

EXPLORATION - Social World Study Guide

The Church says that the earth is flat, but I know that it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the moon, and I have more faith in a shadow than in the Church. - *Ferdinand Magellan*

But in truth, should I meet with gold or spices in great quantity, I shall remain until I collect as much as possible, and for this purpose I am proceeding solely in quest of them. - *Christopher Columbus*

Overview:

Exploration is a way to learn about the world. Historically, people have had an insatiable appetite for knowledge and adventure that has driven them to explore new places, cultures, and ideas. Explorers often changed the way people thought about the world, challenging many basic ideas and assumptions. Aside from human curiosity, there have been many other reasons for exploration. For example, competition for food forced people out in all directions in search of new places to live and new resources. Trade and religion have also played an important part in the history of exploration. In particular, state-sponsored exploration was often driven by these twin elements of religion and trade. Other explorers desired to see new places or lead scientific expeditions, so they set out to learn as much as possible about new lands.

Many people believe that the first explorer to reach the Western Hemisphere (North and South America) was Christopher Columbus in 1492. Others argue that Leif Erikson, a Viking, landed in eastern Canada around the year 1000. Actually, the first explorers to set foot in North America were likely a wandering tribe of hunters who followed game into present-day Alaska from present-day Siberia during an ice age about 20,000 years ago. These hunters probably had no idea that they were embarking upon a colossal exploration. Their descendants continued moving south over the next several millennia and eventually humans populated the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego.

The impact of European exploration into the Americas was profound; in fact, many historians consider it a key turning point in world history. The “discovery” of the Americas by Europeans affected people all over the globe. The consequences of exploration were both positive and negative, affecting different populations in different ways. For example, exploration brought increased wealth to many European powers; this led them to seek out new opportunities to establish colonies and promote trade. On the other hand, it also led to a drastic increase in the international slave trade because of new demands for labor. For the indigenous populations living in North and South America, the end result of exploration and colonization was often disastrous—for example, the ensuing smallpox epidemic that left millions dead. The long-term effects of this exploration are still felt today; topics such as the rights of indigenous people and the lingering problems of racism (which are rooted in slavery) continue to be debated. This cycle we will examine why European exploration into the Americas occurred and how it forever changed the world.

Guiding Questions:

- **What factors led to exploration of the Americas by Europeans?**
- **How did this exploration impact human history?**
- **What issues rooted in European exploration into the Americas continue to impact contemporary American life?**

- ___1. Participate in the teacher presentation on exploration (Mon, 11/26)
- ___2. Watch and discuss the film *Guns, Germs & Steel: Conquest* (Mon, 11/26)
- ___3. Participate in a discussion on the primary sources from Columbus and de Las Casas (Mon, 12/3)

Individual Work (Readings):

- ___ due Tues, 11/27 - read pp. 55-60 "Tradition and Change in Europe" & answer questions 1-7 on pg. 60
- ___ due Weds, 11/28 - read pp. 68-72 "An Era of Exploration" & answer questions 1-5 on pg. 72
- ___ due Mon, 12/3 - Read and annotate the excerpts from the Diario of Columbus and from Bartolome de Las Casa.
- ___ due Tues, 12/4 - read pp. 74-80 "Spain Builds an Empire" & answer questions 1-8 on pg. 80.
- ___ due Weds 12/5 - read pp. 81-86 "Colonizing North America" & answer questions 1-5 on pg. 86.
- ___ due Thurs, 12/6 - read pp. 87-91 "Building the Jamestown Colony" & answer questions 1-5 on pg. 91
- ___ due Mon, 12/10 - read and take notes on the introduction & "Chapter One: Columbus and the Indians" from Howard Zinn's *A Young People's History of the United States*.
- ___ due Tues, 12/11 - Write original sentences for each of the SW Vocabulary Words (and make vocab flashcards)
- ___ due Weds, 12/12 - read and annotate "Removing The Savages" from *A Different Mirror*
- ___ due Thurs, 12/13 - read and annotate "The Hidden Origins of Slavery" from *A Different Mirror*
- ___ due Mon, 12/17 - read and annotate "The Road to the Reservation" from *A Different Mirror*

___7. **Group Work Part One:**

Prepare for a debate as either the opposition (negative) or proposition (affirmative) for one of the resolutions listed below. Debates will take place on Monday, Dec. 3rd and Tuesday, Dec. 4th.

- Columbus Day should be replaced with Indigenous Peoples' Day.
- Native American lands should be protected from exploitation of natural resources.
- Countries in the Americas who had slavery should pay reparations to the descendants of slaves.
- U.S. sports teams with names &/or mascots related to Native Americans should be changed.
- European explorers of the New World should be viewed as heroes rather than villains.
- Thanksgiving is offensive to Native Americans.
- The Indian Removal Act of 1830 solved more problems than it created.
- The use of Native American traditional dress/artifacts/symbols/etc. by non-native people in fashion, music, and other forms of popular culture is offensive and insensitive.

___8. **Group Work Part Two:**

Complete activity a, activity b, and one other activity with your group. The presentations will be given on Thursday, Dec. 13th.

- a. Select either disease, potato, corn, horse, or sugar, and use the corresponding chapter in the *Seeds of Change* book for research. Create a large **icon** representing and explaining your seed. The icon should fit on an 8 1/2 by 11 piece of card stock and include facts explaining why it is considered an important "seed of change."
- b. Look at the "seeds of change" materials with your group and a teacher, and use it to update the "seeds of change" graphic organizer.
- c. Research Spain's exploration into and colonization of the Americas (both North and South). Present information about this topic, focusing on explorers, routes, reasons

for exploration by Spain, and the effects of this exploration on the native peoples of the explored areas.

- d. Research English exploration into and colonization of the Americas (primarily North America). Present information about this topic, focusing on explorers, routes, reasons for exploration by England, and the effects of this exploration on the native peoples of the explored area.
- e. Research Dutch exploration into and colonization of the Americas (North and South). Present information about this topic, focusing on explorers, routes, reasons for exploration by the Netherlands, and the effects of this exploration on the native peoples of the explored areas.
- f. Research French exploration into and colonization of the Americas (North and South). Present information about this topic, focusing on explorers, routes, reasons for exploration by France, and the effects of this exploration on the native peoples of the explored areas.
- g. Research Portuguese exploration into and colonization of the Americas (North and South). Present information about this topic, focusing on explorers, routes, reasons for exploration by Portugal, and the effects of this exploration on the native peoples of the explored areas.

___ 9. Record the information from the group presentations in your notes.

How do I put it all together?

___ 10. There will be a “study day” during group work time on Mon., Dec. 17th

___ 11. Take the SW Vocabulary Test and SW Theme Test (Tues., Dec. 18th)

- The SW test will be consist of writing an in-class essay on the topic listed below. To prepare for your essay test, you will create a topic outline that you can bring with you to the test.
 - **Overall, was exploration of the Americas by Europeans more harmful or more helpful?**