

## **15 DAY TOPICS LIST**

### Themes

The overall theme is the history of great cultural clash and exchange, its effect upon the member cultures, and its significance in shaping the age.

### Subtopics

Questions behind this theme include:

- What are the specific features of this exchange?
- Which group(s) seems to gain from this exchange? Which groups lose?
- What forces/conditions/events speak to the uneven and unequal exchange of culture?

### Sequence of Topics

1. Contextual information on the three worlds (Europe, West Africa, and the Americas)
2. Debriefing of this cultural context (creation of a graphic organizer to aid students)
3. Introduce Christopher Columbus and his Atlantic Crossing
4. Perspectives of Columbus and Las Casas: A comparative document analysis
5. Columbus & the limitations of Native enslavement
6. Subsequent development of West African trade and the Middle Passage
7. Disease, Firearms, & Hierarchy: European Dominance of the New World
8. Expanding Exploration: French & British modes of reconnaissance and settlement
9. Perils and Promise of British colonial Establishment: Thomas Hariot's account

## **15-DAY CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES**

### **Week One: Worlds apart—a study of three cultures in the late fifteenth century**

**Day One** – Context information on Europe. This will consist of a guided reading over A World Lit Only By Fire. Central questions will include: What characteristics define 15<sup>th</sup> Century Europe? What are the forces/conditions that might lead to exploration of the wider world?

**Day Two** – Context information on West Africa. First, students will read selections of the travelogue “Voyage to Africa” by Venetian noble Alvise da Mosto. This will give students an understanding of the Mali Empire as well as a model travelogue. Through the Gold of Africa (Art Institute) slide show and readings, students will be asked to construct an understanding of Pre-European West African culture, specifically the Sudanic empires tied in the West African gold trade. After viewing the slide show, students will be asked to use the slide show images and text (and da Mosto’s example) to create their own travelogue.

**Day Three-** Context information on the Americas. Through reading “Collision at Cajamarca” (from Guns, Germs, & Steel) students will explore the sophisticated empires of the Incans under Atahualpa. Through selections from Brian Fagan’s Kingdoms of Gold, Kingdoms of Jade: The Americas before Columbus students will examine the tribal and national characteristics of North American Natives. The guiding questions will be: How are Pre-Columbian European and American worlds different? How are they the same?

**Day Four** – Students will use the day-three lesson to aid in answering the following Document Based Question: “Based upon the documents and your understanding of yesterday’s lesson, how advanced were the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan civilizations? What are the unique features of each civilization?” (DBQ will be adapted from DBQ activities for Global History Classes DBQ 9: Civilization of the Americas. The DBQ contains six various documents, ranging from pictures, quotes, and a map. Students will be using these six documents to answer the guiding question. The teacher will have the option on how he/she wants to use the DBQ. Considering that this unit will be at the beginning of the school year, a suggestion may be to have students simply create an outline of the DBQ. This may be a good starting point for the class as they continue to develop their DBQ organization and writing skills. This DBQ will challenge the students to not only analyze the documents given, but also to apply the contextual information given on day three of the unit. Students will also learn to have an appreciation of the advanced civilizations of the Americas.

**Day Five** – Debrief on the Three Worlds. As a first project, students will create their own graphic organizer (a product that will serve each student as a learning aid in the subsequent weeks) emphasizing the differences and similarities of each culture, the explicit and implicit goals of each culture, and the differing motivations behind each

culture. The purpose will be for students to have a clear schema of the three worlds on the eve of cultural exchange.

## **Week Two: The Great Cultural Clash—Columbus, gold, glory, and enslavement**

**Day Six** – Columbus’s crossing: The experience of a European sailor (detailed lesson plan by Carolyn Blanda)

**Day Seven** – Perspectives of Columbus, Las Casas, and the Arawak people: A comparative document analysis. This material will come from excerpts highlighted in Howard Zinn’s A People’s History of the United States and James Loewen’s Lies My Teacher Told Me. Students will read excerpts from:

- 1) Christopher Columbus’s account of the Arawak Natives on Hispaniola
- 2) Spanish colonial landowner and Dominican Priest Bartolome Las Casas’ written criticism of Native American treatment at the hands of Spanish colonial governors
- 3) A brief Arawak commentary on the foreign explorers love of gold

Discussion of these documents will be based around the questions “Explain the different views of gold held by Columbus and the Arawak people? To what extent are these differences cultural, to what extent practical? (THIS QUESTION IS AN HONORS LEVEL MODIFICATION) Las Casas and Columbus both come from a European cultural background—examine and clarify the differences in their perspective. How do we as historians account for such differences?”

**Day Eight** – Limitations of Native Amerindian enslavement: Re-enacting the Las Casas-Sepulveda debate. For this lesson, students will have read a brief background on the debate of Native American enslavement held at the court of the conscious-heavy Spanish King Charles I. Students will have also read selections from the two sides Las Casas’ *In Defense of the Indians* and Spanish court chaplain and historian Juan Gines de Sepulveda’s *The Just Causes of War Against the Indians* (Both passages are found in Alfred Andrea’s document compilation The Human Record: Sources of Global History) With this material, students will be placed into two teams (picked the day of the debate), given ten minutes to organize their arguments and potential counter-arguments, and then debate for their side (lasting no longer than 15-20 minutes). The last ten minutes of class will be used for debriefing (What do we know now? What questions do we have?) and lead to the question of alternatives (a segue into African enslavement in the Americas.)

**Day Nine** –West African trade and the Middle Passage: Context

This day will be spent giving the students contextual information/background on the origins of the slave trade in West Africa, the Middle Passage, and reasons for African enslavement. Students will be given a brief lecture pointing out the major ideas of the origins of the slave trade and the treatment of these slaves on the Middle Passage. Information will be used from Jill Lepore’s Encounters in the New World and the Smithsonian/NCSS project Seeds of Change. Students will read a selection titled “Ships of Death” from Encounters in the New World. This will give students a better understanding of the conditions on the slave ships. Students will then use the information

from their reading and create a visual image of the middle passage. Students will draw/create their understanding of what the middle passage represented to them. Once students have finished their drawings, the teacher can share these images to the class. Some guiding questions to consider during this day: What were the motives that led to the slave trade and how did that affect the Middle Passage? Why were Africans chosen to become slaves?

**Day Ten** – On-line History: Discovering the Middle Passage through Image Analysis (detailed lesson plan by Jimmy Ku)

### **Week Three: The Historian’s Task—Reasons for European Dominance & The New Future of the Americas**

**Day Eleven (FINAL PROJECT)**--Disease, Firearms, & Hierarchy: European Dominance of the New World. After two weeks of primary source documents, secondary sources, and images, students will be asked to create a thesis collage to answer the following question:

*Why did the cultural exchange between Europeans, Americans, and West Africans follow the path it did? What do you think are the most important events, forces, and/or conditions that led to this outcome?*

For the thesis collage, Students will be required to create a poster consisting of a statement of their argument (thesis) and at least six (6) excerpts of the unit’s documents supporting their thesis. Students will have class time to work on this project, though it will not be due until the end of the week. In addition to the thesis collage poster, each student will have to write a brief project reflection guided by the questions:

- 1) What new learning did you construct as a result of this assignment?
- 2) What evidence did you leave out? Why?
- 3) Unlike a research paper, you were allowed to make only brief comments next to the evidence you selected.  
What was the effect of this restriction on your final product?  
How did it help? How was it an obstacle?

**Day Twelve**--Expanding Exploration: French & British modes of reconnaissance and settlement. As students are taking the week to answer the large questions of cultural exchange, the remainder of the week will be devoted to narrowing the content focus to North American colonization, specifically the earliest British colonies. For brief background material students will read selections from James Loewen’s Lies My Teacher Told Me. Central discussion questions will include: What are the differences/similarities between French settlement and English settlement in North America? How do these differences lead to English dominance on the Atlantic coast of North America?

**Day Thirteen**--Perils and Promise of British colonial Establishment: Thomas Hariot's account. Students will be given a three-page excerpt of Thomas Hariot's A Briefe and True Report on the New Foundland of Virginia. As this is by far the most difficult text the students have received (A facsimile of a 1588 text), they will spend the whole day in small groups pulling it apart and attempting basic comprehension. The students' homework assignment is to come back with a list of ideas, events, and things they think Hariot is writing about.

**Day Fourteen**--Perils and Promise of British colonial Establishment: Thomas Hariot's account part 2. (Detailed lesson plan by Joseph Brysiewicz)

**Day Fifteen**—Students will have an opportunity to present their completed thesis collages. Briefly, each student will state their argument and pick two or three of their best pieces of evidence to support their argument. With any remaining time, whole-group discussion will focus on the assignment reflection piece and the perils and excitement of constructing the past out of select evidence.