



Exploitation in Cuba during the Ages of Exploration and Colonization

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Seventh Grade World History

Keywords: Cuba, Christopher Columbus, encomienda system, requerimiento, Native Americans, slavery, Middle Passage

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This curriculum unit will examine the issue of exploitation of certain groups in Cuba during the Ages of Exploration and Colonization. It focuses in particular on the exploitation of Native Americans and enslaved Africans brought to the New World. In the unit, students will discover the impact, both positive and negative, of Christopher Columbus and how his actions resulted in the enslavement of Native Americans. Then, students will consider how the encomienda system, a system whereby conquerors were granted the labor of Native Americans, was used as another method of enslavement. Finally, students will engage with personal accounts of those who traveled the Middle Passage and will consider what that horrific voyage may have been like for the millions of Africans who were forced to travel it. Finally, students will be assessed through the creation of sensory figures so that they have a real understanding of the personal effects of this exploitation.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 138 students in Seventh Grade World History.

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Exploitation in Cuba during the Ages of Exploration and Colonization

Lisa Modrow

Introduction

How does a country evolve over time? How is a country impacted by contact and conquest? How does the exploitation of certain groups of people affect society as a whole? In the case of Cuba, radical changes took place in government, economics, and society in response to these conditions. The lives of the Native Americans were forever altered with the arrival Christopher Columbus and others who sailed for Spain. The social structure of Cuba changed as well with the advent of the Encomienda System, a system established by the Spanish as a means of rewarding conquerors by establishing Native Americans as a labor source. As Cuba was recognized for its potential as an economic asset, enslaved Africans were imported to Cuba in droves. All of these structural and societal changes influenced Cuba's evolution as a country.

As a fellow in the Charlotte Teachers Institute seminar *Tracing the Legacy of Hispanic Cultures – 1492 to Today*, I am able to draw direct parallels between the topics discussed in the seminar meetings and the topics covered in my World History class, particularly as I teach the Ages of Exploration and Colonization. As discussions unfold around our assigned readings, my understanding of the development of Hispanic cultures will enhance my teaching of this unit. While the seminar progresses from the influence of Christopher Columbus and the Spanish explorers to the culture of modern Cuba, these topics directly correspond to the lessons in my unit.

School Demographics

I teach seventh grade social studies at Bailey Middle School in Cornelius, North Carolina, a northern suburb of Charlotte, North Carolina. Our school is part of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, a school district that serves over 145,000 students.¹ Bailey Middle School serves around 1700 students in grades six through eight. Bailey recently received a School Performance Grade of "A."

Demographics

Asian	5%
Black	8%
Hispanic	10%
Two or more ethnicities	5%
Caucasian	76%

In my classroom, I teach 138 seventh grade students per day in four classes of seventh grade social studies. Integrated in those classes are English as a Second Language students as well as Exceptional Children. Differentiated learning strategies are required to efficiently serve our student population.

Bailey Middle School is a one to one technology school, which means that each student has access to a chrome book in every class. Because of this, lessons and student activities frequently involve technology.

Our school is involved in the North Star Learning Initiative developed by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Each school is tasked with integrating literacy skills and objectives into all four core content areas. In Social Studies, we concentrate on analyzing and annotating complex texts for improved comprehension and deeper understanding.

For students who need either remediation or enrichment, we offer a time at the start of every day named Bronco Block. During this time, students engage in differentiated assignments in math and language arts as well as remediation in areas with which they need assistance. For high-performing students, this time is used for enrichment. The rigor of student assignments can be increased as appropriate.

Rationale

This unit will be designed for Seventh Grade Social Studies. In seventh grade, the focus of study for the students is World History from the Renaissance through the modern world. Because we cover over 500 years of history at an accelerated pace, it is important that students consider the personal impact of the major eras of history, as this enables them to make deeper connections with the material. This unit will focus on the impact of the exploitation of certain groups of people in Cuba's history.

Prior to seventh grade, much of students' knowledge of the past is rooted in American history. Because it is the history of the country in which we live, topics discussed, particularly the exploitation of any particular group, can take on a personal meaning for many students. When history becomes too personal among students in the classroom, emotions can interfere with rationality. By discussing sensitive topics like slavery in the context of another place, my hope is that students will feel more comfortable in analyzing the effects of the exploitation of certain groups of people in a comparative context.

Additionally, sometimes students can feel disconnected to the history we study. One of the goals of this unit is to humanize the impact of the major eras of history on Cuba. By returning to the same place in each unit of study, students should be able to draw parallels between Cuba's history and the major historical eras.

By the end of seventh grade, students must demonstrate competency in reading and analyzing historical texts, including documents, political cartoons, and propaganda. This unit complements those skills as students would be able to practice their close reading of historical information. Not only would they have to realize the meaning of these texts, but they would be required to delve into the text to discover how it impacted Cuba during the particular time period.

Since we cover so much history at such an accelerated pace, my hope is that by returning to the same concept in multiple units from diverse perspectives of various peoples, students will gain a deeper understanding of the information. When they begin to make connections between the different world events and their impact, I hope that students will look for those same patterns emerging as they continue their study of history and become global citizens.

Unit Goals

The seventh grade course of study in North Carolina requires students to examine the implications of increased global interaction as they study the world from the Age of Exploration to contemporary times. The standards are organized around the five strands of social studies: history, geography, and environmental literacy, economics and financial literacy, civics and governance and culture. These strands are integrated to enhance student understanding of the world in which we live.

The North Carolina Essential Standards demand that students investigate the various factors that shape the development of regions and nations. This unit addresses this need by focusing on the following Essential Standards in the Seventh Grade Social Studies Course:

7.H.1	Use historical thinking to analyze various modern societies.
7.H.2	Understand the implications of global interactions.
7.G.1	Understand how geography, demographic trends, and environmental conditions shape modern societies and regions.
7.C&G.1	Understand the development of government in modern societies and regions.
7.C.1	Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions

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In addition to specific Social Studies standards, teachers are expected to address Common Core Reading anchor standards in literacy to ensure that students are college

and career ready. This unit will focus on the following Common Core Reading Standards for Social Studies:

Key Ideas and Details	Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
	Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
Craft and Structure	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Content Background

Introduction

Cuba is the largest island of the Caribbean. Its rolling plains, temperate climate and amount of rainfall make it well suited for agriculture, a prominent industry on the island. Today, Cuba has a communist government, but is beginning to allow more private ownership and loosen regulations for its citizens.ⁱⁱⁱ

Cuba has a unique history in comparison to much of the rest of North and South America. From its early native population of the Taino to the arrival of Christopher Columbus, which ushered in a new era of Spanish domination, Cuba has undergone tremendous change. Through the era of exploration and colonization, Cuba would import slaves from Africa which would forever alter its social structure. With the advent of the age of revolutions, its political structure would change. In modern times, the rise of Fidel Castro would usher in more political and economic changes for this island nation.

Age of Exploration

Prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus, Cuba was inhabited by a few indigenous groups, primarily the Taino. Taino people lived mostly in constructed buhios, circular or rectangular huts made of bamboo with thatched roofs. These were kept tidy and even

included modest decoration in the form of baskets and decorated pottery.^{iv} Each Taino cluster had a cacique, or leader, who frequently had many wives. However, aboriginal Cuban women seem to have been equal to men in daily life.^v

On October 28, 1492, Christopher Columbus landed in Cuba, which he called Juana in honor of the son of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain. Although he mistakenly believed that he had arrived in Asia, Columbus was immediately taken with what he saw on the island. He thought “a thousand tongues could not adequately relate its loveliness.”^{vi} In his letters for Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain, Columbus relayed that this new land was “not surpassed under the sun in climate, soil and abundance of potable waters, sure to prove materially profitable to Christendom and to Spain especially.”^{vii}

The journal of Christopher Columbus indicates that the Native Americans welcomed him everywhere and accepted his small trinkets as gifts. He enlisted the assistance of an indigenous man as a guide. Although this guide assured him that he had indeed landed on an island, Columbus would not concede that he and his navigators may have miscalculated and issued a declaration that Cuba was a continent.^{viii}

Believing that the islands contained vast amounts of gold, the Spanish explored and when gold was found, forced the Native Americans to work the mines. The indigenous people were exploited in other ways as well. The most detrimental contribution of the Spanish, at least to the indigenous people, were Old World diseases like smallpox and measles, which decimated the native population, who had no immunity.

Age of Colonization

Once the Spanish established dominance on the island of Cuba by defeating any native rebellions, they sought to increase the Spanish presence and control in Cuba by means of the establishment of the Encomienda System. Under this system, portions of the native population would be commended to Spaniards. The Spanish were intended to be “gentle Christian masters who were to instruct [the natives] in the faith and to feed, clothe, and house them, also while training them to do useful work.”^{ix} In theory, this system is beneficial to all involved parties. In reality, it amounted to nothing more than the enslavement of the native people.

Friar Bartolomé de las Casas was among the early Spaniards to receive an encomienda. After a time, however, he began to feel concerned about how the Native Americans were being treated by the Spanish. The Cubeños, as Las Casas referred to the indigenous people of Cuba, were quite hospitable at first and “received the first Spaniards who arrived among them as heavenly visitors.”^x These indigenous people would be betrayed by their hospitality, however, as the Spanish would treat them with ever-increasing cruelty. One example of this cruelty was described by Las Casas as an

instance where the Native Americans welcomed the Spanish with food, but afterwards, a massacre followed. Las Casas writes,

Then, suddenly, without cause and without warning, and in my presence, the Devil inhabited the Christians and spurred them to attack the Indians, men, women, and children, who were sitting there before us. In the massacre that followed, the Spaniards put to the sword more than three thousand souls.^{xi}

This is not the only instance of cruelty described by Las Casas. As the native population began to realize their fate as slaves of the Spanish, many resorted to escape or suicide. Las Casas describes that “there were husbands and wives who hanged themselves together with their children”^{xii} rather than suffer the injustices of the Spanish.

When it became apparent that the Spanish were going to be a permanent presence in Cuba, Diego Velázquez established a permanent settlement and served as the first governor of Cuba. He issued encomiendas, or grants of Native American labor, but soon found that many Spanish women did not wish to sail to the New World. Because of this, marriage between Spaniards and natives became legal.^{xiii} The Encomienda System encouraged cruelty, abuse, and overwork. As a result of this and the spread of Old World diseases, the native population became so small that a new labor source had to be found.

Slavery

This new labor source for Cuba would come from Africa. African slaves would be gradually introduced as labor beginning in the 1500’s. Gradually, Cuba’s suitability for growing sugar cane was realized. Because the growing of sugar cane is labor intensive, the number of slaves brought to Cuba from Africa dramatically increased. Another reason for this is that the growers “preferred male rather than female slaves” for the cane fields and determined that replenishing the supply of new slaves was a “cheaper alternative to raising slave children.”^{xiv}

Slavery had existed in Africa for many years prior to the transatlantic slave trade. It existed in one form as prisoners of war. Those who lost in battle were enslaved by their rivals. Slavery in this form, however, usually meant that the children of these slaves were born free and did not have to suffer their father’s punishment for losing in battle. Sometimes these slaves were even given their freedom after a certain time period. Indentured servitude also existed in Africa, but again was not necessarily a generational condition. By contrast, the slaves who were taken to the New World would be enslaved for the duration of their lives and this enslavement would continue in perpetuity for generations to come until the end of slavery is declared.

The transport of slaves from Africa was known as the Middle Passage. This horrific journey across the Atlantic Ocean began with capture in Africa. Once captured, Africans would be transported to slave forts on the Western coast of Africa to await transport on a cargo ship. Once loaded onto the ship, slaves would often be shackled together with very little room to move.^{xv} Frequently, slaves were captured from different tribes, which made communication difficult, if not impossible, due the lack of a common language. “Exhaustion, malnutrition, fear, and seasickness resulted in depressed immune systems and vulnerability to disease.”^{xvi} These unendurable conditions on the Middle Passage would only be the beginning of the suffering of these captured Africans, for when they arrived in the New World, they would be treated with little to no human dignity.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Cornell Notes

The Cornell note-taking strategy allows students to organize material by key concepts and ideas. Students will divide their papers into two columns with the column on the right being slightly larger. A horizontal line should be drawn at the bottom of the page, leaving a space of about five to seven lines. The column on the right will be used for taking notes in an abbreviated format. It should consist of main concepts and paraphrased ideas rather than long sentences. The use of symbols and abbreviations is encouraged. The column on the left should be used for key words and questions regarding the information. Recording these key words and questions will facilitate easier review of the information at a later date. When both the left and right columns have been completed, students should use the remaining space on the bottom of the page to write a short summary of the information that is included in the notes. This short summary encourages comprehension and retention of the material.

Document Analysis – Say- Mean- Matter

The Say-Mean-Matter strategy is used to enable students to garner a deeper understanding of a text. It encourages students to question a text, search for deeper meanings in the text, and recognize connections that can be made with the text. In order to utilize this strategy, students should create a chart of three equal columns. The words “Say,” “Mean,” and “Matter” should be written at the top of each column respectively. In the first column, students will look for a few meaningful direct quotes from the text and record them. What does it say? The responses in the first column should answer this question. In the second column, students will complete an interpretation of the direct quotes. What does it mean? This question should be answered in the student responses in the second column. Students should be able to defend why they think or how they

know that is the correct interpretation of the material. In the third column, students are asked to consider the implications of what the text says. What does it matter? That is the central focus question for student responses in the third column. Students should consider its importance or significance, particularly how it relates to the concept as a whole. This practice will help students scrutinize the connections that are required for deeper understanding of a text.

If desired, this strategy can serve as a prewriting activity for student analysis of a text. If students have successfully completed the Say-Mean-Matter chart, they can utilize their response from the Matter column to craft an effective thesis statement about the material. To support the thesis, students can employ quotes from the text recorded in the Say column. In effect, they have already found required textual evidence for their thesis statements. Finally, they will use the information recorded in the Mean column to explain their text evidence and how it relates to their thesis statements.

Visual Analysis - OPTIC

This strategy is used to analyze visual texts, including paintings, drawings, photographs, and other visual media. OPTIC is an acronym for Overview, Parts, Title, Interrelationships, and Conclusion. As students complete each aspect of the strategy, they will gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of such texts.

The first step of the strategy is the Overview. In this part, students are asked to describe what is happening in the picture. They should not look for any meaning, only to write with enough detail so that someone who could not see the picture would get a clear image. The second step is to consider the Parts of the picture. Students should note any details that seem important, including but not limited to shading, numbers, size, placement, and movement. Next, students will analyze the Title. Does the title add to the understanding of the visual? What does the title suggest about the image? The next step of the strategy is to scrutinize the Interrelationships in the image. How do the parts relate to one another? How do the parts come together to create tone or meaning in the picture? Finally, students should draw a Conclusion based on the previous steps of the strategy. What was the creator of this image trying to convey?

Text Analysis - SOAPStone

This strategy is used to strengthen readers' interaction and comprehension of a text. It requires students to view a text through different lenses in order to facilitate a complex analysis of the text. SOAPStone is an acronym that stands for Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, and Tone. It is particularly in the analysis of historical texts as it requires students to consider the context and reliability of a given source. In order to use this strategy, students should first read and annotate the text. Annotations should include main ideas and questions and should reflect meaningful student interaction with

the document. When annotations have been completed, students will employ the SOAPSTone strategy.

Students should first consider the Speaker. Who wrote the text? What role did this writer play in the historical context of the event? The second consideration in the strategy is the Occasion. In what time and place was this text created? Students should be encouraged to keep in mind both the immediate events that may have precipitated this document as well as how it fits in to the larger historical event. When this analysis has been completed, students will move on to contemplate the Audience for this particular piece of writing. Who is the particular group of readers to whom this piece is written? This step is not always explicit, which means students will have to utilize higher order thinking skills to complete this analysis. Next, they will be asked to identify the Purpose of the document. Why was it written? In further consideration, students should think about what action or response the writer intended as a result of reading this piece. The next step in the analysis will be to succinctly state the Subject of the text. What is it mostly about? Finally, students should examine the Tone of the text. In order to do this, diction, imagery, and syntax should be considered and regarded for how they point to the general feelings of the author of the document. If this document was read aloud by its creator, what tone of voice would be used?

Collaborative Groups

In this strategy, the teacher will select student groups based on ability. Sometimes teachers may choose to group students by high, average, and low ability so that students will work with other students on their level. This fosters appropriate academic conversations at the level of each student. At other times, the teacher may group students by varying abilities so that students will have the chance to interact with other students at different levels. This encourages the higher students to explain material, which facilitates a deeper understanding when they are required to teach it to peers and it allows the lower students to view the thought processes of those students who are not struggling with the material. This strategy satisfies the 21st century global competency skills requirements that call for students to work collaboratively.

Think Pair Share

This strategy is used to foster individual student responses for which they receive immediate feedback from a peer. The teacher will present a question or topic for students to consider. The teacher will then allow up to two minutes of think time in order to students to produce their own individual response. After the two minutes, students will be paired with another student in the classroom. When the pairing has been completed, student A will present their response to the prompt with student B. Student B should not interrupt student A, but should listen fully. Then student B will share while student A listens fully. After both students have shared, they will each provide feedback about the

other's response. This enables students to receive immediate feedback. Together, each pair will be asked to share out with the class.

Bio-Poem

The creation of a bio-poem is a tool that students can use to analyze historical figures at a deeper level. The construction of the poem requires that students think about a person as more than just the obvious biographical details. It provides a structure for deeper thinking. Although a bio-poem can take different formats, a recommended structure is below^{xvii}:

(Line 1) First Name

(Line 2) Three or four adjectives that describe the person

(Line 3) Important relationship

(Line 4) Two or three things, persons, or ideas that this person loves

(Line 5) Three feelings this person has experienced

(Line 6) Three fears this person has

(Line 7) Accomplishments

(Line 8) Two or three things this person wants to happen or wants to experience

(Line 9) The residence of the person

(Line 10) Last Name

Sensory Figures Assessment Activity

Sensory Figures are created by students to force them to think about a topic with depth, rather than a surface level analysis. In order to create a sensory figure, students should create a simple drawing of an assigned figure. Around that figure, students will write about "what that person might be seeing, hearing, saying, feeling, or doing – to convey significant thoughts feelings, and experiences."^{xviii} Students should be assessed on accuracy and depth of historical understanding.

Classroom Activities

Day One – Christopher Columbus and the Age of Exploration

Purpose

Students will investigate the impact of Christopher Columbus.

Activities

KWL Chart

Cornell Notes

Say - Mean – Matter Document Analysis

Procedure

Warm Up

Begin the class by having students complete a KWL chart about Christopher Columbus. Students should have a fair amount of prior knowledge about him due to their study of him in elementary school. Be sure to focus on the perception of Christopher Columbus that students might have. At the conclusion of this activity, students should share responses as teacher records class input on a class KWL chart.

Activity 1

Students will use information from this website -

http://www.ducksters.com/biography/explorers/christopher_columbus.php^{xix} to take Cornell notes about Christopher Columbus.

At this point, students will reflect on notes taken and class will determine if any new information can be added to our KWL chart.

Activity 2

Introduce the Say, Mean, Matter technique for document analysis to students. Explain that they will now analyze the words of Christopher Columbus by examining his journal. Direct students to this website - <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/columbus1.asp>^{xx} in order to view the journal of Columbus. Teacher should model how to complete the Say, Mean, Matter technique using an entry from Columbus' journal. Then, teacher should assign a portion of the journal for student pairs. After students have been given adequate time to analyze their portion of the journal, students should share out with the class.

Conclusion

To conclude the lesson, teacher should direct the class to complete their own KWL charts about Christopher Columbus. After completion, students should share while teacher records answers on class KWL chart.

Day Two – Another Viewpoint on Christopher Columbus and the Age of Exploration

Purpose

Students will investigate the impact of Spanish exploration in Cuba

Activities

Historical Figure Description

OPTIC Technique for Visual Analysis

Procedure

Warm Up

Ask students to draw a stick figure of Christopher Columbus. Around the figure, ask students to list adjectives that describe Christopher Columbus based on yesterday's readings and discussion. When complete, students should share with partners, then with entire class.

Quickly review some of the information gleaned about Christopher Columbus from his journal that we investigated yesterday. How does he portray himself? What image does he want King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to have of him? Explain that today we are going to learn about Columbus from other sources besides his firsthand accounts of what his journey entailed, which will give us a more balanced perspective about his impact.

Activity 1

Show students the video from this site –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF_unlvjccA.^{xxi} Instruct students that as they watch the video, they should continue adding adjectives around their stick figure of Columbus. They should do this in a different color than they used in the warm-up activity.

After the video, give students a few minutes to finish listing adjectives that describe Columbus. Ask students to share their new adjectives with partners, then share with the class. How does the first list of adjectives compare to the second? What new information did we learn that changed the tone of the adjectives used? What surprised us about this new information?

Activity 2

Explain to students that today they are going to learn a new strategy for analyzing images. Remind students that when we look at images that it is important to look at everything in the picture, not just the main action. Introduce the instructions for using the

OPTIC technique for visual analysis and then display the Theodore de Bry sketches^{xxii} for students to see. Students should complete an analysis with a partner using the OPTIC technique. When finished, teacher should review responses with the class. How does the information in this image confirm the information from the video?

On the same page as these sketches are the writings of Bartolome de Las Casas. Read the last few paragraphs of his writing together as a class to emphasize the treatment the Native Americans received from the Spanish.

Conclusion

Draw a long horizontal line on the board for students to see. On one side write the word 'Hero' and on the other side, write the word 'Villain'. Ask students to consider where they think Christopher Columbus falls on this spectrum. Use the Think-Pair-Share strategy for students to share their own viewpoint and hear the viewpoint of a classmate. Then have students return to their desks. Teacher should ask students to write a paragraph to explain where they think Columbus falls on the spectrum. For students who need additional assistance, teacher should give them the following sentence starter: I think that Christopher Columbus is ____ percent hero and _____ percent villain because . . .

Day Three – Encomienda System

Purpose

Students will analyze the effects of the Encomienda System on the people of Cuba.

Activities

SOAPSTone Analysis

Think-Pair-Share

Procedure

Warm Up

Teacher should type the following sentences into Google Translate. "Each of you is going to have to complete a ten-page research paper about Spanish explorers by tomorrow. If you do not complete it, you will fail and it will not be my fault. It will be your fault for not following these instructions." Choose the option to have Google Translate read it aloud in another language. Be sure to choose a language in which none of your students is fluent. At the conclusion of the announcement, tell your students that they have been given their instructions and that they should begin. Allow for a few minutes of confusion before explaining what the announcement said. Get student feedback. How did they feel? Was this fair?

Activity 1

Explain to students that what happened to them at the beginning of class was very similar to what happened to the Native Americans when the Spanish came to claim their lands. Introduce the SOAPStone technique for historical document analysis. Guide students to the Spanish Requerimiento at this website -

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/contact/text7/requirement.pdf>.^{xxiii}

Students should work in collaborative groups to complete the analysis of the text. When finished, the analysis should be discussed as a class.

Activity 2

Tell students the basic premise of the Encomienda System that Spaniards in the New World were charged with a number of Native Americans who would provide a labor source for them in return for a Christian education and protection. Initiate a class discussion about this system. Does it sound fair? Who benefits the most from such a system? What are the drawbacks of this system? In order to get students moving around the room, the teacher could use the Think-Pair-Share strategy by setting a timer for 20 seconds and having students walk around the room. Students should pair up with whomever is nearest to them when the timer sounds.

Conclusion

Explain to students that the Encomienda System was ultimately a form of slavery for the Native Americans, many of whom would be worked to death or die from diseases brought to the New World from the Spanish. At the end of class, ask students to make a prediction about how the Spanish will replace the labor source of the Native Americans when they are decimated from diseases.

Day Four – Slaves and the Middle Passage

Purpose

Students will examine what the Middle Passage was like for slaves.

Activities

Document Analysis

Bio-Poem

Procedure

Warm Up

As students enter the classroom, ask them to make a list of terms that come to mind when they hear the word “slavery.” Allow students a few minutes to make their lists. At the conclusion of this time, have students share their lists with their table groups. As students share, they should circle any words that they wrote in common with anyone else

at the table. As a group, they should compile a list of like terms. Teacher will ask each table to share two words that were repeated at the table and make a class list on the board. Discuss why these terms were often repeated by many students.

Yesterday, students were asked to make a prediction for where a new labor source could be found for the New World after many of the Native Americans die from Old World diseases. Explain to students that this new source of labor will be captured and brought from Africa. The voyage for these captured Africans is what they will learn about today.

Activity 1

Distribute documents A, B, C, and E from the Reading Like a Historian website - <https://sheg.stanford.edu/middle-passage>. Teacher will NOT use the lesson plan provided on the site, but will instead use the documents for another purpose. These documents are made up of firsthand accounts of people who were related to the Middle Passage in some capacity.

Students should be divided into groups of four and a large sheet of butcher paper should be put in the center of each table. Distribute a different document to each person at the table. Tell students that their purpose for reading these documents is to determine what the Middle Passage was like. Allow students five minutes to read their individual document. When time is up, students should write on the section of the butcher paper in front of them what the Middle Passage was like according to the document they read. Encourage them to pull examples from the text and be very specific in their descriptions.

When each student has done this, students should share around the table. Whenever they hear someone use a word in their description that has already been used by another student, that word should be circled. After all students at the table have shared, the students should examine the words that have been circled. The teacher should ask each table to list five words that were repeated at the table and list them somewhere on the butcher paper.

Using those five words as a basis, the students at the table should work together to answer this question: What was the Middle Passage like for the slaves? Have them write their answer in a complete sentence that contains the five words they listed at their table. They should write this in the center of the butcher paper and underline the five words that were used. Class should share results.

Activity 2

Students should write a bio-poem about a slave who endured the voyage of the Middle Passage. Explain the format of the bio-poem and ask students to come up with reasonable answers for the information that they may not know specifically.

Conclusion

Students should share bio-poems with partners and those who wish may share with the entire class.

Day 5 – Slavery and Sugar

Purpose

Students will consider the impact of slavery on enslaved peoples.

Activities

Gallery Walk

Procedure

Warm Up

Ask students to think about a time when they had to work really hard, both physically and mentally. Have them write about the experience. What were they working toward? Was there a benefit to the work? Was the work for themselves, their families, a charity?

Activity

Explain to students that today they will be viewing and reacting to pictures of slavery in Cuba. Teacher should find and print pictures of slavery in Cuba, particularly related to the growing and harvesting required on sugar plantations. Pictures of work done in the growing of tobacco would also work for this purpose. Teacher should post these pictures on larger sheets of construction paper and hang around the perimeter of the room.

Tell students that they will be reacting to the pictures by using the following sentence starters:

I'm noticing . . .

I'm feeling . . .

I'm wondering . . .

Each student will walk around the room silently with a few sticky notes. As they walk from picture to picture, they should write a reaction on their sticky note using one of the sentence starters. When the sentence is complete, they should attach it to the construction paper on the border of the picture. When everyone has used all of their sticky notes and responded to the pictures, students should be given time to walk around again to read the responses from other students.

Conclusion

Students should share their perceptions of the pictures they saw today. Teacher could use this time to point out particularly reflective and appropriate statements made by students on the sticky notes.

Day 6 – Assessment

Purpose

Students will demonstrate their knowledge about the actions and activities of explorers, Native Americans, and Slaves during the Age of Exploration.

Activities

Sensory Figures Assessment

Procedure

Warm Up

Explain that students will demonstrate their knowledge today about the actions and activities of Christopher Columbus, Native Americans, and Slaves during the Age of Exploration. To prepare for this activity, students should draw an eye, ear, mouth, heart, and hand on a sheet of paper. Next to these symbols, students should brainstorm what Christopher Columbus, a Native American, and a slave would be seeing, hearing, saying, feeling, and doing during the Age of Exploration. This sheet should serve as brainstorming and pre-writing for their assessment. Encourage students to consider what has been discussed in class over the last several days to help them complete this.

Assessment Activity

Students will create sensory figures of Christopher Columbus, a Native American living in Cuba, and a slave who survived the transport of the Middle Passage. To do this, students will draw a simple sketch of each one of these figures. These should be created on separate sheets of paper that will be assembled into a book for the final project. Students will use their pre-writing activity from the warm up to write about these figures. For example, for what they see, students should draw a short line from the eye of the figure to the description of what that person may have seen. Continue to do this for the other senses as well.

Grading of this activity should be based on demonstration of historical knowledge and understanding of these figures.

Notes

ⁱ EVAAS Teacher Evaluation System

ⁱⁱ NC DPI Essential Standards

ⁱⁱⁱ "The World Factbook: CUBA." Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed October 23, 2016.
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html>.

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- iv Wright, J. A. 1916. *The Early History of Cuba, 1492-1586*. New York. Page 11
- v *Ibid.*, Page 12
- vi *Ibid.*, Page 8
- vii *Ibid.*, Page 8
- viii *Ibid.*, Page 19
- ix *Ibid.*, Page 38
- x *Ibid.*, Page 15
- xi Chomsky, Aviva, Barry Carr, and Pamela María Smorkaloff. *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. Page 14
- xii *Ibid.*, Page 14
- xiii Wright, J. A. 1916. *The Early History of Cuba, 1492-1586*. New York. Page 44
- xiv Staten, Clifford L. *The History of Cuba*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003. Page 17
- xv Smallwood, Stephanie E. *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. Page 101
- xvi *Ibid.*, Page 136
- xvii <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/biopoem-identity-poetry>
- xviii https://www.teachtci.com/pdf/webinar_handouts/Interactive_Student_Notebook_Getting_Started.pdf
- xix "Biography." Explorers for Kids: Christopher Columbus. Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.ducksters.com/biography/explorers/christopher_columbus.php.
- xx "Medieval Sourcebook: Christopher Columbus: Extracts from Journal." Internet History Sourcebooks Project. Accessed October 25, 2016. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/columbus1.asp>.
- xxi David and Remus. "Christopher Columbus: What Really Happened." YouTube. November 06, 2013. Accessed October 25, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF_unlvjccA.
- xxii http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/contact/text7/casas_destruction.pdf

Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards

The seventh grade social studies standards are organized around the five strands of social studies: history, geography, and environmental literacy, economics and financial literacy, civics and governance and culture. These strands are integrated to enhance student understanding of the world in which we live.

The North Carolina Essential Standards demand that students investigate the various factors that shape the development of regions and nations. This unit addresses this need by focusing on the following Essential Standards in the Seventh Grade Social Studies Course:

7.H.1	Use historical thinking to analyze various modern societies.
7.H.2	Understand the implications of global interactions.
7.G.1	Understand how geography, demographic trends, and environmental conditions shape modern societies and regions.
7.C&G.1	Understand the development of government in modern societies and regions.
7.C.1	Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups and political entities in modern societies and regions

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In addition to specific Social Studies standards, teachers are expected to address Common Core Reading anchor standards in literacy to ensure that students are college and career ready. This unit will focus on the following Common Core Reading Standards for Social Studies:

Key Ideas and Details	Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
	Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
Craft and Structure	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.
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Materials for Classroom Use

David and Remus. "Christopher Columbus: What Really Happened." YouTube. November 06, 2013. Accessed October 25, 2016.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF_unlvjccA.

This short video contains excellent graphics and represents another viewpoint about the impact of Christopher Columbus.

"Google Translate." Google Translate. Accessed November 30, 2016.
<https://translate.google.com/>.

Use this when teaching students about the difficulties of the Requirement.

"The World Factbook: CUBA." Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed October 23, 2016.
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html>.

This site contains valuable demographic information on every country in the world.

Resources for Students

@NatlHumanities. "Education Programs - National Humanities Center." National Humanities Center. Accessed November 30, 2016.

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/education-programs/>.

This site created by the National Humanities Center contains a wealth of primary source documents.

"History for Kids." World and US. Accessed October 23, 2016.

<http://www.ducksters.com/history/>.

The Ducksters site is an extremely valuable tool for students and teachers. It presents historical information at the appropriate reading level and density for middle school students.

"Medieval Sourcebook: Christopher Columbus: Extracts from Journal." Internet History Sourcebooks Project. Accessed October 25, 2016.

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/columbus1.asp>.

This site is a fantastic resource for primary source documents for students and teachers alike.

Staten, Clifford L. *The History of Cuba*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003.

It is an accessible history of the country that could be useful for both teachers and students to examine Cuba in depth.

Resources for Teachers

Chomsky, Aviva, Barry Carr, and Pamela María Smorkaloff. *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

This compilation of various sources related to Cuba and its history is a valuable resource for teachers to deepen their knowledge of the country's history.

"Reading Like A Historian | Stanford History Education Group." Reading Like A Historian | Stanford History Education Group. Accessed October 23, 2016.
<https://sheg.stanford.edu/rlh>.

The Reading like a Historian website offers several historical documents and lesson plans. While many of the available lesson plans could be easily adapted for middle school, the true value in this website is the trove of primary source documents that have been modified in order to be accessible to middle school readers.

Smallwood, Stephanie E. *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

This text is useful for an in-depth examination of the transport of slaves from Africa to the New World, but is inappropriate for students both in depth and content.

"Social Studies Curriculum by TCI." TCI. Accessed November 30, 2016.
<http://www.teachtci.com/social-studies/>.

The Teachers Curriculum Institute site is a great resource for teaching methods and materials.

Wright, J. A. 1916. *The Early History of Cuba, 1492-1586*. New York.

This resource relies heavily on the writings of Las Casas, but provides reliable information about early Cuba.

Bibliography

Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. New York: Norton, 2001.

This is an accessible text about the history of Latin America. While the text may be too difficult or dense for middle school students, it serves as a valuable source for content background for teachers.

"History for Kids." World and US. Accessed October 23, 2016.
<http://www.ducksters.com/history/>.

The Ducksters site is an extremely valuable tool for students and teachers. It presents historical information at the appropriate reading level and density for middle school students.

Montejo, Esteban, Miguel Barnet, and W. Nick Hill. *Biography of a Runaway Slave*. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1994.

This engaging account of a slave in Cuba would be appropriate for teachers eager to learn details of the daily activities and lives of slaves, but many sections would be inappropriate for middle school students.

"Reading Like A Historian | Stanford History Education Group." Reading Like A Historian | Stanford History Education Group. Accessed October 23, 2016.
<https://sheg.stanford.edu/rh>.

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