

### Chief Joseph Portrait



### About this surrender speech

Chief Joseph (Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt), a Nez Perce Native American, **led his people to resist the takeover of his lands by white settlers**, finally surrendering in 1877.

This speech was given in 1879 to President **Rutherford B. Hayes** to plead his people's case. Despite the respect accorded to him as leader, he was **unsuccessful**.

*He and his people were eventually resettled in Colville Indian Reservation many miles from their home.*

GRAMPS

**Genre:** (Surrender) Speech - published publically as a reading speech, *formally addressing government*. Plea/statement/persuasion speech.

**Register:** formal

**Audience:** Government/head army, who they were fighting against. Indirectly literate audiences.

**Mode:** Speech (can be written and was published).

**Purpose:** To address horrors that Chief Joseph's people experienced and to ask them to stop as they will no longer fight them.

Also to inform the government and others of their wrongdoings to the tribe and the injustices they have suffered.

### Discourse

Discourse: (1) written or spoken communicate or debate. (2) speak or write authoritatively about a topic.

Uses the word "Indians" to **describe Native Americans - now outdated**. Comes from the mistaken belief of European explorers that they had sailed round the world and found India.

Chief Joseph had to appeal to white settlers, **regardless of whether it was disrespectful**, as they had more power/control in this situation.

Shows **inequality and the unfair political power of the white man**.

### Grammar

Effective close of the last statement - **simple sentence in past tense**.

This puts **emphasis on Chief Joseph's points**. It is also very final, as if he's offering a last chance, or expressing disappointment.

### Lexis & Semantics

Chief Joseph's **translator has left some conceptual lexical terms**, such as "Great Father Chief" for President.

This connotes that Chief Joseph is **trying to show how alike they are and how they deserve equality**.

### Lexis & Semantics (cont)

He uses the word "friend" to describe those he is speaking to- this **further suggests he wants to be seen as equals**- it is possible it's meant to **remind the listeners that they could've worked together**, if the Native Americans had been treated properly.

### Phonology

Phonology: (1) the system of contrastive relationships among the speech sounds that constitute the fundamental components of a language. (2) the branch of linguistics that deals with systems of sounds (including or excluding phonetics) within a language or between different languages.

Sounds in the Native American names ("Tu-hul-hil-sote", "Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt") are **different to Western name styles**, this is traditional for Western listeners/readers to hear. Including them makes the speech more personal and emotive, and works to Chief Joseph's advantage,

### Context

**Dichotomy** between races and cultures - "- white man".

**Spiritual quality** to Chief Joseph's speech. Nez Perce tribe.



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### Analysis - general points

**Pre-modifying adjective:** "little children" - to make them sound more *vulnerable*.

**Antistrophe:** "freezing to death" - repetition end of sentence adds *emphasis*.

**Sibilance:** "sick and sad" - *musical quality, terms stand out to the reader by doing this*.

**Modal verb:** "Maybe I shall find them among the dead" - uncertainty, vulnerability.

**Repetition:** "heart" - culturally specific. "- cannot understand" - reinforces issue.

**Proper noun:** "Yellow Bull" - *he still uses his own language*.

**Anaphora:** "Good words", "good words" - *sympathy, emphasis*.

### Pragmatics & Connotations

**Poverty/struggle:** "no blankets"

**Marginalisation:** "at last I was granted permission"

**Broken promises:** "cannot understand", "- broke his word", "promise"

**Listing:** "Great Father Chief; the next Great Chief; the Commissioner Chief; the Law Chief; and many other law chiefs" - *many people but no fixes*.

**Emotive language:** "justice"

**Possessive:** "my dead people", "my country" - still his people's country, even with white settlers.

**Declarative sentence (short):** "I am tired of talk that comes to nothing" - finality, disappointment - evokes sympathy.

### Pragmatics & Connotations (cont)

**Juxtaposition:** "good words and all the broken promises" - sympathy, emphasising *highlights lies and misleading's of the government - mistrust*.

**Rhetorical question:** "If you tie a horse to a stake, do you expect he will grow fat?" *before metaphor in order to add emphasis*.

**Allegorical:** "if you pen an Indian up on a small spot of earth and compel him to stay there, he will not be contented nor will he grow and prosper." - *metaphor to represent his people*.

**Requesting, not demanding:** "I only ask", "let me", "I would like" - power dynamics.

**Anecdotal:** "three have died since I left my camp to come to Washington" - evokes sympathy, *highlights reality of the situation*.

**Collocation + alliteration:** "heart is heavy" - "heart" is cultural.

**Defeatist:** "I know that my race must change" - he now needs to work with the white people because he has no power.

**Trying to bargain:** "let me be a free man", "- submit to the penalty" - he will obey if they allow him freedom- *still under control by the white people in reality*.

**Religion:** "white men treats the Indian as they treat each other" - reference to Christian Bible teachings, that you should treat your neighbour kindly. Treat each other how you want to be treated.



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