech and **Broken Promises**, his speech to President Rutherford B. Hayes and our country's leaders, in an attempt to obtain justice for his people, the Nez Perce. Be sure to rephrase the question in your answer. Be sure to address all aspects of each question.*

I Will Fight No More Forever

1. According to Chief Joseph, what has happened to the people's leaders, the chiefs, and the old man?
2. What is dangerous about having the young men in charge?
3. What does Chief Joseph need time to do?
4. What makes Chief Joseph's speech touching and memorable?
5. Why does Chief Joseph mention the sun?
6. What was Chief Joseph's purpose in speaking?
7. What would you find it hardest to give up if you were forced to leave your family? Why?
8. At what point should a leader abandon a goal or a plan for the sake of the people he/she represents?
9. How is this similar to other Native American works that were also part of the oral tradition of the N.A. people?
10. What lines or phrases most likely helped people remember and retell this speech?

Broken Promises

1. What is the purpose of *Broken Promises*?
2. What is the tone of this piece?
3. How is the tone similar to the tone of *I Will Fight No More Forever*? Use multiple examples from each to support your answer.
4. List what words do *not* do according to Chief Joseph.
5. What is his purpose in addressing the leaders of the America?