

CHIEF VICTORIO

Victorio was born around 1825 in what is now New Mexico. He belonged to the Tchiendeh Apache Native Americans, and by 1853 he was their warrior chief. He came into conflict with both the Mexican and United States armies as settlers moved into his people's ancestral lands.

In the 1870s, the United States Army tried to move Victorio and his people – the Warm Spring band of the Tchiendeh – onto reservations. But Victorio wanted to live where his ancestors had done for centuries, so he resisted as best he could.

But in 1877, Victorio and his followers were confined to the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona Territory. Life on the reservation was hard. The Native Americans there were encouraged to sustain themselves by farming, but the desert landscape made this almost impossible. So the U.S. Army had to keep sending in supplies to stop the people there starving. But the supply deliveries were sometimes unreliable, and disease was common on the reservation. After two years, Victorio left the reservation, taking loyal followers with him.

Both the United States and the Mexican armies tried to re-capture Chief Victorio. But Victorio knew the wild landscape well, and he avoided capture for more than a year. This period of time is known as Victorio's War. Victorio led many raids and attacks on settlements, and the U.S. soldiers fought back. One important battle was fought in the Hembrillo Basin in New Mexico. Here lay a rocky outcrop that Victorio often used as a hideout. It was called Victorio's Peak in honor of the chief.

In October 1880, Victorio and his men were traveling along the Rio Grande river in Mexico. When they reached the mountains of Chihuahua, Mexican soldiers ambushed the party, killing Chief Victorio.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'conflict'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'conflict' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'conflict'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'conflict'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'conflict' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: hard	difficult

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

In 1880, Mexican soldiers ambushed and killed Victorio and his men as they traveled along the Rio Grande.

This led to Victorio's War, in which Victorio escaped capture and fought against American and Mexican troops.

Chief Victorio was born around 1825 in what is now New Mexico.

Life on the reservation was hard, so Victorio and his people left in the end.

In the 1870s, the U.S Army tried to move Victorio and his people onto reservations, including the San Carlos Reservation.

Victorio became warrior chief of his Native American people, the Tchihendeh.

One important battle was fought near Victorio's Peak in New Mexico.

Get to the facts

1 Where was Chief Victorio born?

2 Where did Victorio want to live?

3 When was Victorio moved to the San Carlos Reservation?

4 Which river was Victorio traveling along in 1880?

5 Who killed Victorio?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Ambush

Imagine you are one of Victorio's followers during Victorio's War. One day you are traveling along a Creek. You watch the rocky banks for enemies. Suddenly, you see movement behind a boulder... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

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- b From that sentence, suggest what 'conflict' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'conflict'.
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For example:

Key word – hard Synonym – difficult

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