

Whose Buffalo?
Graphic Organizer Answer Key

**Below are possible arguments for each side of the
“Whose Buffalo?” debate.**

Plains Indians

Commercial Hunters

1. They claimed prior possession of the buffalo, as they were on the Great Plains before the commercial buffalo hunters.

1. They felt that the buffalo were not legally owned by anyone, and could be hunted freely.

2. The buffalo was sacred to them.

2. They felt the Indians should stay on their reservations, and not attack them as they hunted.

3. They used the entire buffalo and did not waste any part of it. They also traded buffalo hides in Mexico for items they needed.

3. After the Civil War, the hunters needed to make money and could sell buffalo hides and tongues.

4. The Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 had promised to let them hunt buffalo south of the Arkansas River as long as the buffalo ranged there.

4. Buffalo hides made into machinery belts were helping produce useable goods during the Industrial Revolution

5. Destruction of the buffalo would destroy their entire nomadic way of life.

5. The selling of buffalo hides to foreign markets (especially England and Germany) promoted international trade.