

Ambassador of the Paiute

By any reckoning in any age, Sarah Winnemucca, known as Thoc-me-tony, or "Shell Flower," in her native language, was an astonishing and courageous figure. She lived through government forced migrations and wars that left most of her people dead or imprisoned. As one of only two Paiutes who spoke English, she became an articulate interpreter, guide, diplomat, and educator. She changed public opinion, influenced legislation, and founded schools. (1) She also wrote a bestselling book—a *coup* that brought great attention to her people's cause. Her achievements are especially impressive considering she lived in an era when both women and Native Americans faced much discrimination.



Sarah was born about 1844, in an area that is now known as Nevada. She was the daughter of Chief Winnemucca II, of the Paiute tribe. At that time, the peaceful Paiute nation was still free, though they had some contact with the endless tide of white soldiers and civilians flooding the West. (2) The Paiute, who had once believed their way of life was *indestructible*, began to feel threatened by the newcomers. Sarah's grandfather, a famous guide, predicted, "Someday all Paiutes will live as the whites do."

In 1860, violent outbreaks escalated into the Paiute War. (3) The U.S. military instituted *martial* law over the Paiute people. (4) They installed the first of the nearly *omnipotent* white overseers, called Indian agents. Many of these agents were horribly cruel and corrupt.

Sarah, only seventeen, was horrified by the war. She tried to stop the bloodshed by intervening with both the Paiute and the U.S. military. Tragically, she lost several family members before the violence ended.

(5) Sarah continued to work for a *stable* peace. (6) When her people were put on reservations far from their Nevada home, the *robust* young woman traveled to Washington, D.C., and other cities, making speeches to gain the Paiutes' release. (7) Her intelligent arguments gained her the *staunch* support of influential people. With their help, Sarah wrote an autobiography called *Life Among the Paiutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*. The book documented the wrongs that government agents and others had inflicted upon her people. Newspapers began speaking out about the injustices that Sarah described. Her efforts led to many promises from the U.S. government for better treatment of the Paiutes, but few of these promises were kept.

(8) Despite their best efforts, the Paiute and other Native American nations could not *withstand* the white conquest. (9) They were often *blockaded* into ever-smaller and more barren pieces of land, where they faced starvation, disease, and the destruction of their way of life. (10) Sarah became convinced that only through education could her people overcome their *vulnerability* to white dominance, so she set up schools for Native Americans.

Eventually, the years of struggle took their toll, and Sarah became ill. She died of tuberculosis in 1892. Sarah Winnemucca's memory is honored in stories and monuments throughout Nevada.

Each sentence below refers to a numbered sentence in the passage. Write the letter of the choice that gives the sentence a meaning that is closest to the original sentence.

- _____ 1. She also wrote a bestselling book—a _____ that brought great attention to her people's cause.
 a. breaking barrier b. simple task c. tricky attack d. successful action
- _____ 2. The Paiute, who had once believed their way of life was _____, began to feel threatened by the newcomers.
 a. unlimited in power b. closed off c. impossible to destroy d. healthy and strong
- _____ 3. The U.S. military instituted _____ law.
 a. war-related b. cruel and unusual c. unlimited d. permanent

- _____ 4. They installed the first of the nearly _____ white overseers, called Indian agents.
a. intelligent b. impossible-to-harm c. loyal d. all-powerful
- _____ 5. Sarah continued to work for a _____ peace.
a. just b. loyal c. permanent d. warlike
- _____ 6. The _____ young woman traveled to Washington, D.C., and other cities, making speeches to gain the Paiutes' release.
a. brilliant b. strong c. loyal d. desperate
- _____ 7. Her intelligent arguments gained her the _____ support of influential people.
a. firm b. angry c. forceful d. resistant
- _____ 8. Despite their best efforts, the Paiute and other Native American nations could not _____ the white conquest.
a. close off b. attack c. destroy d. resist
- _____ 9. They were often _____ into ever-smaller and more barren pieces of land.
a. persuaded b. easily changed c. closed off d. sent
- _____ 10. Sarah became convinced that only through education could her people overcome their _____ to white dominance.
a. barriers b. threats c. fear d. weakness

Indicate whether the statements below are TRUE or FALSE according to the passage.

- _____ 1. Sarah Winnemucca was the daughter of a Paiute chief.
- _____ 2. Although healthy at first, she became sickly as she aged.
- _____ 3. Several of her family members died of tuberculosis.

WRITE THE DERIVATIVE

Complete the sentence by writing the correct form of the word shown in parentheses. You may not need to change the form that is given.

- _____ 1. Getting an interview with the famous sports star was a major _____ for the young reporter. (*coup*)
- _____ 2. In the last storm, the old barn _____ the hurricane's winds. (*withstand*)
- _____ 3. The falcon could sense that the rabbit was _____. (*vulnerability*)
- _____ 4. The police are _____ the avenue so that the ambassadors can leave safely. (*blockade*)
- _____ 5. The ad said the toy was _____, but mine broke the first day I had it. (*indestructibility*)
- _____ 6. Lynn's family _____ supported her decision to go to law school. (*staunch*)
- _____ 7. _____ is an essential quality in a furniture mover. (*robust*)
- _____ 8. Before the painter climbed the ladder, he checked its _____. (*stable*)
- _____ 9. The candidate in favor of _____ law lost the election by a landslide. (*martial*)
- _____ 10. In Greek mythology, Zeus's _____ gave him full power over all other gods and goddesses. (*omnipotent*)