

Effects of European Explorations in Latin America

History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools

Grade 7 Content Standards

7.11 Students analyze the political and economic change in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (the Age of Exploration, the Enlightenment, and the Age of Reason)

1. Know the great voyages of discovery, the locations of the routes, and the influence of cartography in the development of a new European worldview.
2. Discuss the exchanges of plants, animals, technology, culture, and ideas among Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas...and the major economic and social effects on each continent.

7.7 Students compare and contrast the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the Meso-American and Andean civilizations.

3. Explain how and where each empire arose and how the Spanish defeated the Aztec and Incan empires.

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills

Research, Evidence, and Point of View

1. Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.

Historical Interpretation

2. Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long- and short-term causal relations.

Unit Overview

Meeting of Content Standards

Prior to the Effects of Exploration unit, students already understand European exploration (focused on Spain and Portugal) to the Americas during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They learned various reasons for Europe's interest in the Americas as well as famous expeditions, including Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan. Students also hold knowledge about the Maya, Aztec, and Inca empires. Their study of these civilizations gives them background knowledge about their governing systems, religions, and numerous achievements. This understanding of exploration and existing American civilizations offers a transition to the current unit, an investigation into the deeper repercussions of exploration. The unit highlights disease and decimation of native populations, discrimination, and invention of race. At its conclusion, students incorporate current issues with their knowledge about the positive and negative short and long-term effects of exploration.

Meeting of Analysis Skills

The Effects of Exploration unit draws upon many academic skills. Student engagement with multiple source types, including primary accounts of Christopher Columbus and Bartolome de las Casas, paintings, and current articles, provides an opportunity to work as historians. In addition, students create meaningful resources themselves, primarily through the Trial of Cortes activity. Their task guides them through difficult questions and also forces them to ask questions as well. Although students understand the basic discrimination against natives, this unit delves further into this topic and enables them to connect the past to the present. Comprehension of Aztec and Inca defeat are impossible without consideration of the effects of exploration. Similarly, appreciation for indigenous cultures and peoples is difficult to foster if their histories remain silent. The content and skills demanded from students in this unit make it both rigorous and personally significant.

Objectives and Major Concepts

Unit Question

What are the short and long term effects of European exploration to the Americas?

Objectives

1. Students will understand the positive and negative interactions between Europeans and natives.
2. Students will understand and assess the various factors contributing to the collapse of the Aztec Empire.
3. Students will understand the mixing of Europeans with indigenous Americans and the lasting effects of

colonization.

Major Concepts

The Effects of Exploration unit seeks to have students think critically about world history by connecting to their prior knowledge. Students must rethink traditional notions of Christopher Columbus as the “discoverer” of the Americas and balance it against the atrocities inflicted upon natives. As they weigh this new information, they justify their answer to the focus question, what are the short and long term effects of European exploration to the Americas? However, though not written in this unit, students should also understand the positive results of exploration and settlement, including trade, improved cartography, and other scientific achievements.

Resources

Teacher Resources

Across the Centuries textbook

Disease, Decimation, and Slavery

http://www.pbs.org/conquistadors/cortes/cortes_flat.html

Bartolome de las Casas:

Loewen, James W. *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.

Las Casas' Journal: <http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/CCREAD/lascasas.htm>

Columbus' Journal: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.html>

Casta Paintings Background information:

<http://www.unc.edu/courses/2002spring/hist/046h/001/assets/Castaintro.htm>

<http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/CULPEPER/BAKEWELL/thinksheets/castas.html>

Student Resources

Across the Centuries textbook

Advanced Preparation

- The following lessons are designed for 55-minute class periods.
- As part of normal procedure, students have journals to keep an ongoing log of notes, quickwrites, and other pertinent information. This journal is used daily as an opening to the day's lesson.

Procedures

Disease, Decimation of Native Populations, Slavery, and Bartolome de las Casas

I. Advanced Preparation

A. Artwork

1. Have one or two paintings of early interactions between Europeans and natives. See *Lies My Teacher Told Me* and *Across the Centuries*.

B. Handouts

1. Say-Mean-See-Matter graphic organizer
2. Quotes from Bartolome de las Casas, Christopher Columbus, and general statistics about the impacts of exploration and the settling of Latin America from resources listed above.

II. Introduction (15 minutes)

A. Art Analysis Journal Entry

1. Students individually study artwork depicting the arrival of Europeans to the Americas. Analyze the picture using guiding questions from teacher.
2. What do you see happening in the picture? Who are the people and what are they doing? Compare and contrast the Europeans and natives.
3. Discuss

III. Activity (40 minutes)

A. Say-Mean-See-Matter

1. Read the first quote under the Say column. Interpret its meaning and write in own word under the second column. Draw a picture or symbol representing the quote in the See column. Finally, in the Matter column, write a brief explanation of the quote's significance.
2. Complete the first quote together to model the procedure. Students work independently or in partners to complete the rest. By analyzing these quotes, students must interpret primary and secondary sources and make meaning out of them. The inquiry process also helps students see the contrast between de las Casas and other Europeans of his time.

B. Debrief

1. How is de las Casas important to Latin American history? Why are de las Casas' writings important for understanding the effects of exploration?

C. Assessment

1. Students write two letters from the perspective of an Arawak Indian and from a Spanish

conquistador. Students must convey the different interpretations of the same events and address the positive and negative effects of exploration.

Collapse of the Aztec Empire

I. Advanced Preparation

A. Prior Knowledge

1. Students should be familiar with the strengths of the Aztec Empire before the arrival of Europeans.

B. Materials

1. Scissors, glue, markers, and construction paper to create spectrum.

C. Handouts

1. Information/reading about the arrival of Cortes.
2. Factsheet: Causes for the Collapse of the Aztec Empire

II. Introduction (15 minutes)

A. Cortes in Mexico

1. Read, with students, the story of Cortes' arrival and subsequent interactions with Montezuma.
2. Review the strengths of the Aztec Empire (conquest of other tribes, religion, the city of Tenochtitlan).

III. Activity (40 minutes)

A. Reasons for the Aztec Collapse

1. In groups of four, students receive a factsheet outlining different reasons for Spain's conquest over the Aztec Empire (weapons/armor, Aztec religion, rebellions, disease, Support for Spanish, Overconfidence).
2. Students read the information and rank each reason according to most/least important reason for Aztec defeat. They must justify their decisions.
3. Create a spectrum listing the various reasons for the collapse. Above each one, the group must create a symbol to represent the idea of each cause.

B. Debrief

1. Each student group shares their spectrum and explains their symbols and reasoning.
2. As a class, discuss similarities and differences between different spectrums. Reach a consensus about the most important factors contributing to the fall of the Aztec Empire.

Castas

I. Advanced Preparation

A. Paintings

1. Select a variety of images and post them around the room. Paintings should ideally depict different people, activities, and settings.
2. Paintings should be numbered for quick reference when discussing later.

B. Handouts

1. Prepare background information about casta paintings, their purpose, and terms students should know. See emory.edu website listed above.
2. Students use Casta Paintings handout during the gallery walk or copy the handout into their journals. It is used during the gallery walk to organize their observations and thoughts.

II. Introduction (Journal)

A. Quickwrite Journal Entry (10 minutes)

1. Open-ended questions to generate student thinking regarding issues of race/racism.
2. What is racism? Why does racism exist and why is it difficult to end?
3. Students share ideas with class.

III. Background Information (15 minutes)

A. Review

1. Brainstorm and review main ideas from previous lessons about European exploration and treatment of indigenous groups. Key ideas include: technology of Europeans, disease, slavery, encomienda system, transfer of ideas/goods, religion, etc.

B. Casta Paintings

1. Students read background information about casta paintings and terms used in the art (mestizo, mulatto). Students are also introduced to Spanish colonization of Mexico.
2. Students take notes in their journal about important points of information from reading.
3. Brief discussion about topic to informally assess student understanding and to address questions.

VI. Activity (30 minutes)

A. Gallery Walk

1. Students are given guiding questions to consider as they walk around the room to study various paintings.

- How is life depicted in the painting? Is it accurate or inaccurate? Why?
- Who is in the painting and how are they depicted? (Personality, social class, lifestyle, education) What are they doing?
- What background/setting is shown in the painting? Why is it important?
- What other images/symbols make the painting unique? (Religious symbols, symbols of wealth, education, social class, etc...)

B. Alternate Ideas

1. In addition to Casta Paintings, the gallery may also display other images of race from the US or internationally. Students compare/contrast the different images and look for common themes as well as differences.

B. Debriefing

1. After gallery walk, students discuss paintings and connect discussion to larger issue of race/racism.
2. Questions to consider: Are casta paintings an accurate portrayal of life in Latin America at this time? Are terms such as mestizo or mulatto pejorative? Why or why not? Why did artists create casta paintings?
3. Students may also write their reactions to the paintings in their journals as a closing quickwrite.

Trial of Cortes

I. Advanced Preparation

A. Research

1. Teacher must review and evaluate different websites or other sources students use for research.
2. Students must have some familiarity with internet browsing as well as other forms of research.
3. Have relevant books, handouts, and other materials available for students of varied reading levels.

B. Handouts

1. Student research handout (or 3x5 index cards for research).

II. Introduction

A. T-Chart Journal Entry

1. Positive and negative consequences of European exploration in the Americas. Also, consider which effects are short or long-term. This opening activity is meant to review information from this unit.

III. Activity

A. Student Preparation

1. The class divides itself into three parts. 1) Maya/Aztec supporters, 2) Cortes/Spain supporters, and 3) jury.
2. Prosecutors - Maya/Aztec supporters: using information learned from this unit and previous units, this group must argue for imprisonment of Cortes and payment for historical grievances. Students will break into smaller groups for three or four and create presentations accusing Cortes and Spain for the harm done to Mexico. Group focuses may be divided among the following topics:

- Disease and death of native population
→ *Say, Mean, See, Matter* handout
- Exploitation of labor and slavery
→ *Say, Mean, See, Matter* handout
- Disenfranchisement of natives, extinguishment of culture/language, current events
→ *EZLN background information*
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EZLN>
→ *US Department of State*
http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/mexico_0101_bgn.html
→ *Homage to Rigoberta Menchu*
<http://www.indians.org/welker/menchu.htm>
→ *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages*
<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/stabilize/additional/tarahumara.htm>

3. Defendants - Cortes/Spain supporters: justify the motives and actions taken during the exploration and settlement of Latin America. Students use historical information as well as current events to defend Spain's actions. Groups of three or four will focus on the following topics:

- Importance of religion during the time of exploration
→ Diary Entries, Christopher Columbus, Hernando Cortes, Bartolome de las Casas

- Benefits of exploration and settlement: trade, new goods, technology/ideas, cultures
→ *European Voyages of Exploration*
http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/aztec.html
→ *1492: An Ongoing Voyage*
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/>
- Ongoing preservation efforts
→ *Guatemalan Jungles Yield a Wealth of Maya Treasure, NY Times*
<http://college3.nytimes.com/guests/articles/2004/05/11/1158502.xml>
→ *Inside Mexican Pyramid, Buried Clues Link Ancient Cultures, NY Times*
<http://college4.nytimes.com/guests/articles/2002/11/19/1052063.xml>
→ *Articles, NY Times*
http://college.nytimes.com/guests/directory/Arts_&_Humanities/History/Incas/

4. Jury: while other groups research and prepare their arguments, the jury pool will create a quiz for the class to take at the end of the unit (multiple choice/short answer). During the court session itself, the jury is responsible for taking notes on both sides and deciding the guilt/innocence of Cortes. They must use a rubric to guide their decision and explain their decisions to the class.
→ Factual evidence presented
→ Presentation: argument, persuasiveness, tone, transitions etc...

B. Trial Outline

1. Student research and preparation. (2 ½ days)
2. Representatives from each subgroup meet to discuss and streamline arguments. Others create evidence (posters, charts, diary entries, etc.) to present during the proceedings. (1 day)
3. Introduction of jury and their role; opening statements from each side. (1/2 day)
4. Arguments from each side. (1 day)
5. Jury deliberation and judgment. (1/2 day)

C. Assessments

1. Students must submit their notes, written arguments, and other work as evidence for their project.
 - Use handout to organize information and arguments
 - Submit written draft of group argument
 - Jury must take notes during the presentations and listen for the main argument and evidence used to prove it.
 - Jury must discuss the strongest arguments on both sides and prepare their final decision based on this discussion. Jurors may write questions on the bottom of their notes to ask either side or fellow jurors.
2. Student-written quiz.

SAY:	MEAN: Own Words	SEE: Picture/Symbol	MATTER: How did the Spanish and Natives interact?
<p><i>[Columbus carried two flags] with an F and a Y ...The Admiral [Columbus] said...in the presence of all, he would take, as in fact he did take, possession of the...island for the king and for the queen, his lords...</i></p>			
<p><i>I knew that they were a people who could be more easily... converted to our holy faith by love than by force, [we] gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put round their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure...</i></p>			
<p><i>It appeared to me to be a race of people very poor in everything... They neither carry nor know anything of arms, for I showed them swords, and they took them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance...</i></p>			

SAY:	MEAN: Own Words	SEE:	MATTER: How did the Spanish and Natives interact?
<p>Facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 1515, there were approximately 50,000 Arawak Indians on the Island of Haiti, in the Caribbean - Columbus shipped 500 Arawak men, women, and children to Spain to sell as slaves - 200 died during the voyage from Haiti to Spain - By 1550, 500 Arawak were left on the Island of Haiti 			
<p><i>“Let us in the name of the Holy Trinity go on sending all the slaves that can be sold.”</i></p> <p>■ Christopher Columbus During his 2nd voyage</p>			
<p><i>“What we committed in the Indies [Americas] stands out among the most unpardonable offenses ever committed against God and mankind and this trade [in Indian slaves] as one of the most unjust, evil, and cruel among them.”</i></p> <p>■ Bartolome de las Casas Spanish Missionary (1530s)</p>			

FACTSHEET: Causes for the Aztec Collapse

<p style="text-align: center;">Support for the Spanish</p> <p>Cortes easily persuaded enemy tribes to join him in fighting the Aztec. These tribes agreed because they disliked paying tribute to the king and did not know the Spanish would mistreat them later.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Disease</p> <p>Even before Cortes arrived in Tenochtitlan, European diseases had already reached the Aztecs. The natives had no immunity from these new diseases, such as small pox and measles. By the time Cortes arrived, thousands of natives had already died and many more continued dying.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overconfidence</p> <p>The Aztecs were known for their military skill and might. Before the Spanish, the Aztecs successfully defeated most of their enemies easily. In their confidence, the Aztec underestimated the strengths of the Spanish military.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Rebellions Within the Empire</p> <p>By the early 1500s, many conquered tribes within the Aztec Empire started to rebel. They disliked their lower class status and high tributes. The king sent soldiers all over the empire to stop the rebellions. With his military divided and spread thin, the Aztecs were less prepared to fight the Spanish.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Aztec Religion</p> <p>An important aspect of the Aztec faith was the belief that Quetzalcoatl, an ancient god, would return to Aztec lands and reclaim his kingdom. This belief explains why Montezuma initially treated Cortes and his men as honored guests. Cortes used this against the Aztecs and took advantage of them.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spanish Religion</p> <p>Christianity was the dominant religion of Europe. Many missionaries joined explorations to convert the native people. Missionaries believed God gave them authority over all non-Christians. Some also believed those refusing to convert were worthy of slavery or death. This religious motive justified Spain's actions towards the natives in Latin America.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Weapons/Armor</p> <p>Spanish soldiers used a variety of weapons, including swords, crossbows, muskets, and cannons. Aztecs relied on spears, hatchets, javelins, and arrows. In addition, Spanish armor was made from metal and offered protection from traditional Aztec weapons. Aztecs, meanwhile, wore armor of padded cotton and feathers.</p>		

Example: Spectrum
Causes of the Aztec Collapse

Casta Paintings

Painting	People: Describe the different people in the painting	Place: Describe the setting	Other Symbols: religion, education, social class, lifestyle
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Research Topic: _____

Source: website, book, page #	Facts	Why is this fact important? How does it help your argument? What would the other side argue in their defense?

Trial of Cortes: Juror Notes

Prosecution: Maya/Aztec Supporters	Defense: Cortes/Spain Supporters
Argument: Facts/Evidence:	Argument: Facts/Evidence:

Questions?