**Chief Seattle’s Letter**

**To President Franklin Pierce in 1855**

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|  | Dear Mr. President: |
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| *1* |  So the great white chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? We do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How then can you buy them from us dear sir? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. |
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| *2* |  The air is precious to the red man for all things share the same breath—the beast, the trees, the man. The white man does not seem to notice the air that he breathes; but perhaps because I am savage, I do not understand. But one thing we do know which one day the white man may discover, our God is the same God. When the last red man has vanished from the earth and the memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, these shores and forest will still hold the spirits of my people, for they love this earth as the newborn loves its mother’s heartbeat. |
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| *3* |  If we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it, care for it as we have cared for it, and with all your strength treat the beast of this land as your brothers, for if all the beasts are gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. |
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| *4* |  All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of the earth. The earth is precious to Him, and to harm the earth is to heap great contempt upon its creator. Ah, but the whites too shall pass; perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses are tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of men, where is the thicket? It is gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. |
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|  | Sincerely, |
|  |  |
|  | Chief Seattle |

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