

Americas: Conquest & Colonization Unit 2 Overview: World History, 10th Grade

Driving Concept 1: Intraregional Interactions

Through this driving concept, students will examine the interactions of people and the movement of ideas and biological or ecological forces within different regional networks across the world in the 14th and 15th centuries. Students will analyze the role of natural resources, access to bodies of water, climate and continental shape on the interconnectedness of different societies. Students will evaluate the impact of trade, cultural patterns, political ideologies and the development or inheritance of different technological and scientific innovations on different societies across the globe.

Driving Concept 2: Convergence, Upheaval and Resistance (1400– 1750)

Through this driving concept, students will analyze the shift from micro to macro networks of human interaction. Students will analyze the impact of increased global interaction on human populations across the world, including the movement of plants, animals, pathogens, technology and people — both voluntary and unjustly forced. Students should analyze different perspectives and sources to evaluate the different motivations for increased trade and interaction.

Essential Question

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

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About This Unit

Unit 2: Americas: Conquest & Colonization examines the transformative effects of European colonization on the Americas and the lasting consequences for Indigenous communities. Students will explore the diverse and complex societies that existed in the Americas before European contact and analyze how European exploration and colonization reshaped the social, economic, and cultural landscapes of the continent. The unit will highlight the motivations behind European expansion, the key figures involved, and the processes of colonization that led to the displacement and disruption of Indigenous ways of life. Students will critically assess the long-term impacts of these colonial actions, including the destruction of Indigenous populations, the imposition of European governance, and the cultural changes that followed. The unit culminates in an annotated source collection, where students will engage with a variety of primary and secondary sources to evaluate the historical significance of European colonization and its enduring effects on Indigenous societies across the Americas.

Use the Best Practices Repository for information on implementing every strategy and lesson activity!

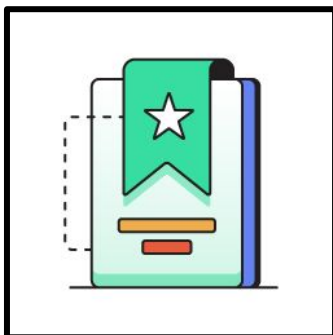
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Priority Standards	
2.12	Evaluate the motivations for European maritime expeditions across the Atlantic Ocean and the impact of ideology, disease, and inherited and revised technologies on systems of enslavement and colonization.
2.13	Analyze government structures, technological innovations and geographical features of empires and city states across the Americas to evaluate the drastic impact of European colonization on Indigenous societies, including the Aztec and Incan Empires.
2.14	Analyze examples of Indigenous resistance to European colonization in the Americas.
2.25	Evaluate the impact of Spanish missionaries and resistance to colonization on Indigenous culture and social roles in the Americas, including on the evolution of language and the impact on Two-Spirit identities in different cultures.

Additional Standards	
2.2	Analyze geographic features of Afro-Eurasia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas and Oceania in the early 1400s, including the impact of native crops, bodies of water, landforms and climate on the development of societies in each region.
2.3	Compare the size and relative isolation of different regional networks across Afro-Eurasia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas and Oceania at the start of the 15th century.
2.6	Analyze the impact of the exchange of agricultural methods and scientific, mathematical and technological innovations on at least two different societies across the Americas in the 14th and 15th centuries.
2.20	Evaluate the limits of using European sources for understanding the political, technological, and cultural life of empires in the Americas.

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Unit Preview		
<i>Subtopic(s)</i>	<i>Compelling Question</i>	<i>Standard(s)</i>
American Societies Pre-European Contact	How did American societies govern themselves, sustain their populations, and express their identities before European exploration?	2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.13, 2.20
European Colonization	To what extent did European empire-building impact Indigenous societies, global trade, and cultural exchange?	2.2, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.20
Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Populations	How were the impacts of European conquest experienced and understood by Native American populations?	2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.25
Assessment:		All Unit Standards



Unit Focus Skill: Historical Significance

Thinking historically means identifying and exploring the reasons why historical people, places, events, or ideas are worth remembering; that is, their historical significance.

American Societies Pre-European Contact: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 1 (120 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 2 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 3 (90 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	What factors facilitated Aztec dominance in Mesoamerica?	How did the Inka expand, govern, and legitimize their rule?	How did the Aztec and Inka systems of governance differ in managing their empires?
STANDARD(S)	2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.13, 2.20	2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.13	2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.13
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Causation Evaluating Evidence	Contextualization Historical Significance	Comparison
DO FIRST	Frayer: Aztecs Notice, Wonder, Think	Frayer: Inkas (Incas) A-Z Guide	Frayer: Centralized Government Anticipatory Guide
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 1: Supporting Questions	Introduction to the Inka (Inca)	Introduction to Comparison Source Analysis
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Guided Notes and Gallery Walk	Smithsonian Digital Exhibit	Comparison Graphic Organizer
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	Formative Assessment: Aztecs- Evidence	N/A	Comparison Infographic
CONCLUSION	Causation Graphic Organizer	Exit Ticket: Quickwrite	Optional: Review Anticipatory Guide Unit 2 Inquiry Journal Topic 1: Compelling Question

European Colonization: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 4 (120 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 5 (60 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	What were the key motivations behind European exploration?	Should we celebrate Columbus' "discovery" of America?
STANDARD(S)	2.12	2.12, 2.13
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Causation Contextualization	Contextualization Historical Significance
DO FIRST	Frayer: Age of Exploration A-Z Guide	Frayer: Columbus Day Notice, Wonder, Think
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 2: Supporting Questions	Partner Reading of Presidential Proclamations
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Introduction to Causes of European Exploration "What is the Context?" European Exploration	Columbus Day Source Analysis
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	European Exploration Research + Advertisement	Inside/Outside Circle
CONCLUSION	Exit Ticket: Gallery Walk	Exit Ticket: Quickwrite

European Colonization: Topic Overview Continued

	<u>LESSON 6 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 7 (150 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 8 (60 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	How did the Columbian Exchange affect the people, environments, and economies across the Atlantic?	What is known about early Indigenous and European interactions and how reliable are the European sources in explaining them?	How did social hierarchies develop in Spanish America and what lasting impacts did they have?
STANDARD(S)	2.2, 2.12	2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.20	2.12
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Causation	Perspective Evaluating Evidence	Perspective Historical Significance
DO FIRST	Frayer: Columbian Exchange Prediction	Frayer: New World Image Alive	Frayer: Caste System Notice, Wonder, Think
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Introduction to the Columbian Exchange	Historical Figure Research	Casta Paintings Video and Questions
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Columbian Exchange Interactive Map	Historical Figure Profile	Caste System Pyramid
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	Columbian Exchange One-Pager	Historical Figure Speed Dating (Inside/Outside Circle)	Casta Painting Gallery Walk
CONCLUSION	Exit Ticket: Quick Research	Exit Ticket: Quickwrite	Unit 2 Inquiry Journal Topic 2: Compelling Question

Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Populations: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 9 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 10 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 11 (90 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	In what ways did the Spanish manage and control Indigenous populations?	How did systems that coerced labor from Indigenous populations affect their social, economic, and cultural structures?	How significant was the role of disease in reshaping the demographics of Indigenous societies?
STANDARD(S)	2.12, 2.13	2.12, 2.13	2.12
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Contextualization Comparison Perspective	Causation	Causation Historical Significance
DO FIRST	Frayer: Encomienda System Notice, Wonder, Think	Frayer: Coerce Notice, Wonder, Think	Frayer: Demographics Anticipatory Guide
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Inquiry Journal Topic 3: Supporting Questions	"What is Causation?" Coerced Labor Readings Jigsaw	Introduction to Blog Posts "Early American Contagions" Reading
ACTIVITY 2 - PRACTICE	Encomienda System Reading	Causation Graphic Organizer	Impact of Disease Blog Post
ACTIVITY 3 - EXHIBIT	Encomienda System Source Comparison	Formative Assessment: European Exploration- Causation	Optional: Review Anticipatory Guide
CONCLUSION	Perspective Graphic Organizer	Exit Ticket: Triangle, Square, Circle	Exit Ticket: Blog Post Peer Evaluation



Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Populations: Topic Overview

	<u>LESSON 12 (60 MINS)</u>	<u>LESSON 13 (90 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	To what extent did Spanish missionaries alter Indigenous cultures and societies?	How did Indigenous populations resist European conquest and colonization?
STANDARD(S)	2.12, 2.14, 2.25	2.14, 2.25
FOCUS SKILL(S)	Historical Empathy Evaluating Evidence	Historical Significance
DO FIRST	Frayer: Mission System A-Z Guide	Frayer: Resistance Give One, Get One
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH	Introduction to Spanish Missions	Introduction to Historical Significance
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE	Spanish Missions and Cultural Syncretism Stations	Indigenous Resistance Reading and Rainbow Highlighting
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT	N/A	Indigenous Resistance Jigsaw Historical Significance Graphic Organizer
CONCLUSION	Formative Assessment: Guaraní and Jesuits- Evaluating Evidence	Unit 2 Inquiry Journal Topic 3: Compelling Question

Assessment Overview

	LESSON 14 (60 MINS)	<u>LESSON 15 (120 MINS)</u>
SUPPORTING QUESTION	Place-Based Lesson Extension <i>See page 11 for lesson options and view Best Practice Repository for additional information about implementation</i>	How did European conquest of the Americas have long-lasting impacts on Indigenous American societies?
STANDARD(S)		All Unit Standards
FOCUS SKILL(S)		Historical Significance Evaluating Evidence
DO FIRST		Frayer: Annotation Give One, Get One
ACTIVITY 1 - LAUNCH		Introduce and Model Source Annotation
ACTIVITY 2- PRACTICE		Source Selection and Annotation
ACTIVITY 3- EXHIBIT		Peer Review
CONCLUSION		Unit 2 Inquiry Journal Essential Question

Place Based Lesson Extension

	LESSON 14 (60 MINS)
SUPPORTING QUESTION	
STANDARD(S)	
FOCUS SKILL(S)	
DO FIRST	
OPTION 1 - PODCAST	
OPTION 2 - SYNCHRONOUS PRESENTATION	
OPTION 3 - FIELD TRIP	
CONCLUSION	

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Unit Commentary:

Unit 2 provides students with an in-depth exploration of key historical events and their long-lasting impacts. As they work through the unit, students will practice the skill of assessing historical significance, which will be the focus of their final assessment—an annotated source collection. This skill will help students understand how historical events and developments have shaped the world in permanent ways, both at the time and in subsequent periods.

Topic 1 examines American societies before European contact, giving students the chance to explore the diverse cultures, governance systems, and technologies that existed. Students will analyze primary sources and artifacts to understand how Aztec and Inkan societies were organized and how they interacted with their environments.

In Topic 2, the focus shifts to European colonization. Students will investigate the motivations behind European exploration and colonization, examining key figures, events, and the processes through which Europeans established control over new territories. This topic will challenge students to assess the significance of colonization from both the European and Indigenous perspectives.

Topic 3 explores the lasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples. Through a variety of sources, students will analyze the social, economic, and cultural changes that resulted from European colonization. This topic emphasizes the deep and enduring effects of these changes on Indigenous communities across the Americas.

The unit concludes with an annotated source collection assessment. Students will select and annotate primary and secondary sources to evaluate the historical significance of the European conquest and colonization of the Americas. This activity encourages students to critically engage with historical evidence, draw connections between sources, and articulate the long-lasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous societies.

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Suggested Readings and Helpful Resources:

For information on:

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Unit Pedagogical Resources:

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Museum Component:

- Optional Field Trip: [The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian](#)
 - Exhibit → Nation to Nation: Treaties between the United States and American Indian Nations