

Inquiry Journal

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: American Societies– Pre European Contact Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>What factors facilitated Aztec dominance in Mesoamerica?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 2	<i>How did the Inka expand, govern, and legitimize their rule?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 3	<i>How did the Aztec and Inka systems of governance differ in managing their empires?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 1: American Societies– Pre European Contact **Compelling Question**

How did American societies govern themselves, sustain their populations, and express their identities before European exploration?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: European Colonization Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	What were the key motivations behind European exploration?
	K:
	W:
LESSON 5	Should Christopher Columbus be celebrated for discovering America?
	K:
	W:
LESSON 6	How did the Columbian Exchange affect the people, environments, and economies across the Atlantic?
	K:
	W:

Continued on next page



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: European Colonization Supporting Questions	
LESSON 7	<i>What is known about early Indigenous and European interactions and how reliable are the European sources in explaining them?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 8	<i>How did social hierarchies develop in Spanish America and what lasting impacts did they have?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 2: European Exploration

Compelling Question

To what extent did European empire-building impact Indigenous societies, global trade, and cultural exchange?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies Supporting Questions

LESSON 9	<i>In what ways did the Spanish manage and control Indigenous populations?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 10	<i>How did systems that coerced labor from Indigenous populations affect their social, economic, and cultural structures?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 11	<i>How significant was the role of disease in reshaping the demographics of Indigenous societies?</i>
	K:
	W:

Continued on next page



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies Supporting Questions	
LESSON 12	<i>To what extent did Spanish missionaries alter Indigenous cultures and societies?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 13	<i>How did Indigenous populations resist European conquest and colonization?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies

Compelling Question

How were the impacts of European conquest experienced and understood by Native American populations?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

[CER Paragraph to be written at conclusion of week.]



Essential Question

How did European conquest of the Americas have long-lasting impacts on Indigenous American societies?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Paragraph Template

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

CLAIM (Your argument)	
EVIDENCE #1 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #1 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	
EVIDENCE #2 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #2 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	



Unit 2: Americas: Colonization and Conquest

Inquiry Journal (Exemplar)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: American Societies– Pre European Contact Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>What factors facilitated Aztec dominance in Mesoamerica?</i>
	K: The Aztecs lived in modern-day Mexico.
	W: Did the government of the Aztecs look similar or different to other regions in this period?
LESSON 2	<i>How did the Inka expand, govern, and legitimize their rule?</i>
	K: The Inkas lived in modern-day Peru.
	W: What methods did the Inka use to expand their empire?
LESSON 3	<i>How did the Aztec and Inka systems of governance differ in managing their empires?</i>
	K: Both the Inkas and Aztecs were eventually conquered by the Spanish.
	W: Did the Aztec and Inka ever interact or were they too far geographically for connections?



Topic 1: American Societies– Pre European Contact

Compelling Question

How did American societies govern themselves, sustain their populations, and express their identities before European exploration?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

American societies such as the Aztecs and Incas developed complex systems to govern themselves, sustain their populations, and express their unique identities before European exploration. Both civilizations ruled vast empires through strong centralized bureaucracies and used military conquest to expand their territories. After conquest, they implemented systems to maintain control and ensure the integration of newly subjugated peoples. The Aztecs governed through a tribute system, requiring conquered peoples to provide goods such as woven cloth, luxury items, and even captives for religious ceremonies, including human sacrifice. These tributes not only sustained the empire economically but also reinforced the Aztec identity as a dominant and sacred power. The central city of Tenochtitlan served as a political and cultural hub, with its grand temples and ceremonial spaces reflecting the Aztec connection to their gods. The Inca, on the other hand, utilized the *mit'a* system, a labor tax that required adult citizens to work on public projects such as roads, terraces, and temples. This system ensured the empire's infrastructure supported agricultural production and communication across their vast, mountainous territory. Terracing techniques allowed the Inca to grow food on steep slopes, sustaining their population despite challenging geography. Their identity was expressed through monumental architecture like Machu Picchu and their extensive road network, which symbolized unity and the strength of the empire. Through their distinct methods of governance, economic systems, and cultural practices, the Aztecs and Incas created thriving civilizations that reflected their ingenuity and adaptability to their environments.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: European Colonization Supporting Questions	
LESSON 4	What were the key motivations behind European exploration?
	K: Christopher Columbus reached the Americas in 1492.
	W: Were other regions engaging in exploration in the same time period?
LESSON 5	Should Christopher Columbus be celebrated for discovering America?
	K: Columbus never actually set foot on American soil.
	W: How can you discover a land that was already inhabited?
LESSON 6	How did the Columbian Exchange affect the people, environments, and economies across the Atlantic?
	K: European exploration caused new groups of people to interact. This led to trade and cultural exchanges.
	W: Did the Columbian Exchange have any positive impacts on the Native American population?

Continued on next page



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: European Colonization Supporting Questions	
LESSON 7	<i>What is known about early Indigenous and European interactions and how reliable are the European sources in explaining them?</i>
	K: We don’t have a lot of sources written by indigenous people, so almost all of our understanding of this time comes from a European perspective, making it impossible to truly understand the side of the native people.
	W: Were there positive interactions between the two groups?
LESSON 8	<i>How did social hierarchies develop in Spanish America and what lasting impacts did they have?</i>
	K: Social hierarchies determine the weath, status, and rights of individuals. They often are based on factors that cannot be changed (e.g. race) rather than merit.
	W: How did the interactions of these different groups contribute to the structure of a social hierarchy?



Topic 2: European Exploration

Compelling Question

To what extent did European empire-building impact Indigenous societies, global trade, and cultural exchange?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

European empire-building profoundly reshaped indigenous societies, global trade, and cultural exchange, leading to significant disruptions, economic transformations, and the blending of cultures worldwide. Colonization caused the deaths of millions of indigenous people due to disease, warfare, and enslavement, as seen in the smallpox epidemics that decimated Native American populations. In global trade, the Columbian Exchange introduced new goods, such as potatoes and maize from the Americas to Europe, and wheat and horses from Europe to the Americas, while the transatlantic trade fueled economies with the forced labor of enslaved Africans and the export of raw materials like sugar and tobacco. Culturally, empire-building facilitated the blending of traditions, including the introduction of Christianity to indigenous peoples and the integration of African and indigenous traditions into colonial societies. New art, music, and cuisines emerged as a result of this cultural mixing and the development of the caste system. These impacts illustrate how European conquests disrupted traditional ways of life, reshaped economies and diets across continents, and facilitated cultural exchanges that often occurred under conditions of oppression and forced assimilation, leaving a lasting global legacy.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies Supporting Questions	
LESSON 9	<i>In what ways did the Spanish manage and control Indigenous populations?</i>
	K: When the Spanish conquered areas in America, they enslaved many Native Americans.
	W: How did the Europeans force the indigenous people to work for them? What types of work did they do?
LESSON 10	<i>How did systems that coerced labor from Indigenous populations affect their social, economic, and cultural structures?</i>
	K: The coercion of labor would demonstrate significant power imbalances. This would have deep impacts across societies.
	W: What types of coerced labor existed in Spanish colonial America?
LESSON 11	<i>How significant was the role of disease in reshaping the demographics of Indigenous societies?</i>
	K: Diseases brought over from the Columbian Exchange like smallpox killed massive amounts of Native Americans.
	W: Why did these diseases have such a large impact on the Indigenous people?

Continued on next page



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies Supporting Questions	
LESSON 12	<i>To what extent did Spanish missionaries alter Indigenous cultures and societies?</i>
	K: Missionaries often go to another country to convert people to Christianity or another religion.
	W: What percentage of Indigenous people converted willingly?
LESSON 13	<i>How did Indigenous populations resist European conquest and colonization?</i>
	K: The Spanish were attempting to eliminate all aspects of Indigenous culture and power and this would have logically led to resistance efforts.
	W: How successful were resistance efforts and what were the outcomes?



Topic 3: Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Societies *Compelling Question*

How were the impacts of European conquest experienced and understood by Native American populations?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The impacts of European conquest were experienced by Native American populations as catastrophic losses in population, autonomy, and cultural identity, understood as deliberate disruptions to their way of life. Diseases like smallpox and measles decimated Indigenous communities, with mortality rates as high as 90%, leaving survivors to grapple with the collapse of social structures. Beyond disease, systems like the encomienda forced Native Americans into brutal labor, often under the guise of Christianization, while the silver mines of Potosí exploited Indigenous workers in harsh and deadly conditions. Missionaries sought to convert Native peoples, frequently erasing traditional beliefs and practices in the process. Despite these challenges, Indigenous populations resisted in various ways, from organized uprisings like the Pueblo Revolt and Toypurina's rebellion to acts of cultural resilience, such as maintaining traditions in secret or adapting them under colonial pressure. To many Indigenous populations, these combined forces of disease, labor exploitation, and cultural suppression represented not only a biological and economic catastrophe but also a profound assault on their identities and sovereignty.



Essential Question

How did European conquest of the Americas have long-lasting impacts on Indigenous American societies?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The European conquest of the Americas had profound and long-lasting impacts on Indigenous societies, including the loss of population through disease and violence, the disruption of traditional ways of life, and the imposition of European cultural, social, and economic systems. The arrival of Europeans introduced devastating diseases, such as smallpox, measles, and influenza, which decimated Indigenous populations who had no prior exposure or immunity. Scholars estimate that in some areas, up to 90% of the population died within a century of contact. Beyond disease, violent conquest, including massacres and forced labor systems like the encomienda, further reduced populations and destabilized communities. The Spanish, for instance, destroyed Indigenous governance structures and religious practices, replacing them with European systems that marginalized Indigenous ways of life. For example, the imposition of Christianity and the prohibition of traditional rituals disrupted cultural identities, while the extraction of natural resources for European markets undermined Indigenous economies. These changes permanently altered the demographics, cultures, and landscapes of the Americas. The massive population loss created power vacuums, weakening resistance to European domination and leading to the fragmentation of once-thriving civilizations like the Aztecs and the Incas. Furthermore, the introduction of European agricultural practices, animals, and technologies transformed the environment and displaced traditional food systems. The cultural imposition marginalized Indigenous languages and customs, many of which were lost entirely or became syncretic adaptations of European traditions. These effects of conquest were not confined to the colonial era but persist today, as Indigenous peoples continue to face systemic inequities rooted in the legacies of colonization.

