

Common Core Lesson Plan

Topic: Early Explorers

Title: *Early Exploration and the Columbian Exchange*

Resources (primary resource documents, artifacts, material needs, etc.)

- Excerpt from the journal of Christopher Columbus
- King Ferdinand's letter to the Tainos
- The Treaty with Massasoit
- The Columbian Exchange
- Columbian Exchange Map

Common Core Standards

- RH 1-6, 8 and 9

Essential Standards

- 8.H.1.3, 8.H.1.4, 8.G.1.1

Background Information

- Students will have an understanding of the interaction between Europeans and South Americans from the 6th/7th grade social studies curriculum

Instructional Sequence (before, during, and after instruction)

Step 1

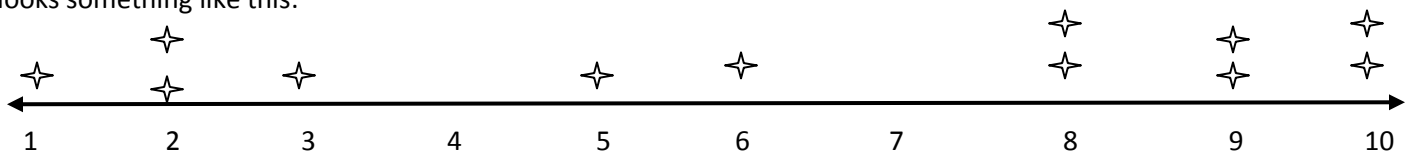
Have students answer the following question: "What happens when you mix blue and yellow paint? Blue and red? Yellow and red?" Use their answers to highlight the fact that once the two colors mix, they each have parts of the other in the whole, even if they are separated again. Make the comparison of the blended colors to what it was like when Europe and the Americas first mixed. Have students brainstorm what specific things the colors might represent (ie – food, animals, plants, diseases, technologies, religious beliefs, styles of governing). Discuss findings as a class.

Step 2

After briefly introducing the Age of Exploration, have students complete the Primary Source packet questions in small groups. Have the groups share their answers from each section with the class.

Step 3

As a class, determine what direction they think the interaction between Europe and the Americas will take. Have them rate their answer from one to ten, with one to four being bad for the Europeans (one being the worst) and good for the Native Americans, seven to ten being bad for the Native Americans (ten being the worst) and good for the Europeans, and five/six being equally bad for both groups. Compile the data on a spectrum graph (straight line) on the board that looks something like this:



Discuss the findings as a class, examining reasons why the class as a whole sampled the way they did.

Step 4

Have students watch Part 1 of “1492 The Columbian Exchange”, which can be found here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE_s-e5COPk&feature=relmfu

After watching, students can share with the class how their opinions were reaffirmed or changed by what they saw.

Step 5

Have students read the essay “The Columbian Exchange” by Alfred Crosby, annotating as they read. Have students share how their perspectives have continued to evolve after completing the reading, first in pairs, then as a whole class.

Step 6

Project the map of the Columbian Exchange for the class to see (or distribute handouts if desired). Have students make a bullet list of observations from the map (more animals came from Europe and Africa; tobacco was introduced to Europe for the first time). Have students share their observations with the class.

Step 7

Assign students a three to five paragraph essay on the following topic: “What is the overall impact of the permanent establishment of contact between Europe and the Americas and the exchange of goods that followed?” Students can use information from any or all of the sources covered to complete the essay. The essay can serve as a formative assessment for this mini-unit.

Excerpt from the journal of Christopher Columbus

Saturday, 13 October. "At daybreak great multitudes of men came to the shore, all young and of fine shapes, very handsome; their hair not curled but straight and coarse like horse-hair, and all with foreheads and heads much broader than any people I had hitherto seen; their eyes were large and very beautiful; they were not black, but the color of the inhabitants of the Canaries, which is a very natural circumstance, they being in the same latitude with the island of Ferro in the Canaries. They were straight-limbed without exception, and not with prominent bellies but handsomely shaped. They came to the ship in canoes, made of a single trunk of a tree, wrought in a wonderful manner considering the country; some of them large enough to contain forty or forty-five men, others of different sizes down to those fitted to hold but a single person. They rowed with an oar like a baker's peel, and wonderfully swift. If they happen to upset, they all jump into the sea, and swim till they have righted their canoe and emptied it with the calabashes they carry with them. They came loaded with balls of cotton, parrots, javelins, and other things too numerous to mention; these they exchanged for whatever we chose to give them. I was very attentive to them, and strove to learn if they had any gold. Seeing some of them with little bits of this metal hanging at their noses, I gathered from them by signs that by going southward or steering round the island in that direction, there would be found a king who possessed large vessels of gold, and in great quantities. I endeavored to procure them to lead the way thither, but found they were unacquainted with the route. I determined to stay here till the evening of the next day, and then sail for the southwest; for according to what I could learn from them, there was land at the south as well as at the southwest and northwest and those from the northwest came many times and fought with them and proceeded on to the southwest in search of gold and precious stones. This is a large and level island, with trees extremely flourishing, and streams of water; there is a large lake in the middle of the island, but no mountains: the whole is completely covered with verdure and delightful to behold. The natives are an inoffensive people, and so desirous to possess any thing they saw with us, that they kept swimming off to the ships with whatever they could find, and readily bartered for any article we saw fit to give them in return, even such as broken platters

and fragments of glass. I saw in this manner sixteen balls of cotton thread which weighed above twenty-five pounds, given for three Portuguese ceutis. This traffic I forbade, and suffered no one to take their cotton from them, unless I should order it to be procured for your Highnesses, if proper quantities could be met with. It grows in this island, but from my short stay here I could not satisfy myself fully concerning it; the gold, also, which they wear in their noses, is found here, but not to lose time, I am determined to proceed onward and ascertain whether I can reach Cipango. At night they all went on shore with their canoes.

Taken from: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.asp>

Guiding Question:

Based on this entry, how would you expect Columbus to treat the natives he encountered?

King Ferdinand's letter to the Tainos

In the name of King Ferdinand and Juana, his daughter, Queen of Castile and Leon, etc., conquerors of barbarian nations, we notify you as best we can that our Lord God Eternal created Heaven and earth and a man and woman from whom we all descend for all times and all over the world. In the 5,000 years since creation the multitude of these enations caused men to divide and establish kingdoms in various parts of the world, among whom God chose St. Peter as leader of mankind, regardless of their law, sect or belief. He seated St. Peter in Rome as the best place from which to rule the world but he allowed him to establish his seat in all parts of the world and rule all people, whether Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles or any other sect. He was named Pope, which means admirable and greatest father, governor of all men. Those who lived at that time obeyed St. Peter as Lord and superior King of the universe, and so did their descendants obey his successors and so on to the end of time.

The late Pope gave these islands and mainland of the ocean and the contents hereof to the above-mentioned King and Queen, as is certified in writing and you may see the documents if you should so desire. Therefore, Their Highnesses are lords and masters of this land; they were acknowledged as such when this notice was posted, and were and are being served willingly and without resistance; then, their religious envoys were acknowledged and obeyed without delay, and all subjects unconditionally and of their own free will became Christians and thus they remain. Their Highnesses received their allegiance with joy and benignity and decreed that they be treated in this spirit like good and loyal vassals and you are under the obligation to do the same.

Therefore, we request that you understand this text, deliberate on its contents within a reasonable time, and recognize the Church and its highest priest, the Pope, as rulers of the universe, and in their name the King and Queen of Spain as rulers of this land, allowing the religious fathers to preach our holy Faith to you. You own compliance as a duty to the King and

we in his name will receive you with love and charity, respecting your freedom and that of your wives and sons and your rights of possession and we shall not compel you to

baptism unless you, informed of the Truth, wish to convert to our holy Catholic Faith as almost all your neighbors have done in other islands, in exchange for which Their Highnesses bestow many privileges and exemptions upon you.

Should you fail to comply, or delay maliciously in so doing, we assure you that with the help of God we shall use force against you, declaring war upon you from all sides and with all possible means, and we shall bind you to the yoke of the Church and of Their Highnesses; we shall enslave your persons, wives and sons, sell you or dispose of you as the King sees fit; we shall seize your possessions and harm you as much as we can as disobedient and resisting vassals. And we declare you guilty of resulting deaths and injuries, exempting Their Highnesses of such guilt as well as ourselves and the gentlemen who accompany us. We hereby request that legal signatures be a fixed to this text and pray those present to bear witness for us, etc.

Taken from: <http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/haiti/history/spanish/ferdinand.htm>

Guiding Question:

What is the King's reasoning for demanding that the Tainos surrender to him? Was he justified in your opinion?

THE TREATY WITH MASSASOIT

"... the coming of their great Sachem, called Massasoiet. Who, about four or five days after, came with the chief of his friends and other attendance, with the aforesaid Squanto. With whom, after friendly entertainment and some gifts given him, they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24 years) in these terms :

- I. That neither he nor any of his, should injure or do hurt to any of their people.
- II. That if any of his did any hurt to any of theirs, he should send the offender that they might punish him.
- III. That if any thing were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored; and they should do the like to his.
- IV. That if any did unjustly war against him, they would aid him; and if any did war against them, he should aid them.
- V. That he should send to his neighbours confederates to certify them of this, that they might not wrong them, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.
- VI. That when their men came to them, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them.

Taken from: <http://www.pilgrimhall.org/massa-tr.htm>

Guiding Question:

How do the English settlers appear to be taking a different approach to the Native Americans than the Spanish settlers did? How are the two approaches the same?

The Columbian Exchange

by Alfred Crosby

Millions of years ago, continental drift carried the Old World and New Worlds apart, splitting North and South America from Eurasia and Africa. That separation lasted so long that it fostered divergent evolution; for instance, the development of rattlesnakes on one side of the Atlantic and vipers on the other. After 1492, human voyagers in part reversed this tendency. Their artificial re-establishment of connections through the commingling of Old and New World plants, animals, and bacteria, commonly known as the Columbian Exchange, is one of the more spectacular and significant ecological events of the past millennium.

When Europeans first touched the shores of the Americas, Old World crops such as wheat, barley, rice, and turnips had not traveled west across the Atlantic, and New World crops such as maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, and manioc had not traveled east to Europe. In the Americas, there were no horses, cattle, sheep, or goats, all animals of Old World origin. Except for the llama, alpaca, dog, a few fowl, and guinea pig, the New World had no equivalents to the domesticated animals associated with the Old World, nor did it have the pathogens associated with the Old World's dense populations of humans and such associated creatures as chickens, cattle, black rats, and *Aedes egypti* mosquitoes. Among these germs were those that carried smallpox, measles, chickenpox, influenza, malaria, and yellow fever.

The Columbian exchange of crops affected both the Old World and the New. Amerindian crops that have crossed oceans—for example, maize to China and the white potato to Ireland—have been stimulants to population growth in the Old World. The latter's crops and livestock have had much the same effect in the Americas—for example, wheat in Kansas and the Pampa, and beef cattle in Texas and Brazil. The full story of the exchange is many volumes long, so for the sake of brevity and clarity let us focus on a specific region, the eastern third of the United States of America.

As might be expected, the Europeans who settled on the east coast of the United States cultivated crops like wheat and apples, which they had brought with them. European weeds,

which the colonists did not cultivate and, in fact, preferred to uproot, also fared well in the New World. John Josselyn, an Englishman and amateur naturalist who visited New England twice in the seventeenth century, left us a list, “Of Such Plants as Have Sprung Up since the English Planted and Kept Cattle in New England,” which included couch grass, dandelion, shepherd’s purse, groundsel, sow thistle, and chickweeds. One of these, a plantain (*Plantago major*), was named “Englishman’s Foot” by the Amerindians of New England and Virginia who believed that it would grow only where the English “have trodden, and was never known before the English came into this country.” Thus, as they intentionally sowed Old World crop seeds, the European settlers were unintentionally contaminating American fields with weed seed. More importantly, they were stripping and burning forests, exposing the native minor flora to direct sunlight and to the hooves and teeth of Old World livestock. The native flora could not tolerate the stress. The imported weeds could, because they had lived with large numbers of grazing animals for thousands of years.

Cattle and horses were brought ashore in the early 1600s and found hospitable climate and terrain in North America. Horses arrived in Virginia as early as 1620 and in Massachusetts in 1629. Many wandered free with little more evidence of their connection to humanity than collars with a hook at the bottom to catch on fences as they tried to leap over them to get at crops. Fences were not for keeping livestock in, but for keeping livestock out.

Native American resistance to the Europeans was ineffective. Indigenous peoples suffered from white brutality, alcoholism, the killing and driving off of game, and the expropriation of farmland, but all these together are insufficient to explain the degree of their defeat. The crucial factor was not people, plants, or animals, but germs. The history of the United States begins with Virginia and Massachusetts, and their histories begin with epidemics of unidentified diseases. At the time of the abortive Virginia colony at Roanoke in the 1580s the nearby Amerindians “began to die quickly. The disease was so strange that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it.” When the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620, they did so in a village and on a coast nearly cleared of Amerindians by a recent epidemic.

Thousands had “died in a great plague not long since; and pity it was and is to see so many goodly fields, and so well seated, without man to dress and manure the same.”

Smallpox was the worst and the most spectacular of the infectious diseases mowing down the Native Americans. The first recorded pandemic of that disease in British North America detonated among the Algonquin of Massachusetts in the early 1630s: William Bradford of Plymouth Plantation wrote that the victims “fell down so generally of this disease as they were in the end not able to help one another, no not to make a fire nor fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead.”

The missionaries and the traders who ventured into the American interior told the same appalling story about smallpox and the indigenes. In 1738 alone the epidemic destroyed half the Cherokee; in 1759 nearly half the Catawbas; in the first years of the next century two-thirds of the Omahas and perhaps half the entire population between the Missouri River and New Mexico; in 1837–1838 nearly every last one of the Mandans and perhaps half the people of the high plains.

European explorers encountered distinctively American illnesses such as Chagas Disease, but these did not have much effect on Old World populations. Venereal syphilis has also been called American, but that accusation is far from proven. Even if we add all the Old World deaths blamed on American diseases together, including those ascribed to syphilis, the total is insignificant compared to Native American losses to smallpox alone.

The export of America’s native animals has not revolutionized Old World agriculture or ecosystems as the introduction of European animals to the New World did. America’s grey squirrels and muskrats and a few others have established themselves east of the Atlantic and west of the Pacific, but that has not made much of a difference. Some of America’s domesticated animals are raised in the Old World, but turkeys have not displaced chickens and geese, and guinea pigs have proved useful in laboratories, but have not usurped rabbits in the butcher shops.

The New World's great contribution to the Old is in crop plants. Maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, various squashes, chiles, and manioc have become essentials in the diets of hundreds of millions of Europeans, Africans, and Asians. Their influence on Old World peoples, like that of wheat and rice on New World peoples, goes far to explain the global population explosion of the past three centuries. The Columbian Exchange has been an indispensable factor in that demographic explosion.

All this had nothing to do with superiority or inferiority of biosystems in any absolute sense. It has to do with environmental contrasts. Amerindians were accustomed to living in one particular kind of environment, Europeans and Africans in another. When the Old World peoples came to America, they brought with them all their plants, animals, and germs, creating a kind of environment to which they were already adapted, and so they increased in number. Amerindians had not adapted to European germs, and so initially their numbers plunged. That decline has reversed in our time as Amerindian populations have adapted to the Old World's environmental influence, but the demographic triumph of the invaders, which was the most spectacular feature of the Old World's invasion of the New, still stands.

Taken from: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/american-indians/essays/columbian-exchange>

The Columbian Exchange



Taken from: http://jb-hdnp.org/Sarver/Maps/ah02_columbianexchangem.jpg