Discovering Christopher Columbus—Lower Elementary 6-9

Lesson 1: What are we celebrating on Columbus Day?

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Columbus Day by Mir Tamim Ansary, or other appropriate Columbus Day book, Appendix 1—“Columbus Documents”

Exercise 1: K-W-L Exercise

1. Ask students how we learn about events that happened in the past (what people said, what people wrote down, pictures, videos) Say: It's the job of people called historians to learn about events of the past and put the story together. This story can change each time a new fact is discovered. It also can change when an old “fact” turns out not to be true. Today, we are going to talk about Christopher Columbus and why we celebrate him.
2. Ask students what they Know about Christopher Columbus and record their answers in the left hand column.
3. Ask students what they Want to learn about Columbus and record in the middle column.
4. Explain that you will record what they Learn in the right-hand column of the chart.

Direct Aim:

To provide students with opportunities to assess their knowledge, verbalize their interest, and record their findings through a visual aid accessible to the entire group.

Exercise 2: Reading Columbus Day by Mir Tamim Ansary and Secondary Sources

1. Say: Historians call the information that has been written or told by people who were at an event Primary (that means “first”) Sources. Then there are other stories written about the event later, or by people who weren't there, and those are called Secondary Sources. Make sure students understand the difference by explaining as much as necessary.
2. Tell students you will read them a book about Columbus written just a few years ago. [We highly recommend Columbus Day by Mir Tamim Ansary.]
3. Ask: Do you think this is a Primary Source or a Secondary Source? [Prompt students if necessary: Did Columbus make his voyage just a few years ago, or was it a long time ago?]
4. Say: As you listen to the book, think about facts you think are important to put on our K-W-L chart and tell me after we're all done. [You know your group best—decide to allow interruptions or not while reading]
5. Read book and show pictures.
6. Elicit more responses for “Want to know” and “Learned” sections and add to K-W-L chart.
7. Ask students why they think we celebrate him with a national holiday.

Direct Aims:

1. For students to gain experience in recalling, analyzing and verbalizing information.
2. To introduce students to the concept of Primary and Secondary sources.
3. To introduce students to a basic but balanced view of Columbus Day.
Lesson 2: What Do We Learn about Columbus through his Ship’s Log?

Introduction:

Show the K-W-L chart and ask students to recall what they learned about Columbus in Lesson 1. Ask how they obtained the information (from book we read). Continue asking: Was the person who wrote the book there when Columbus landed? (no) Who can remember if the book is a primary or secondary source? (secondary)

Exercise: Reading Columbus Sources

1. Say: Now we’re going to read parts of Columbus’ log book from the day when he landed. This first part was re-written from Columbus’ notes by a priest named Bartolomé de las Casas. Would this be a Primary Source or a Secondary Source? (primary)
2. Read Appendix 1, Document 1 below or the Adapted Excerpt to students and discuss the questions following it.
3. Then do the same for Documents 2, 3, and 4.
4. After discussing the readings, add any pertinent facts to the K-W-L chart.

[Note: When Columbus returned after his 1st voyage, he reported to the royal court at Barcelona and presented the original log to the Spanish Sovereigns. Queen Isabel ordered the log copied. The original soon disappeared, but the Barcelona copy was returned to Columbus prior to his 2nd voyage and was in his possession at his death in 1506. It was then passed to his son Fernando and remained in his library for many years. At some point, Las Casas got the Barcelona copy and made what we today call the Diario. Although most of the Diario was written in the third-person of Las Casas, nearly all of that portion dealing with Columbus’s movements in Bahamas is in first person of Columbus himself, and is (according to Las Casas) direct quotes from the Barcelona copy. The Barcelona copy disappeared late in the 16th century, but Las Casas’ Diario was discovered intact in 1795.]

Direct Aims:

1. To introduce students to Columbus’ adventures in his own words
2. To give students experience in listening closely, analyzing and interpreting events
Primary Source Excerpt

Thursday, October 11, 1492

Two hours after midnight land appeared, some two leagues [3 nautical miles] away. They took in all sail...and lay...waiting for day. ..This was Friday, on which they reached a small island...called in the Indian language Guanahani. [Thought to be Watling Island in Bahamas] Immediately some naked people [Now known as Taíno or Arawak peoples] appeared and the Admiral [Columbus] went ashore on the armed boat, as did Martin Alonso Pinzon and Vicente Yanez his brother, captain of the Nina. The Admiral raised the royal standard and the captains carried two banners with the green cross which were flown by the admiral on all his ships...On landing they saw very green trees and much water and fruit of various kinds. The Admiral called the two captains and the others who had landed...and demanded that they should bear faithful witness that he had taken possession of the island...for his sovereigns and masters the King and Queen...Soon many people of the island came up to them.

Adapted Excerpt

Very early one morning, Columbus’ ship stopped near an island. Some people, called the Arawak or Taíno, came out to see it. Columbus and some of his men got in a small boat and claimed the land for the King and Queen of Spain. They saw many green trees, water and different kinds of fruit. Soon, many people came out to see them.

Possible Discussion Questions:
1. What does it mean to “take possession” of the land for the King and Queen?
2. Why did Columbus do this? What do you think about what he did?
3. What words did the author use to describe the land? Does it sound like a good place to live?

Primary Source Excerpt

In order to win their friendship...I gave them some red caps and glass beads which they hung round their necks, also many other trifles. These things pleased them greatly and they became marvelously friendly to us. They afterwards swam out to the ship’s boats in which we were sitting, bringing us parrots and balls of cotton thread and spears and many other things, which they exchanged with us for such objects as glass beads, hawks and bells. In fact, they very willingly traded everything they had. But they seemed to me a people very short of everything. They all go naked as their mothers bore them, including the women, although I saw only one very young girl.

Adapted Excerpt

To make friends, I gave them beads to hang around their necks, which they liked. Later, they swam out to our boats and brought us parrots, balls of cotton thread, spears and other things. They traded them for glass beads and brass bells. They traded everything they had. But I think they need many things. They have no clothes.

Possible Discussion Questions:
1. Did the Taíno people own many things?
2. Do you think they needed a lot of things to live on the island?
3. Did Columbus think they were poor because they didn’t have clothes? Do you think so?
4. Did they have the same kind of things that Columbus’ people had?
5. What does it mean to “trade”? What were some of the items they exchanged?
Document 3 (Las Casas Quoting Columbus)

### Primary Source Excerpt
All the men I saw were young. I did not see one over the age of thirty. They were very well built with fine bodies and handsome faces. Their hair is coarse, almost like that of a horse’s tail and short; they wear it down over their eyebrows except for a few strands at the back, which they wear long and never cut...Some of them paint themselves black, others white or any colour they can find. Some paint their faces, some their whole bodies, some only the eyes, some only the nose.

### Adapted Excerpt
I saw some young handsome men. They had thick, short hair. They had bangs in the front and a few long strands of hair in the back. They painted themselves black, white or other colors. Some painted their whole bodies, some just their faces. Some painted around their eyes. Some just painted their noses.

### Possible Discussion Questions:
1. Do Columbus’ words help you see what Taíno men looked like?
2. Why do you think they painted themselves?
3. What do you think Columbus and his men thought when he saw the painted men?

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Document 4 (Las Casas Quoting Columbus)

### Primary Source Excerpt
They do not carry arms or know them. For when I showed them swords, they took them by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane. Some instead of an iron tip have a fish’s tooth and others have points of different kinds...I saw some who had wound scars on their bodies and I asked them by signs how they got these and they indicated to me that people came from other islands near by who tried to capture them and they defended themselves. I supposed and still suppose that they come from the mainland to capture them for slaves. They should be good servants and very intelligent, for I have observed that they soon repeat everything that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for they appeared to me to have no religion. God willing, when I make my departure I will bring half a dozen of them back to their Majesties, so that they can learn to speak.

### Adapted Excerpt
They do not have or know about weapons. When I showed them a sword, they cut themselves on the sharp edge. They do not have iron, but make spears out of the hard stem of sugar cane plants. Instead of using an iron point, they use fish teeth or other sharp things. I saw that some people had scars from wounds. When I asked through sign language how they got them, they said people came from other islands and tried to take them, but they fought back. They should be good servants because they seem very smart, and repeat back whatever I say to them. They don’t have any religion, so I think they should become good Christians. When I leave here, I will bring back six of them to the King and Queen so they can learn how to speak.

### Possible Discussion Questions:
1. Do the people have the same kind of weapons that the Spanish do?
2. How do you know they can still protect themselves?
3. What does Columbus mean when he says they will make good servants?
4. What does Columbus say they should become?
5. Where does he say he will bring some of them?
Lesson 3: Why is it Important to read more than one story about a past event?

Materials: Copy of Morning Girl by Michael Dorris; Appendix 2—“Excerpt from Morning Girl”

Introduction for younger students: Say: Now, let’s read one other story. We've heard from an author who wrote a history book. We’ve heard from someone who knew Columbus and copied down what Columbus wrote himself. Who haven’t we heard from? (the other people, the Indians, the Taíno). That’s right, the people Columbus met. Remember from reading the first book, Columbus thought he had landed in the Indies, so he called these people Indians. We know now that they were the Taíno people. Unfortunately, they did not write anything down about meeting Columbus. (Skip down to Exercise 2.)

Introduction for older students: Write “Multiple Perspectives” on the board. Say: So we’ve heard the story of Columbus’ landing from historians, and we’ve also heard it from someone who was there. But to better understand history, it’s important to use multiple perspectives. Explain term, using many examples, until students understand it. Then ask: Since history is a story, or stories, told about events in the past, whose story do we hear the most—the winner’s story or the loser’s story? (winner) Continue: The stories we most hear of Columbus and his voyages are from the European perspective. In this class, we’re also going to look at a Native American perspective of this event.

Exercise 1: Two Sides of the Same Story (for older students)

Step One: Show students the following graphic.

1. Ask pairs to remember a past event that happened that they both witnessed. Have one student tell the story. Then the other. Discuss how their stories are alike and different, i.e. what each one chose to emphasize and/or omit.
2. Explain how the story of past events, history, changes exactly the same way.
3. Continue using examples until students understand.

Step Two: Show students the following graphic.
1. Show students the event—Columbus lands. Begin to tell Columbus’ side of the story. *(takes land for Spain, trades with natives, makes natives work for him)*

2. Then tell the Taíno side of the story. *(this is our land, we will welcome these strange people, we will help them)* Ask: **How is this story different from the Columbus story?**

3. Then explain that for all events in history there is more than one story. It is important to emphasize that sometimes, we know more than one story of an historical event, but sometimes we don’t.

4. As you work through teaching Columbus, keep pointing out the various perspectives. Emphasize that even some Spanish, like Las Casas, told a different story than Columbus’ version.

**Summary:** Tell students you always want them to ask two questions when studying any historical information—*Is there another side to the story?* and *Whose story is not being told?*

**Exercise 2:** Reading a Different Perspective

1. Tell students an American Indian named Michael Dorris wrote a book about a family living on the island where Columbus landed, called *Morning Girl*. Have students point out front and back covers and title page of book.

2. Explain how he imagined what the Taíno might have thought about meeting Columbus and his people.

3. Introduce the character of a young girl called Morning Girl who explains how she felt.

4. Read students a selection from *Morning Girl*, pp. 67-72 [Appendix 2]

5. As you read, make sure that students understand the content.

6. Stop to answer questions that appear numbered and in italics.

**Summary:**

- Elicit questions about the Taíno and add to K-W-L Chart.

- Say: *Sometimes, when an author uses accurate historical information, we can get a pretty good idea of how things might have happened. But we can never know for sure. Historians work pretty much the same way when they write stories about the past.*

**Extensions:**

- Draw a picture of Columbus and his men landing on the island, from Morning Girl’s point of view.
- Draw a picture of the island people, from Columbus’ point of view.
- Imagine how you would feel if people you had never seen before came to your house and told you they were taking it for themselves. What you would do? Journal about it.
- Help students use prior knowledge by asking: *Let’s remember back from Columbus’ logs—what DID happen next when he landed on the island?*

**Direct Aims:**

1. To give young students a Native American perspective on Columbus’ “discovery” of the Taíno

2. To give students experience in listening closely, analyzing and interpreting fiction
Excerpt from *Morning Girl* by Michael Dorris

“I looked at the place where I was, to remember it. The island was all green and brown, the flowers red and yellow, the sky a deep and brilliant blue...Dawn made a glare on the ocean, so I splashed through the shallow surf and dived without looking. I felt the hair lift from around my head, felt a school of tiny fish glide against my leg as I swam underwater. Then, far in the distance, I heard an unfamiliar and frightening sound. It was like the panting of some giant animal, a steady, slow rhythm, dangerous and hungry. And it was coming closer.

I forgot I was still beneath the surface until I needed air. But when I broke into the sunlight, the water sparkling all around me, the noise turned out to be nothing! Only a canoe! The breathing was the dip of many paddles! It was only people coming to visit, and since I could see they hadn’t painted themselves to appear fierce, they must be friendly or lost.

I swam closer to get a better look and had to stop myself from laughing. The strangers had wrapped every part of their bodies with colorful leaves and cotton. Some had decorated their faces with fur (1. *What do you think she meant by that?*) and wore shiny rocks on their heads (2. *What were they?*). Compared to us, they were very round. Their canoe was short and square, and in spite of all their dipping and pulling, it moved so slowly. What a backward, distant island they must have come from. But really, to laugh at guests, no matter how odd, would be impolite, especially since I was the first to meet them. If I was foolish, they would think they had arrived at a foolish place...I kicked toward the canoe and called out the simplest thing.

“Hello!”

One of the people heard me, and he was so startled that he stood up, made his eyes small, as fearful as I had been a moment earlier. Then he spotted me, and I waved like I’d seen adults do when visitors arrive, my fingers spread to show that my hand was empty.

The man stared at me as though he’d never seen a girl before, then shouted something to his relatives. They all stopped paddling and looked in my direction.

“Hello,” I tried again. “Welcome to home. My name is Morning Girl. My mother is She Wins the Race. My father is Speaks to Birds. My brother is Star Boy. We will feed you and introduce you to everyone.”

All the fat people in the canoe began pointing at me and talking at once. In their excitement they almost turned themselves over, and I allowed my body to sink below the waves for a moment in order to hide my smile. One must always treat guests with respect...even when they are as brainless as gulls.

When I came up they were still watching, the way babies do: wide eyed and with their mouths uncovered. They had much to learn about how to behave. (3. *How do you behave when you see someone that looks different from you?*)

“Bring your canoe to the beach,” I shouted, saying each word slowly so that they might understand and calm themselves. “I will go to the village and bring back Mother and Father for you to talk to.”
Finally one of them spoke to me, but I couldn’t understand anything he said. Maybe he was talking in Carib or some other impossible language. But I was sure that we would find ways to get along together. It never took that much time, and acting out your thoughts with your hands could be funny. You had to guess at everything and you made mistakes, but by midday I was certain we would all be seated in a circle, eating steamed fish and giving each other presents. It would be a special day, a memorable day, a day full and new. (4. Do you think Morning Girl was afraid of these new guests? 5. Do you think the people on the island had guests before? 6. What makes you think so?)

I was close enough to shore now for my feet to touch bottom, and quickly I made my way to dry land. The air was warm against my shoulders, and there was a slight breeze that disturbed the palm fronds on the ground. I squeezed my hair, ran my hands over my arms and legs to push off the water, and then stamped on the sand.

“Leave your canoe right here,” I suggested in my most pleasant voice. “It will not wash away because the tide is going out. I’ll be back soon with the right people.”

The strangers were drifting in the surf, arguing among themselves, not even paying attention to me any longer. They seemed very worried, very confused, very unsure what to do next. It was clear they hadn’t traveled much before.

I hurried up the path to our house...as I dodged through the trees, I hoped I hadn’t done anything to make the visitors leave before I got back, before we learned their names. If they were gone, Star Boy would claim that they were just a story, just like my last dream before daylight. But I didn’t think that was true. I knew they were real. (7. Do you think Columbus and his men really were confused, or didn’t know what to do next? 8. Why do you think Morning Girl thought they hadn’t traveled much before?)
Lesson 4: Who were the Taíno? Are they still around today?

Materials: Appendix 3—“Taíno Factsheet”, copy of Rohmer’s Atariba & Niguayona or Jaffe’s The Golden Flower [see “Columbus” section—Suggested Resources], Taíno websites [“Caribbean Tribal Websites” section— Suggested Resources]

Exercise 1: Investigating the People Columbus “Discovered”

1. Prepare a K-W-L chart about the Taíno and elicit student responses for the chart.
2. Use Taíno Fact Sheet [Appendix 3] and read it with the students.
3. Have students identify details about housing, clothing, etc. learned.
4. Have them compare and contrast the way Taíno people lived in Columbus’ time with the way we live today.
5. Help them to decide whether there are more things that are alike (similarities) or not alike (differences).
6. Record what students have Learned about the Taíno on K-W-L chart.

Exercise 2: Taíno Culture through literature

1. Read a Taíno folktale, such as “Atariba & Niguayona” or “The Golden Flower” [in our Bibliography.]
2. Discuss concepts that are unfamiliar as well as the artwork and how people and places are depicted.
3. Compare information learned from folktale with that from Taíno Fact Sheet.
4. Encourage students to talk about folktales popular in their culture or families. Compare and contrast these tales with the Taíno tales.

Exercise 3: Taíno Research Project (for older students)

1. Divide class into groups.
2. Using Appendix 3, “Taíno Fact Sheet” and websites listed (and whatever other available resources), assign each group a research topic. Recommended website: http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/41/325.html
3. Taíno Presence Today
4. Topics can include Caribbean Environment, Physical Appearance and Clothing, Homes and Furnishings, Farming and Food, Male and Female Roles, Games and Art, Tools and Weapons, Fishing and Hunting, Beliefs, Social Structure, History, and the Taíno Today.
5. Allow a class period for students to research
6. Record what students have Learned about the Taíno on K-W-L chart.
7. Have groups make a poster board and give presentations of their findings.

Direct Aims:

1. To provide students with information about this Caribbean culture.
2. To help students realize they are still here today, despite misconceptions to the contrary.
Taíno Fact Sheet: Who are the Taíno?

- Taíno [tie-EE-no] Indians are part of the Arawak Indian group.
- The Arawak originally came from South America.
- The Taíno language belonged to the Arawak language family.
- Spanish writers wrote “Taíno” to describe the people in the Caribbean.
- In the Arawak language, it means “men of good.”
- Most often, the Spanish simply described the people as Indians.
- The Taíno lived on islands in the Caribbean Sea called the Greater Antilles [an-TILL-eez].
- Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico make up the Greater Antilles.
- They lived in diverse rainforests and the weather was tropical.

What They Looked Like

- Columbus said they had copper or olive skin and thick, black hair, short in front and long in back.
- Some Taíno women wore short cotton skirts, but most people wore no clothes at all.
- They liked to bathe often.
- They were rarely taller than five feet, six inches.
- They painted their bodies with earth dyes and wore shells and metals as jewelry.
- Men and women chiefs often wore gold in the ears and nose, or as pendants around the neck.
- Some had tattoos.
- From all early descriptions, the Taíno were healthy and well-fed.

Bohíos [bo-EE-ohs] Hamac Dujo [DO-hoh]

Villages (Yucayeques [you-kuh-YEH-kays])

- Taíno lived in small, clean villages of houses built in valleys, along rivers and on ocean coastlines.
- Taíno settlements ranged from single families to groups of 3,000 people.
- Each large village had a ballpark.
- Their houses, called bohíos [bo-EE-ohs], were made from Royal Palm and other trees.
- They made both round and rectangular houses.
Appendix 3: (Lesson 4, Exercises 1 and 3)

- chiefs, caciques [kah-SEE-kays], lived in rectangular huts, in the village center facing the ball court.
- Both types were made with wooden frames, straw roofs, earthen floors, and a little furniture.
- These buildings were strong enough to resist hurricanes.
- They wove cotton hammocks and used them to sleep in.
- They wove cotton mats, small sails and fiber ropes called bejucos [beh-WHO-kos].
- They also made baskets, farming tools, and pottery.
- Most Taíno owned wooden stools with four legs and carved backs, cotton hammocks for sleeping, clay and wooden bowls for mixing and serving food, calabashes or gourds for drinking water and bailing out boats, and their most prized possessions--large dugout canoes--for transportation, fishing, and water sports.
- They sat in wooden seats called dujos [DO-hohs].

Food

Cassava or yucca roots

- Taíno grew corn, yucca, beans, squash, sweet potatoes, chili peppers, tobacco and cotton.
- Yucca was their main crop.
- They also grew fruits like guava, papaya and pineapple.
- They knew how to rotate crops so the earth remained fertile.
- They also made cassava bread out of yucca, a poisonous root they learned to make safe to eat.
- They gathered fruits and nuts.
- They also hunted and fished.
- They caught little mammals or lizards with sticks, and birds with stones.
- Columbus wrote they had flocks of tame ducks, or “yaguasa” [yah-GWAH-suh], which the people roasted and ate.
- They fished for manatees, turtles, and shellfish.

Activities

They were great fishermen and boat navigators and they traded among the islands.
They visited one another constantly, going from island to island.
They traveled long distances by canoe from March to August, guided by the North Star and the Milky Way.
They played a game like soccer in the ballparks, called bateyes [baa-TAY-yeas].
They had feasts, and danced and sang using flutes and drums called tambores [tahm-BORES].
When the first crops appeared, like yucca, beans or corn, the people held ceremonies of thanksgiving.
They built canoes that could carry more than one hundred people.
They used certain trees to dye cotton.
They used trees and plants to make boats, spears, digging tools, chairs, bowls, baskets, woven mats and large fishing nets.

**Government**

The Taíno had a well-organized government.
The highest class was the chief called a cacique [kah-SEE-kay].
Each cacique ruled his or her own territory called a cacicazgo [kah-see-KAHZ-go].
The next class, the nitaina [knee-tie-EEN—no], was the sub-chiefs, priests, and medicine people.
The nitainos made all objects of wood, stone, gold, shell, bone and pottery.
The lowest class, the naboria [nah-BORE-eyuh], was the worker class.
The naborias lived in round huts, called bohios.
In Puerto Rico, for example, at the time of Columbus there were 17 cacicazgos on the island; in Hispaniola, there were 5 major cacicazgos.

**Beliefs**

The Taíno believed the world and everything in it was alive with power.
The souls of animals and people were alive with power.
Mountains, caves, rivers, trees and the sea were all alive with power.
They believed that the earth was between the deep waters and the heavens.
They thought an imaginary circular hole, the fifth direction, connected earth from the sea bottom to heaven.
They may have called the ceiba tree the “World Tree.”
The World Tree had roots in the deep sea and branches that kept heaven in place.
The ceiba tree is still regarded as sacred in Mesoamerica, South America, and the Caribbean.
The Taíno respected their ancestors.
They buried the dead under their houses.
Leaders and high officials had different kinds of funerals.
The Taíno people thought generosity and kindness were the most important things. It was important to them to try and feed all their people.
Taíno culture was passed on in ceremonial dances (“areitos”) [uh-RAY-toes], drumbeats and oral stories.
They also played a ceremonial ball game of 10 to 30 players per team with a rubber ball.

They believed that winning this game brought a good harvest and strong, healthy children.

**Taíno Contributions to Culture**

- Taíno designs were copied by the Europeans, including *bohío* (straw hut) and *hamaca* (hammock)
- The musical instrument, the maracas, is Taíno.
- Many words are from Taíno—yucca, iguana, manati, güiro, hamaca, barbacoa, casaba, canoa, and huracan.

**Barbacoa**

- High Estimates of Taíno of Hispaniola
  - In 1492: 8,000,000
  - By 1508: 100,000
  - By 1518: 20,000
  - By 1535: none

- Low Estimates of Taíno of Hispaniola
  - In 1492: 300,000
  - By 1508: 60,000
  - By 1514: 14,000
  - By 1548: 500

- Both estimates show that within the first 50 years of the Spanish conquest, most Indians had died or disappeared.

**Sources**

Lesson 5: Did Columbus really “discover” America?

Materials: Globe, Appendix 4—“World of Christopher Columbus”; Dictionaries; appendix 5—“Timeline of Columbus’ First Voyage”

Introduction:

Explain that Columbus knew the world was round, and thought he might be able to sail west to get to India—but he didn’t know that North America and South America were there. When he reached land, he thought he had reached the Indies. It is believed that’s why he named the island people ‘Indians’.

Exercise 1: Map work—Identifying Places

1. Use a globe to review names of continents and cardinal directions with students.
2. Point out Europe and Spain, where Columbus lived.
3. Point out India and show its relationship to Spain.
4. Explain that people of Columbus’ time were trading with people of India and looking for a shorter route there.

Exercise 2: Map Work—Labeling and Plotting a Route

1. Pass out the Caribbean map of your choice [Appendix 4].
2. Have students locate (or label) the continents, Spain, India, the East Indies and the West Indies.
3. Ask them to draw a sea route from Spain to India by sailing south and then east.
4. Ask them to draw a land route from Spain to India.
5. Point out the West Indies on the map.
6. Tell students that the islands of the West Indies are usually considered to be part of North America.
7. Ask them to draw a line from Spain to the West Indies.
8. Help students measure the distance from Spain to India going south and southeast and from Spain to Indian going west. Then ask: Which route is shorter? Was Columbus successful in finding a route to the East Indies or India?

Exercise 3: Let’s Talk about the Word “Discover!”

1. Ask students what it means to “discover” something. Accept all definitions.
2. Tell students that one dictionary says “it is learning about something that you didn’t know about before” or “finding something that is hidden.” Compare to the student definitions.
3. When students are competent about what “discover” means, ask: Did Columbus discover North America?
4. Then ask: Do you know if he discovered the United States of America? (He never set foot in what became US)
5. Continue discussing the concept of discovery by asking if the Taíno thought they were discovered or not.
6. Explain how many historians still disagree about whether we should say Columbus discovered the lands he sailed to. After all, the lands were always there.
7. Continue the discussion as long as students are interested.
8. Summarize everyone’s opinions and add your findings to the K-W-L chart.

Extensions:

- Help students to write and/or draw their own definition of the word “discover.”
- Help students write two sentences taking the point of view of Columbus and the Taíno. Suggested prompts: “To Columbus, he did discover the West Indies because…. To the Taíno the land was not discovered because…”
- Have older students complete Appendix 5—“Timeline of Columbus’ First Voyage.”

Direct Aims:

1. To provide students with physical and geographic orientations and the rationale for his first voyage.
2. To encourage students to explore the ramifications of a word such as “discover.”
Appendix 4: (Lesson 5, Exercise 2)

“The World of Christopher Columbus”  

Name ____________________
“The World of Christopher Columbus”

Name ____________________
**A Timeline of the First Voyage of Columbus**

You will need:

- Scissors
- Your recording notebook or a paper strip
- Glue
- A world map in an Atlas

**Directions:**

1. Cut apart the boxes of events in Columbus’ first voyage. Arrange them in order and glue them into your recording notebook or on a paper strip. Then complete the second page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 3, 1492</td>
<td>Columbus sails from Palos, Spain. He has three ships—the <em>Santa Maria</em>, <em>Pinta</em>, and <em>Niña</em>.</td>
<td>December 5, 1492</td>
<td>Columbus lands on Hispaniola, now Haiti and the Dominican Republic. He thinks it might be Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 16, 1493</td>
<td>The <em>Niña</em> and <em>Pinta</em> set sail back to Europe.</td>
<td>March 4, 1493</td>
<td>The ships arrive in Lisbon, Portugal and return to Spain soon after.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6, 1492</td>
<td>Columbus and his ships leave the Canary Islands after re-stocking food and goods.</td>
<td>October 12, 1492</td>
<td>Land is sighted. Today many historians think it was probably Watling Island in the Bahamas. Columbus and his crew go ashore the same day. Columbus claims the land for Spain and names it “San Salvador.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 25, 1492</td>
<td><em>Santa Maria</em> gets shipwrecked on the north coast of Hispaniola. With the help of the native people, Columbus carries the goods to shore. He uses the wood from the wrecked ship to build a small colony called <em>La Navidad</em>, which means “Christmas.” Columbus leaves 39 men at La Navidad.</td>
<td>October 28, 1492</td>
<td>Columbus lands in Cuba. He thinks it is China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 1493</td>
<td>Columbus lands in Spain with gifts and Indian captives. Columbus becomes a hero in Spain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directions: The stars on this map show the underlined places from your Timeline. Use an Atlas to identify them and write their names (found in the Word Box below) on the lines. Draw lines to connect the stars and show the route that Columbus sailed on his first voyage. Use the Internet or a history book to check your work.

Word Bank
Cuba     the Bahamas
Hispaniola
Canary Islands  Portugal
Lesson 6: Did Columbus discover America if there were already people here? (For younger students)

Materials: Globe or world map; pictures of pre-Columbian artifacts; maps of Viking settlements; guitar and/or CD player; Appendix 6—“Some Native Tribes as of 1492”; Appendix 7—“A Song of Indian Nations”

Exercise 1: Pre-Columbian Populations

Introduction: In our last class, we talked about whether or not we thought Columbus discovered America. Ask: Who remembers what we thought? We do know, from reading our primary and secondary sources, there were people on the islands where Columbus and his men landed in the West Indies. Ask: Who remembers what we call them? (Taíno) Some people do not believe Columbus “discovered” the West Indies because there were already people there.

1. Tell students that we know there were people living all over North and South America before Columbus arrived.  
2. Say and ask: We know because they left evidence. What is evidence? (clues that people leave behind).  
3. Explain that this evidence has been buried in the ground for a long time. Certain kinds of scientists called archaeologists come in. They dig up this evidence, identify it, and calculate how old it is.  
5. Continue explaining that after archaeologists look at all the evidence they have found, they make theories about the people who used these things to try to understand how they lived. [Show Pre-Columbian artifact pictures]  
6. Sometimes, there are primary sources and secondary sources that give us details and dates, and historians can work with archaeologists to add to the story.

Exercise 2: How People Got Here

1. Explain: There is lots of evidence that Vikings came to North America almost 500 years before Columbus. They built a settlement in Canada, on the northernmost tip of the island of Newfoundland called L’Anse aux Meadows. [Show on map or globe]  
2. There are other theories that people may have sailed across the oceans from China and Africa before Columbus. We have evidence that people were living in North America for many, many thousands of years and there are many theories about how they came here and when. One of the first theories is that people walked across a land bridge between Russia and Alaska about 13,000 years ago. [Show on map or globe]  
3. Thousands of years ago, many people did not write down their histories. Sometimes they drew pictures on rocks; other times they told their histories in story form and passed them along from year to year.  
4. Conclude by saying: So we don’t know how they got here, or where they came from, for sure. We just know they were here from all of the evidence they left, buried under the ground. These people were the great-great-great-great-grandparents of the people Columbus found and called “Indians,” and there were some who lived right here in this place. [Research pre-Columbian cultures that lived in your specific region of the country. We have given some regional resources in “Resources for Pre-contact Native Peoples”]

Exercise 3: North American Indian Tribes

1. Ask: Who can tell me the names of some of the Indians, or Native Americans, they’ve heard about? [Solicit names of tribes/be prepared to tell students names of some of the tribes that inhabited your state or even town.]  
2. Say: There were more than 500 tribes living in what is now the United States when Columbus landed in 1492.  
3. Pass out copies of Appendix 6—“Some Native Tribes as of 1492” to have students identify tribes across the United States.

Exercise 4: A Song of Indian Nations

1. Say: I’d like to teach you a song now that talks about Columbus and some of the people who were already here. It is written in a musical style that was popular during Columbus’ time called a “tarantella.” [Click on audio link to hear song performed at http://www.sisterschoice.com/activitysss.html#1492. Music and chords available in I Will Be Your Friend, from Teaching Tolerance at www.teachingtolerance.org.]
2. After practicing the song, ask students to tell you some of names of Native people they've learned from the song.
3. Have students use Appendix 6 again. Say: *I'd like you to look through the map and circle the names of the people we just sang about.*
4. Conclude by saying and asking: *Finally, let's review our definition of “discover.” Some people, and some books, say Columbus “discovered” America. What do you think? Did Columbus discover America if there were already people here?*

**Extensions:**

- Discuss the kinds of trash our society is leaving behind for future archeologists. *(computers, diapers, cell phones, cans, fast food containers)* Ask: *What do you think these things would tell them about us?*
- Ask students if they have anything to add to the K-W-L chart.

**Direct Aims:**

1. To help students understand that there were other cultures living in North America before Columbus.
2. To help students understand that other people came to this hemisphere before Columbus.
3. To provide students with a catchy tune they will sing at Columbus Day for years to come.
Some Native Tribes as of 1492

Find and circle these tribes on the map:

- Inuit
- Cherokee
- Aztec
- Menominee
- Onandaga
- Cree
- Taino
- Carib

Name__________________________
1492 Words and music by Nancy Schimmel

In fourteen hundred ninety-two
Columbus sailed the ocean blue,
It was a courageous thing to do
But someone was already here.

Columbus knew the world was round
So he looked for the East while westward bound,
But he didn’t find what he thought he found,
And someone was already here.

Chorus: The Inuit and Cherokee,
The Aztec and Menominee,
The Onandaga [on-on-DAH-ga] and the Cree;
Columbus sailed across the sea,
But someone was already here.

It isn’t like it was empty space,
Caribs [kah-REEBS] met him face to face.
Could anyone discover the place
When someone was already here?

Chorus: So tell me, who discovered what?
He thought he was in a different spot.
Columbus was lost, the Caribs were not;
They were already here.
**Lesson 6A: Were there people other than the Taino on the North American continent during Columbus’ voyages? (For older students)**

**Materials:** Appendix 8—“Resources for Pre-contact Archeological Information—National, Regional, by State”; Appendix 6—“Some Native tribes as of 1492” [from previous lesson 6]

**Introduction:**

Tell students that we know there were people living all over North and South America before Columbus arrived and after. He just didn’t know about them. In fact, long before Europeans came to North and South America, there were millions of native people spread across the two continents.

**Exercise 1: Pre-Columbian Populations**

1. Have students research information about pre-Columbian groups in your home state using Appendix 8.
2. Choose a reporting strategy and have students report back to class what they have discovered.

**Exercise 2: North American Indian Tribes**

1. Ask: **Who can tell me the names of some of the Indians, or Native Americans, they've heard about?** [Solicit names of tribes and be prepared to tell students the names of some of the tribes that inhabited your state or even town.]
2. Say: **There were more than 500 tribes living in what is now the United States when Columbus landed in 1492.**
3. Use the Appendix 6 map again to have students identify tribes across the United States.
4. Take this opportunity to dispel some common stereotypes about American Indians. A good place to start is at the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian website at [www.mitchellmuseum.org](http://www.mitchellmuseum.org). Click “Education” in left menu, then “Teachers” then “Top Ten Truths” fact sheet.
5. Since these tribes had been living in North America for thousands of years, revisit the idea that they were discovered by Europeans even though they had always been there.

**Extensions:**

- Have students choose a tribe that was living in the area around the school and ask them to research who they were, what they were like, when they lived in the area, where they might have had villages, and how they lived.
- You might consider have a class day to commemorate this tribe and invite parents to hear presentations that students put together.

**Direct Aims:**

1. To teach that there were millions of native people all over the so-called “New World.”
2. To introduce students to the fact that there were native people living where they live today.
3. To directly deconstruct stereotypes about native people by giving accurate information.
Resources for Pre-contact Native Peoples Information for Teachers—Midwest States

**National**

National Museum of the American Indian—Smithsonian Institute—Infinity of Nations Quest
http://nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/infinityofnations/culturequest/

**Illinois**

Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site—Tips for Teachers
http://www.cahokiamounds.org/learn/tips-for-teachers/

Dickson Mounds—Illinois State Museum
http://www.experienceemiquon.com/content/dickson-mounds-museum-2

Field Museum—N. American Anthropology
http://fieldmuseum.org/explore/department/anthropology/north-america

Illinois Fluted Site Survey
http://flutedpointsurvey.com/illinois/


Native American Module—Illinois State Museum
http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/index.html

Schingoethe Center for Native American Cultures
http://www.aurora.edu/museum/#axzz2VptoDXwB

**Indiana**

Angel Mounds State Historic Site
http://www.angelmounds.org/about-us-2/angel-mounds/

Eiteljorg Museum of the American Indian
http://www.eiteljorg.org/

Pokagan Band Potwatomi—click Pokagan Band History at bottom
http://beta.pokaganband-nsn.gov/who-we-are/pokagon-band-history

**Iowa**

Effigy Mounds National Monument—Grades 1-3
http://www.nps.gov/efmo/forteachers/first-third-activities.htm

Effigy Mounds—Grades 4-6
http://www.nps.gov/efmo/forteachers/fourth-through-sixth-grade-activities.htm

Toolsboro Indian Mounds—Teacher’s Guide

**Kansas**

Kansas Historical Society—Archeology Traveling Trunk

Kansas Historical Society
http://heritage.ky.gov/kas/kyprehist.htm
Kentucky
Kentucky Heritage Council http://heritage.ky.gov/kas/kyprehist.htm

Michigan
Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture and Lifeways http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/aboutus/history.htm

Minnesota
Minnesota Institute of Art http://www.artsmia.org/surrounded-by-beauty/

Missouri
Missouri Archeological Society http://associations.missouristate.edu/mas/archaeologyinmo.html
Towosaghy State Historic Site YouTube http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=vA-fkTT0W4Y

Ohio
Ohio Archeological Sites http://heritage.ky.gov/kas/kyprehist.htm
Hopewell Culture National Historic Park http://heritage.ky.gov/kas/kyprehist.htm
Sun Watch Indian Village/Archeological Park http://www.sunwatch.org/archaeology/ohio-pre-history

Wisconsin
Forest County Potawatomi http://www.fcpotawatomi.com/culture-and-history
Oneida Nation Museum http://www.oneidanation.org/museum/education.aspx
Wisconsin Fluted Site Survey http://flutedpointsurvey.com/wisconsin/
Lesson 7: What happened once Columbus arrived in the West Indies? (For older students)

Materials: Appendix 9—“Background on Doctrine of Discovery”; Appendix 10—“Columbus Primary Sources”

Introduction:

Explain that most historians who write books for younger students will say that Columbus received support from King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to find a shorter route to the East Indies so Spain could develop new trade routes for spices and foods from that area of the world. But add that Columbus also wanted to bring his religion, Catholicism, to non-believers around the world. Say: Let’s look at some more primary sources for more information.

Exercise 1: What Columbus Did in His Own Words

Background: Teachers should read Appendix 9—“Background on the Doctrine of Discovery” to familiarize themselves with this doctrine, which gives a window into the minds of Columbus and other explorers. It is the basis on which they and later ones justified their subjugation of native people all across North and South America as well as the rest of the world. For more information beyond this background, go to http://www.doctrineofdiscovery.org/.

1. Distribute page 1 of Appendix 10—“Columbus Primary Sources.”
2. Read the journal entries and ask students to paraphrase what Columbus said. [You may also have students read the primary or adapted excerpts and answer the questions on their own.]
3. Answer and discuss the following questions together. Encourage them to use evidence from the excerpts.
   a) Why was Columbus going to the Indies?
   b) Who gave him permission?
   c) What is he looking for?
   d) What is Columbus bringing the king and queen when he goes back to Spain?
   e) What orders does Columbus give to the native people?
   f) What does Columbus say he will do if the Indians don’t follow his rules and orders?

4. Help students to draw conclusions and make predictions by asking the following questions: Why do you think Columbus feels he can make the Indian people slaves? What do you think the Taíno people will do?

Exercise 2: Getting to Know Bartolomé de las Casas

Background: Ask students if they remember hearing the name Bartolomé de las Casas from other primary sources we used before. He was a Spanish man whose father sailed with Columbus during his second voyage and became his friend. He was also a settler on Hispaniola who eventually owned a plantation, was master to many Taíno slaves, and made a great deal of money. He became a collector and a historian and documented what he saw and heard while he traveled around the islands. Over the years, he had a change of heart, became a priest and began to call for better treatment of the Taíno. He wrote to the King and Queen of Spain, and the Pope, to show the abuses of the Taíno by the Spanish.

1. Distribute page 2 of Appendix 10—“Columbus Primary Sources.” Say: Let’s read some of what Las Casas wrote in a book called An Account, Much Abbreviated, of the Destruction of the Indies.
2. Read excerpt together or on their own, paraphrase, and discuss the following questions.
   a. According to Las Casas, what did Columbus do?
   b. What happened to the Taíno?
   c. How does Las Casas feel about all this?
   d. How do you know?
3. Finally, add any pertinent information to the K-W-L chart.
Extensions:
- Encourage students to compare and contrast by asking: *How is Las Casas’ report different from Columbus’ report?*
- You might want to discuss how Las Casas probably exaggerated some things in order to get people’s attention. What he reported was true, but like good advertisers, he exaggerated his report for impact. Emphasize, however, what Las Casas reported was, in fact, true.

Direct Aims:
1. To utilize primary sources to investigate some of Columbus’ actions during his first voyage
2. To introduce students to Bartolome de Las Casas
3. To provide older students with the concepts behind the Doctrine of Discovery, which motivated Columbus’ actions.
Appendix 9: (Lesson 7, Exercise 1)

_Doctrine of Discovery: The International Law of Colonialism_ by Professor Robert J Miller, Lewis & Clark Law School

The following ten points outline the philosophy underlying European conquest of the Americas. It is important to incorporate these points in teaching about the relationship between Europeans and native populations from Columbus landing through Manifest Destiny, especially Lewis and Clark expedition, right up to today. Indian people still live under conditions set up under the guise of the Doctrine of Discovery.

1. **First discovery.** The first European country to discover lands unknown to other Europeans claimed property and sovereign rights over the lands and native peoples. First discovery, however, was usually considered to have created only incomplete title.

2. **Actual occupancy and current possession.** To turn first discovery into recognized title, a European country had to actually occupy and possess newly found lands. This was usually done by building forts or settlements. Physical possession had to be accomplished within reasonable amount of time after first discovery to create a complete title.

3. **Preemption/European title.** Discovering European countries also claimed the power of preemption, that is, the sole right to buy the land from Indigenous peoples. This is a valuable property right similar to an exclusive option to purchase land. The government that owned the preemption right prevented/preempted any other European government or individual from buying land from native owners. The United States still claims this power over Indian lands today. 25 U.S.C. section 177 (2006).

4. **Indian or Native title.** After first discovery, Euro-American legal systems claimed that Indigenous Peoples and nations had lost their full property rights and full ownership of their lands. Europeans claimed that Indigenous nations only retained the rights to occupy and use their lands. Nevertheless, these rights could last forever if they never consented to sell to the European country that claimed the preemption power. If Indigenous nations did choose to sell, they were only supposed to deal with the government that held the preemption right. Thus, “Indian title” in the United States, and ‘Maori title’ in New Zealand, and Indigenous titles elsewhere allegedly defined limited ownership rights.

5. **Tribal limited sovereign and commercial rights.** After a first discovery, Europeans considered that Indigenous Nations and Peoples had lost some aspects of their inherent sovereign powers and their rights to international free trade and diplomatic relations. Thereafter, they were only supposed to deal with the European government that had first discovered them.

6. **Contiguity.** Under Discovery, Europeans claimed a significant amount of land contiguous to and surrounding their actual discoveries and settlements in the New World. Contiguity became very important when different European countries had settlements somewhat close together. In that situation, each country claimed to hold rights over the unoccupied lands between their settlements to a point half way between the actual settlements. Moreover, contiguity held that the discovery of the mouth of a river gave the discovering country a claim over all the lands drained by that river; even if that was thousands of miles of territory. For example, refer to the boundaries of the Louisiana Territory and Oregon country as defined by the United States.

7. **Terra nullius.** This phrase literally means a land or earth that is null or void or empty. This element stated that if lands were not possessed or occupied by any person or nation, or even if they were occupied but were not being used in a fashion that European legal and property systems approved, then the lands were considered to be “empty” and available for Discovery claims. Europeans were very liberal in applying this element and often considered lands that were actually owned, occupied, and being used by Indigenous Peoples to be “vacant” and available for Discovery claims if they were not being “used” according to Euro-American laws and cultural mores.

8. **Christianity.** Religion was a significant aspect of the Doctrine of Discovery. Under Discovery, non-Christian peoples were not deemed to have the same rights to land, sovereignty, and self-determination as Christians.

9. **Civilization.** The European ideals of civilization were important parts of Discovery and of ideas of superiority. Europeans thought that God had directed them to bring civilized ways and education and religion to Indigenous Peoples and to exercise paternalism and guardianship powers over them.

10. **Conquest.** This element claimed that Europeans could acquire Indian title by military victories in “just” and “necessary” wars. In addition, conquest was also used as a term of art to describe the property rights Europeans claimed to have gained automatically over Indigenous Nations just by showing up and making a “first discovery.”

Further Information: Watch Professor Robert Miller talk about the impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on YouTube at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBAqizD_7Ls](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBAqizD_7Ls)
### What did Columbus do? (Adapted for Elementary Level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Excerpts</th>
<th>Adapted Excerpts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As soon as I arrived in the Indies, on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts.</td>
<td>When I came to this place, the Indies,* I took some native people by force. I wanted to get information from them. I also wanted them to learn our language. * Columbus thought he was in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would make fine servants…. With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.</td>
<td>They would become fine servants...We could capture all of them with fifty men. Then we could make them slaves and do whatever we want with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They [the Taíno] are artless and generous with what they have...no one would believe but him who had seen it. Of anything they have, if it be asked for, they never say no, but do rather invite the person to accept it, and show as much lovingness as though they would give their hearts ... Their Highnesses may see that I shall give them as much gold as they need ... and slaves as many as they shall order to be shipped.</td>
<td>King and Queen of Spain, you would not believe how kind, generous, and loving these Indians are! If you ask them for something, they will give it to you. I will give you, your highnesses, as much gold as I can get and as many slaves as I can take on the ship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They [Indians] should be good servants...I, our Lord being pleased, will take hence... six natives for your Highnesses.</td>
<td>These Indians could be good servants. I will take six of them back to Spain with me for the King and Queen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I implore you to recognize the Church...[and] in the name of the Pope take the king as lord of this land and obey his mandates. If you do not do it...I will make war everywhere and every way I can...I will take your women and children and make them slaves. ... The deaths and injuries that you will receive ...will be your own fault and not...his majesty nor...the gentlemen that accompany me.</td>
<td>I want you all to follow my religion and also obey my king's rules. If you don't, I will fight you. I will make the women and children slaves. If you don't follow my orders, it will be your fault.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 April, 1495. I ordered all persons fourteen years or older to collect three handful quantities of gold every three months for thy Royal Highness. As they bring it, they are given copper tokens to hang around their necks. Those found without tokens shall have one hand cut off as punishment.</td>
<td>On April 14th 1495, I ordered every Indian over fourteen to collect three handfuls of gold every three months. I'm going to give this to the King and Queen of Spain. When the Indians bring it, I give them a copper necklace. Those Indians who don't do this will be punished.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Primary Source

Endless testimonies … prove the mild and pacific temperament of the natives…. But our work was to exasperate, ravage, kill, mangle and destroy; small wonder, then, if they tried to kill one of us now and then…. The admiral [Columbus], it is true, was blind as those who came after him, and he was so anxious to please the King that he committed irreparable crimes against the Indians...

The Spaniards “thought nothing of knifing Indians by tens and twenties and of cutting slices off them to test the sharpness of their blades… they [Indians] dig, split rocks, move stones, and carry dirt on their backs to wash it in the rivers, while those who wash gold stay in the water all the time with their backs bent so constantly it breaks them; and when water invades the mines, the most arduous task of all is to dry the mines by scooping up pansful of water and throwing it up outside…

Husbands and wives were together only once every eight or ten months and when they met they were so exhausted and depressed… they ceased to procreate. As for the newly born, they died early because their mothers, overworked and famished, had no milk to nurse them, and for this reason, while I was in Cuba, 7000 children died in three months. Some mothers even drowned their babies from sheer desperation…. in this way, husbands died in the mines, wives died at work, and children died from lack of milk … and in a short time this land which was so great, so powerful and fertile … was depopulated… My eyes have seen these acts so foreign to human nature, and now I tremble as I write…

“There were 60,000 people living on this island…so that from 1494 to 1508, over three million people had perished from war, slavery, and the mines. Who in future generations will believe this? I myself writing it as a knowledgeable eyewitness can hardly believe it…”

### Adapted Excerpts

Everyone says the native people are peaceful and good. But the Spanish were so bad to them that the Indians sometimes tried to kill them. Columbus was so anxious to please the king that he did bad things too.

The Spanish were not even sorry or worried about killing so many people...The Indians worked so hard digging for gold that many just fell down, too tired to work more...

Husbands and wives hardly saw each other…the babies died early because they had no food…men died in the mines…Pretty soon there were not very many Indians left alive…I have seen all these things with my own eyes and I am very sad...

Can you believe that over three million Indians have died in about 15 years…I saw it and I still can’t believe it…How Horrible!
Lesson 8: What is the Columbian Exchange? (For younger students)

Materials: Appendix 11—“Columbian Exchange” Worksheet; Photos or samples of any items with which students may be unfamiliar in Appendix 11

Exercise 1: The Columbian Exchange

Introduction:

Ask: Who remembers, from reading our primary sources and our secondary sources, some of the things Columbus and his men gave to the Taíno? (bells, beads) What did they give back to him? (food, parrots, cotton) Say: When Columbus first met the Taíno people, they exchanged gifts. Did you know that during the next twelve years, Columbus sailed back and forth from Spain to different islands in the West Indies? He also sailed to Central America. With each of his four voyages, he exchanged new things with the people he met. He brought new plants, animals and ideas to the “Indians” from Spain. Then he brought some of their plants, animals and ideas back to Spain. This is often called the Columbian Exchange. It changed the world forever. In this lesson, we’re going to learn about five things that many historians believe are the most important things that were brought across the ocean.

Say: Let’s see if you can guess what I am talking about by the clues I give you.

1. Our first plant first grew many thousands of years ago in Mexico. Columbus and his men had never seen it before. I’m going to give you some clues; raise your hand if you think you know the answer. We love to eat it steamed in summertime with butter on it. We eat it popped when we watch movies. We eat it in flakes for breakfast. We grow some kinds of it to feed cattle and cows. We press the kernels to make cooking oil and even use it as gas in some of our cars! That’s right, corn has become a very important plant for millions of people in Europe, Africa and Asia because it grows in many different places and provides them with food they didn’t have before Columbus.

2. Here’s another very important plant Columbus brought back. These came from the Andes Mountains of South America and come in many different colors and sizes. We boil them, mash them, bake them, cut them in thin strips and fry them, and eat them as chips. Because they can grow in cold places with poor soil, they became a very important food for many people in Europe, Asia and Africa. That’s right, potatoes.

3. Columbus brought these animals with him on his second voyage of 1493. They are large animals that the Spanish tamed and rode into battle. Because the Indians had never seen them before, they were afraid of them at first. But many years later, these animals escaped and ran wild in the American West, and some Native peoples tamed them and became very good at riding them. These animals changed the way people could move from place to place and also changed farming, because they could be used to pull a plow. That’s right—horses.

4. Columbus brought this plant with him from Spain. It has been around for more than 10,000 years. Today, we use this plant to sweeten things like coffee, tea and a certain kind of treat we love to eat around Halloween. Back in Columbus’ day, it was very hard to grow in Europe, so it was rare there. But Columbus discovered it would grow really well in the West Indies. His men set up plantations and made the Taíno people clear the lands and grow this plant in their fields. The plantation owners shipped the plants back to Spain and made lots of money. When the Spanish needed more people than the Taíno, they captured men from Africa and made them work in the fields, too. This plant was bad for the workers in Columbus’ time and it’s still bad for your teeth today...that’s right, sugar cane.

5. Then play the guessing game to talk about disease. There were some dangerous things that you can’t even see that may have made the most difference in the history of the world. These things were carried in the bodies of people and animals that came to the islands from Europe. Seen only with microscopes, these things made many millions of people who lived in the West Indies, South America, and North America very sick, and even made them die. That’s right—germs or diseases were brought over from Europe and Africa with Columbus and his men. Diseases like smallpox, measles, malaria and influenza were spread through the air or by touch. Entire Indian villages—and even whole tribes of Indians—were killed. Some of the diseases that the Indians had were brought back to Europe, too, and made the Europeans sick.
6. Summarize by explaining there were many, many other things that went back and forth across the ocean during the Columbian Exchange—many plants, animals, people and ideas. Talk about the fact that when Columbus and his men exchanged these things, they were probably just thinking about finding new ways to make money and help Spain be more important in the world. They may not have been thinking that their actions would have consequences. Consequences are what happened when these things were exchanged. Conclude by saying: Some good things and some bad things happened, and they still do, even to this day.

[There are many websites on Columbian Exchange containing items brought back and forth; please feel free to expand and/or replace the five key items in above exercise.]

**Exercise 1A: Matching Cause and Effect**

1. Give each student Appendix 11—“Columbian Exchange” worksheet.
2. Explain that these are just a few of the things that were exchanged during Columbus’ voyages.
3. Direct them to draw a line from the picture, to its name and finally, to the consequence.
4. Discuss the following questions with students: Who do you think benefitted more from the Columbian Exchange: the Spanish or the Taíno? Why?

**Extensions:**

- Using an expanded list of items from the Columbian Exchange, have students break down food items in a traditional breakfast, or in a pizza dinner. Then ask them to answer the following questions: Which items came from the Americas? Which came from Europe? They will probably be surprised.
- Ask students if they would like to add any information to the K-W-L chart.

**Direct Aims:**

1. To introduce students to early globalization.
2. To illustrate that the consequences of any action might be both good and bad.
3. To underscore how devastating the introduction of new diseases were to native populations.
4. To teach students about the source of foods they eat.
The Columbian Exchange

Draw a line from the picture to the name, and then to the consequence.

**Corn**
People could use them to move from place to place. They changed the ways of warfare and farming.

**Sugar**
They grew in cold places and in poor soil. They became an important food for the people of Europe.

**Diseases**
The Spanish grew this plant in the West Indies by using Taino men and African slaves.

**Potato**
These caused the deaths of many millions of people on both sides of the ocean.

**Horses**
When the Spanish brought this plant back, it fed many people in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Name ____________________
Lesson 8A: What is the Columbian Exchange? (For older students)

Materials: Appendix 12—“The Columbian Exchange; Appendix 12A—“Exchange Cards”

Introduction: There are many excellent websites and lesson plans regarding the Columbian exchange available for teacher background and student research.

Exercise 1: Things Exchanged Across Continents

1. Divide the class into 4 groups and make copies of all of the cards in Appendix 12A for each group.
2. Explain these are just some plants, animals, tools and ideas that were exchanged between the West Indies and Europe. Once overseas, some were brought into Africa and Asia, as well.
3. Have students refer to Appendix 12 and group pictures into appropriate hemisphere, using supplied labels.

Exercise 2: Expected and Unexpected Consequences

1. Say: Every action has a reaction, a consequence. Some of the consequences that these plants, animals, tools and ideas had when they were brought into a different place were good or positive. Others were bad or negative. Some of these consequences happened a few years later; some changed the world forever. Let's see if you can use your powers of logic and reasoning to match the pictures of items from the Columbian Exchange to their consequences, and then we'll discuss them.
2. Have group read the consequence cards and match them to the item exchanged. Discuss.
3. Then ask them to group the picture and consequence cards into “positive” or “negative” sections.
4. After students have finished matching, ask them to check their work. Taking one item at a time, elicit from the students in which hemisphere the card should be placed. Discuss the consequences of each item to ensure that each group has matched the cards correctly.
5. Spend some time discussing the impact of disease. Many of the diseases introduced by the Spanish were brought over in pigs, sheep and other animals, or spread through the air. Native people had no natural immunities to them. Additionally, large numbers of Native people became enslaved, working in gold or silver mines and on plantations, and they were getting less food from their untended crops. Overwork and poor nourishment made them less likely to stave off new European germs. The Spanish brought smallpox, measles, chickenpox, influenza, typhus, diphtheria, cholera, bubonic plague, scarlet fever, whooping cough and malaria, among other diseases. Although estimates of Native population on the American continents vary greatly, it is estimated that more than 80 to 95 percent of Native people were killed within the first 100-150 years following contact by Columbus and his crew.
6. Add any pertinent information to the K-W-L chart for either Columbus or the Taíno.

Extensions:

- Have students find pictures from Aztec Codices in books or on the Internet that illustrate effect of small pox on the Aztec population and discuss.
- Have students find pictures of Plains Indian Wintercounts that also have pictures showing the effect of disease during certain years on those tribes.

Direct Aims:

1. To introduce students to early globalization.
2. To illustrate that the consequences of any action might be both good and bad.
3. To underscore how devastating the introduction of new diseases were to native populations.
4. To teach students about the source of foods they eat.
# The Columbian Exchange

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To the West Indies and Beyond</th>
<th>To Europe and Beyond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sugar cane</td>
<td>beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
<td>chili peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oranges</td>
<td>sweet potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black rat</td>
<td>manioc (cassava)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pigs</td>
<td>rubber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>cacao (chocolate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earthworms</td>
<td>corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written alphabet</td>
<td>turkeys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plows</td>
<td>quinine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the wheel</td>
<td>gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firearms</td>
<td>silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diseases</td>
<td>democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Beans" /></td>
<td>This vegetable has many colors and sizes. It can be eaten cooked or raw. Native Americans grew this plant. It is one of the “Three Sisters.” They grew it with corn and squash. It became important all over the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Chili Peppers" /></td>
<td>This plant is used as a spice. It was found first in Bolivia and Brazil. It is used in many countries. Even people in India, China, and Hungary use it. This plant is rich in vitamins. It helps to digest food. It can even make pain hurt less.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Tomatoes" /></td>
<td>This fruit is full of vitamins. It grew in South America first. Then it went to Europe, Asia and Africa. Greece is the place that uses it the most today!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sweet Potatoes" /></td>
<td>This root plant is China’s third most important crop after rice and wheat. It first grew in Central and South America. Then it went to Asia. It was planted where people could not grow rice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Manioc (Cassava)" /></td>
<td>This root plant was eaten by the Taino. It was also used by people in Central and South America. It became an important food for African people. It can grow well in poor soil. It is good for you too!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>rubber</strong></td>
<td>This tree makes a sticky material. It grows in Brazilian rainforests. People brought its seeds to Asia. They grew this tree on big farms. They make super balls and tires there today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tobacco</strong></td>
<td>Native people used this plant for hundreds of years. Later, Europeans used it as medicine and money. They grew it on plantations. This plant is used all over the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cacao (chocolate)</strong></td>
<td>Aztec kings used this plant first. They used it as money. They also made a special drink with it. Later the Spanish and English kings and queens made it a popular drink. It is now mainly grown in Africa and the East Indies. This bean is a favorite in candy and desserts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>potatoes</strong></td>
<td>This plant was found in the Andes Mountains. It grows in cold places and poor soil. It became an important food in Europe. Many Irish people depended on this plant for food. A disease ruined the whole crop in the 1800s. Millions of Irish people died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>maize (corn)</strong></td>
<td>This plant first grew in Mexico a long time ago. Native people ate it. The Spanish brought it to Europe. It also went to Africa and Asia. It fed many people in these places. It comes in many different kinds and colors. It is used to make many kinds of products too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>turkeys</strong></td>
<td>There were several kinds of this bird in North America. The Spanish took only one kind to Europe. This kind was tamed by the Aztec people. We eat this bird at a fall holiday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>quinine</strong></td>
<td>This medicine comes from the bark of a tree. It only grows in forests. The forests are in parts of South America. This bark could cure malaria. This bark saved the lives of many people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gold</strong></td>
<td>Columbus used Taíno people as slaves in the West Indies. He wanted them to find this mineral. There wasn’t much there. Other explorers came later. They found it in Mexico. They also found it in Peru. They sent lots of it back to Spain. It made King Philip II the most powerful ruler in Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>silver</strong></td>
<td>This mineral was mined by Native people and African slaves in Mexico and Peru. It was shipped to Spain. The Spanish used it to make coins. They traded the coins to China. They got silk, china and tea in return.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>hammocks</strong></td>
<td>Columbus saw the Taíno people using these. He brought them back to Europe. Soon, they were being used on ships. They took up less room and swayed with the motion of the ship. That way, sailors were not tossed around so much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To Europe and Beyond</strong></td>
<td><strong>To the West Indies and Beyond</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sugar cane</td>
<td>First grown in New Guinea, this plant provided Europeans with a rare, sweet kind of food. The Spanish brought it to the West Indies. It was a perfect place to grow it. The Spanish first used Taíno slaves to grow it. Then they used African slaves. It was then sent back to Europe to use in coffee, tea and alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
<td>This plant was first grown in Africa. It was brought to the good soil and climate of the southeast part of today’s United States. It grew on plantation farms. African slaves were brought over to help grow it. Then it was sent back to Europe and Asia. It became an important part of people’s diets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slavery</td>
<td>The Spanish used people to work on their large farms. The English did too. First they used native people. Then they brought large numbers of African people. These people were brought to South America. They were brought to North America too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oranges</td>
<td>This fruit grows on trees. When it was brought to North America, it grew well in warm weather climates with good soil. It is now a major crop of some warm-weather US states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black rat</td>
<td>These animals came on ships. They were hiding on them. When the ships landed, they escaped. They carried many diseases. One was bubonic plague.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pigs</td>
<td>These animals were carried for food on ships. Many of them escaped on land. They had babies very fast. There were too many wild ones. They destroyed gardens and forests. They also brought diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>People used these animals to move from place to place. They used them to farm. They also used them to make war. Many of these animals escaped. They became wild in the West part of the United States. They changed the lives of some Native people living there forever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>This animal came on the second voyage of Columbus. People used its meat, hides and milk. The Spanish raised herds. They raised them in North and South America. This animal ate all the grass up at times. They ate the crops of Native people too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>People got wool from this animal. They used wool to make clothes. It also carried another thing. It brought a disease. South American animals died from it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthworms</td>
<td>These squirming animals were brought over in the dirt of other plants. They made the soil better for farming. When they move through dirt, they bring air and nutrients to plant and tree roots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Alphabet</td>
<td>By using this invention, people could match sounds to symbols. They used these symbols to make words. They also wrote them down. That way, other people could read them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plows</td>
<td>This metal tool changed farming. It could be pushed by a person or pulled by a horse. It allowed people to dig the soil in rows to make it easier to plant seeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wheel</td>
<td>When this round tool was brought over, it changed the way Native people moved from place to place. It also changed the way they farmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>The Spanish brought over guns and gunpowder. They also brought iron and steel weapons. These things changed how people made war.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These things made many people sick all over the world. They killed millions of Native people in both North and South America. Animals carried some of them. The air spread others. They are very small. You need a microscope to see them!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive consequence</th>
<th>Negative consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>diseases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 9: What have we learned about Christopher Columbus? (For younger students)

Materials: K-W-L Chart

Exercise 1: Review What We Have Learned

1. Display KWL chart. Say: Let’s review our K-W-L chart and see if we can answer questions. Who can tell me:
   - Why did Columbus set sail across the sea in 1492 in the first place?
   - What adjectives would you use to describe Columbus?
   - Do you think he accomplished what he set out to?
   - Do you think his voyages changed the world?
   - Do you think YOU could be an explorer? Why or why not?
   - Do you think all explorers should have holidays?
   - Does Columbus deserve a holiday?

2. Tell students that most federal holidays are celebrations of the people and events that are important in history. Review some of those holidays (President’s Day, Fourth of July, Veteran’s Day)

3. Teach students that some people in the United States do not think we should celebrate Columbus Day with parades and other activities. Elicit students’ ideas by asking: Who do you think those people might be? (Usually it is Native people in both North and South America)

4. For many years, groups of Native people have held protests in such big cities as Denver and Washington, D.C. They have asked that the parades and other activities that honor Columbus be canceled. [Show students some images, if desired, at http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/article/columbus-day%3A-images-of-protest-138448]

5. Ask: Why do you think Native people might not think that honoring Columbus is appropriate? (Their great-great-great-great grandparents killed by diseases; they were slaves; land was taken by Spanish and later others)

Exercise 2: Alternatives to Columbus Day

1. Explain that several US cities and states have replaced Columbus Day with alternative days of remembrance. (Berkeley in California celebrates Indigenous Peoples Day; South Dakota celebrates Native American Day; Hawaii celebrates Discoverer’s Day, which honors the arrival of Polynesian settlers)

2. Discuss student reactions to alternative celebrations as a lead in to conclusion below.

3. Say: Now it’s time to share your ideas. Take out your journals and answer this question: How do you think we should observe Columbus Day at this school?

Direct Aims:

1. To summarize what students have learned.
2. To help students think critically from a multicultural perspective.
Lesson 9: How should we commemorate Columbus Day? (For older students)

**Materials:** Popular books about Columbus

**Exercise:** Comparing and Contrasting Like an Historian

1. Choose a typical Columbus book readily available in the library or frequently used by schools.
2. Before reading, go over the title, front and back covers, date of publication. Explain that some books are older and historians may have discovered facts no longer true or new facts that change the history of what we have learned.
3. Then say: You have learned to be good historians in this unit. You know what a primary and secondary source is. You also know that past events, what we call “history,” is not just one story. So, when we read this book, I want you to think about these questions: Does the book tell the full story? Why or why not? What differences do you see between when it was written and what you know now?
4. Stress how when students research something, they should always find the newest sources to make sure they have all the facts. Review asking whose stories did we study in this unit and how were they different.
5. Repeat with other books as you wish.

**Extensions:**

- Show students a 1960s cartoon about Columbus at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuvRFZ4Mxbo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuvRFZ4Mxbo). Explain this story of Columbus was the way most adults grew up learning about him. Have students correct any misinformation they see in the video.

- Say: Now it’s time to share your ideas. Take out your journals and answer this question: How do you think we should observe Columbus Day at this school?

**Unit Conclusion:**

- Ask and discuss these questions: What makes a great explorer? Did Columbus accomplish what he set out to? Does he deserve a federal holiday?

**Direct Aims:**

1. To summarize what students have learned.
2. To help students think critically from a multicultural perspective.
Some Suggestions For Touch Boxes

1. Use shoebox-sized Rubbermaid containers with easily removable tops—buy 8 so they all match.
2. Make the outside label for each box in color of map’s cultural area.
3. Back the information cards and labels for each object with same color.

**Northeast Woodlands (green)**
- Pieces of birchbark
- Birchbark canoe
- 3 sisters: squash, corn and bean replicas
- Replica of strawberries
- Dream catcher
- Cattail leaves (used for mats)
- Cattail fluff (used for stuffing, diapers)—make sure it’s in sealable container!
- Piece of buckskin (for clothing)
- Piece of deer hide with hair
- Piece of bear hide (for clothing)
- Tobacco (sacred plant used in ceremonies)
- Porcupine quills (used in decorating)
- Plastic models of deer, bear, wolf, trout, etc. --important woodland animals
- White cowrie shells—used as money
- CD of music / Book of photos

**Plains (orange)**
- Piece of buffalo hide (robes)
- Piece of buckskin (clothing)
- Onion bulb replica (representing camas bulb dug for food)
- Corn replica
- Sunflower replica
- Small cradleboard
- Buffalo horn beads
- Plastic models of buffalo, deer, pinto pony
- Tiny drum
- Toy buckskin horse
- CD of music / Book of photos

**Northwest Coast (purple)**
- Small wooden mask replica
- Piece of bear hide (for robes)
- Piece of buckskin (for clothes)
- Piece of fishing net
- Replica of grapes
- Cedar leaves
- Balls of cedar wood
- Plastic models—bear, salmon, deer
- Totem pole book
- Northwest Coast art magnets
- CD of music / Book of photos / CD of teaching stories—“The Third Ear”, by Johnny Moses

**California (red)**
- Rabbit fur
- Piece of buckskin (clothing)
- Piece of deer hide
- Tule (reed) doll
- Shell necklace
- Acorns
- Stalks of reeds
- Reed purse
- Postcards of baskets
Plastic models—jackrabbit, deer, antelope
Abalone shell (used for decoration)
Conch shell pendant
Fishing net
CD of music/Book of photos

Southeast (pink)
Snapping turtle foot
Alligator head
Postcards—Cherokee alphabet, Cherokee seal, Cherokee clans
Piece of buckskin
gSmall Seminole doll
gSmall painted gourd
Plastic models—deer, fox
Replicas of corn, beans, squash, strawberries, fern
CD of music/Book of photos

The Great Basin (brown)
Pinon cone (pine nuts)
gPine nuts in jar
Coiled yucca fiber
Rabbit fur
Sage (sacred plant)
Plastic models—fox, jackrabbit
Toy buckskin bear
Shoshone rattle
CD of music/Book of photos

Southwest (yellow)
Male and female Navajo dolls in traditional dress
Rabbit fur
Replicas of corn, beans, squash, pepper and sunflower
Saguaro cactus stem
Small Burden basket
Small Navajo rug
Small southwestern clay pot
Small sand painting
Piece of real cotton
Piece of turquoise
CD of music/Book of photos

Plateau (grey)
Piece of buffalo skin
Onion bulb (representing camas bulb)
Piece of bear hide
Piece of deer hide
Elk teeth
Buffalo teeth
Gold Sacagawea dollar
Buckskin bear toy
Shoshoni rattle
Plastic models—elk, wolf, deer, buffalo, trout, bear, Appaloosa horse
CD of music/Book of photos

Please feel free to contact me if you’re unsure what to include, what to write for information cards or with questions—Linda Bechtle at potawproj@gmail.com
Resources for Touch Boxes

1. **Canyon Records** has great compilations of traditional music you can use for your CDs. Choose 6 songs or so that represent different dances and copy them onto your own CD.

2. **Michael’s Craft Stores**—usually have fruits and veggie replicas, and many have animal models

3. The **Midwest Institute for Native American Studies** (www.MINASIllinois.org, or call 847-328-5968), offers a wide variety of Montessori materials pertaining to Native American Fundamental Needs, along with Botany and Zoology materials pertaining to the Eastern Woodlands and Plains, and sets of mini-ethnographies on the Potawatomi peoples of the Midwest. They also offer a Timeline of Illinois Civilizations for Upper Elementary students. Contact them for rental of Cultural Areas Touchboxes.

4. **Museum stores** (check out the Mitchell Museum in Evanston, the Field Museum in Chicago, the Schingoethe Museum at Aurora University in Aurora

5. **Online Native craft stores** for smaller replicas—check out the Christmas decoration section!

6. **Online animal parts stores** (do a Google search for hides, teeth and bones!)

Great Sources for Books

* Oyate
*Oyate is an organization working to see that Native histories and lives are portrayed correctly. They offer a great catalog of books, posters and videos.
2702 Mathews Street
Berkeley, CA 94702
(510)848-6700
www.oyate.org

* Teaching for Change
*A good collection of resources for multicultural teaching at all grade levels. Pick up your copy of Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years and the Unlearning Indian Stereotypes CD here!
Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA)
P.O. Box 73038
Washington, D.C. 20056-3038
(202)238-2379
www.teachingforchange.org

* UCLA American Indian Studies Center
*A small but intense assortment of books and videos.
Publications Unit
3220 Campbell Hall
Box 951548 AA34
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1548
www.books.aiosc.ucla.edu

* Woodland Pattern
*This literary arts center offers books from independent presses often unavailable from other bookstores. A nice Native American selection, in addition to many other cross-cultural topics.
720 East Locust Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414)263-5001
www.woodlandpattern.org
※ Written Heritage
*A nice selection of Native books, videos and music*
P.O. Box 1390
Folsom, LA 70437-1390
1-800-301-8009
www.writtenheritage.com

※ Cherokee Publications
*Great selection of books, videos, maps and kits*
P.O. Box 430
Cherokee, NC. 28719
1-800-948-3161
www.CherokeePublications.net

※ Crazy Crow Trading Post
*Huge selection of beads, craft materials and kits*
P.O. Box 847
Pottsboro, TX 75076-0847
1-800-786-6210
www.crazycrow.com

※ Noc Bay Trading Company
*Great selection of beads, craft materials and audiotapes*
P.O. Box 295
1133 Washington Ave.
Escanaba, MI 49829
1-800-652-7192
www.nocbay.com

※ Sioux Trading Post
*Beads, books, botanicals, craft materials and finished arts*
6th and Main Streets
Rapid City, SD
1-800-541-2388
www.siouxtrading.com

※ Wandering Bull, Inc.
*Craft supplies, gifts and botanicals*
P.O. Box 496
Carver, MA 02330
1-800-430-2855
www.wanderingbull.com
General: Children

Addy, Sharon, Hart Right Here on This Spot (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999) ISBN 0-395-73091-0

* Bruchac, Joseph and James, How Chipmunk Got His Stripes (Puffin Books) ISBN 0-14-250021-6


Great Lakes Books: Children


Gibson, Karen Bush, The Potawatomi (Bridgestone Books)


### Some Basic Information About Pre-Contact Cultural Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Northeast Woodlands</th>
<th>Plains</th>
<th>Southeast Woodlands</th>
<th>Great Basin</th>
<th>Southwest</th>
<th>Plateau</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Northwest Coast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>Sometimes mountainous, often forested with many lakes and rivers. Excellent soil for farming.</td>
<td>Grasses predominate; few trees except those along rivers. Sometimes harsh temperature extremes in north.</td>
<td>Mountains, forests, swamps. Good farming soil—generally warm climate year-round in lower elevations.</td>
<td>Most land dry, sandy desert. More resources around rivers and lakes.</td>
<td>Mountain forests, scrublands and deserts; not ideal for farming. Often wide daily temperature extremes.</td>
<td>Predominantly mountain habitat with forests and grasslands; many rivers.</td>
<td>Mountains and forests, grasslands and deserts; ocean access. Wide gamut of temperatures, too.</td>
<td>Tall mountains with thick pine forests; many rivers and lakes; ocean highly utilized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>Wide variety of game animals, especially deer, fish, birds. Many edible plants, especially wild rice, nuts and berries; good farming.</td>
<td>Hunted a number of small animals and deer. Heavily reliant on corn, beans and squash crops and pinon nuts.</td>
<td>Elkhorn men teaching, small mammals hunted. Camas bulbs dug and other edible plants gathered. Some fish and ducks.</td>
<td>Elk, deer and small mammals hunted. Camas bulbs dug and other edible plants gathered. Some fish and ducks.</td>
<td>Elkhorn men teaching, small mammals hunted. Camas bulbs dug and other edible plants gathered. Some fish and ducks.</td>
<td>Freshwater and salt-water fish and invertebrates. Deer, small mammals hunted. Acorns major food source, and other edible plants gathered.</td>
<td>Salt-water and fresh-water fish, invertebrates and mammals (whales); deer and smaller animals, birds. Kelp, berries and other edible plants. Little farming.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>Primarily deerskin dresses and moccasins for women, leggings, shirts and breechclouts for men. Fur robes in winter.</td>
<td>Women: long, tanned buffalo- or elk-hide dresses, leggings and moccasins. Men: breechclouts and moccasins, shirts and buffalo robes when colder.</td>
<td>Very little in warm seasons; bodies were often tattooed. Deerskin shirts and pants in mountainous northern areas. Often wore turbans as hats, decorated with feathers.</td>
<td>Yucca fiber sandals, woven robes of rabbit-skin or other small animals or duck feathers. Woven aprons of sagebrush bark.</td>
<td>Sheep wool and cotton dresses, shirts and skirts (sometimes also worn by men). Woven fiber or deerskin moccasins. Deerskin clothing in mountain areas and near Plains.</td>
<td>Same as Basin, but with addition of hides from antelope and sheep. Women also wore hats made of woven fiber. After Europeans brought trade beads,</td>
<td>In many areas, Plains-style shirts, dresses and moccasins made of elk and antelope. Women made hats of cedar bark and carried bags made of corn husks.</td>
<td>Animal hide clothing in colder northern areas; in other areas, clothing made from woven cedar bark. Blankets made from mountain-goat hair. Woven cedar hats kept out rain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>Multi-familied longhouses in summer; smaller, portable wigwams made from bent saplings and cattail mats or bark in winter.</td>
<td>Some sedentary tribes made earth lodges of logs covered by layers of dirt and grass; most people used tipis, portable pyramidal frames covered with buffalo hide.</td>
<td>In northern areas, houses built with wattle and daub- logs plastered with mud and grass. Palisaded villages. In warmer areas, open-sided platform houses called chickees.</td>
<td>Conical huts thatched with brush or grass in summer; wickiups dug over pits for warmth in winter.</td>
<td>Apartment-like pueblos made from adobe bricks with few windows. Also six-sided hogans made of logs chinked with mud.</td>
<td>Partly-subterranean mud pit houses—log frames lined with cedar and covered with mud.</td>
<td>Thatched huts called wickiups, domed frames made from tree branches filled in with overlapping layers of grasses and reeds.</td>
<td>Villages of plank houses made from wide, red cedar boards. Often decorated inside and out with totem poles representing the family’s lineage and status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It has been said that you cannot teach what you do not know. It is also a common adage that teachers teach as they have been taught. Both statements have implications for the approach to teaching about Indians or Native Americans, this nation’s indigenous peoples, which has remained largely unchanged since perhaps the 1920s or 1930s when the practice of teaching about them through an “Indian” unit began. The “Indian” unit remains one of the more popular ways to teach elementary age children about Indians or Native Americans, usually without regard for what and when the material is developmentally appropriate.

As indigenous educators who are former elementary teachers and current teacher educators, we have been asked to express our views on teaching about American Indians and Alaska Natives in the elementary schools. We think there are some very fundamental questions that all teachers and teacher educators must ask regarding the presence of the United States of America’s indigenous peoples in the elementary school curriculum, particularly in the social studies. We believe that we should be asking what should be taught, when it should be taught, and how it should be taught. Perhaps most importantly, we should be asking Why are we teaching about “Indians” or “Native Americans?”

Eliminating Stereotypes We strongly believe that an “Indian Unit” or a “Native American Unit,” usually taught in November, is not the best way for children to gain knowledge about and understanding of indigenous peoples. If we could get one point across, it would be that students should not learn about American Indians or Native Americans only in November. More importantly, teachers must rethink the practice of teaching about American Indians and Alaska Natives in short isolated segments or units of instruction, especially in the early grades.

Nearly twenty years ago, Patricia G. Ramsey in “Beyond Ten Little Indians and Turkeys: Alternative Approaches to Thanksgiving,” pointed out that the song “Ten Little Indians” objectifies Native peoples, as do “I is for Indian” and “E is for Eskimo” alphabet posters.¹ She described “First Thanksgiving” enactments with “Indian Headdresses” and “Pilgrim Hats” as events that reinforce dehumanized stereotypes of Native peoples. She pointed out that Thanksgiving is celebrated as a universal day of rejoicing—an event that demonstrated the beginning of a mutually beneficial relationship between the European settlers and indigenous peoples—when, in fact, it disrupted a way of life. She believes that children need to be aware of the experiences of all groups involved in order to understand the significance of historical events, and she offered guidance to teachers about observing Thanksgiving by asking three questions:

1. Do the proposed activities in any way support or reinforce negative and dehumanized images of Native Americans?

2. Do the activities imply or confirm historical misconceptions about the relationship between Europeans and Native Americans?

3. Are the experiences of all the people involved realistically represented?

Ramsey concluded with several excellent alternative approaches to the typical “Pilgrims and Indians Thanksgiving Feast,” which can be found in her article.

We agree with Ramsey and believe that the traditional (not thematic) unit approach to teaching about indigenous peoples objectifies American Indians and Alaska Natives. We ask teachers to think about this question: What other people are taught about as the subject of units? Our experience and observations suggest that most units are about events or things or animals, not people. We believe that if units are taught around themes, such as giving thanks, then teachers can introduce the different and similar ways in which people (in the community, the country, or the world) behave in formal situations within their societies.

Names Give Meaning Readers will notice that we use the term “indigenous.” If children were taught what this word means, it would clear up many misconceptions about the collective terms for native peoples of the Americas—Indians, American Indians, Native Americans, and Native (or, in Canada, Indian, Aboriginal, or First Nations). It would also help them to understand what sets indigenous peoples apart from the rest of this nation’s “minority” population. Land, and one’s relationship with the land, was, is, and will be a defining point for indigenous peoples (including Native Hawaiians).

At some point in the upper grades through high school, students should study about “Indian” people as indigenous people in the context of pre-1492 American history. They should learn about sovereignty and treaties as the basis for the political relationship between indigenous nations and the federal government. American Indian and Alaska Native tribes are the only ethnic groups to have a constitutionally-based relationship with the federal government. Culturally,
American Indians and Alaska Natives fit into the study of cultures in the multicultural curriculum. However, a unique political relationship based on sovereignty and treaties defines “American Indian and Alaska Native” relative to the U.S. Constitution, and explains why reservations exist for some (but not all) and why tribal governments were acknowledged by the United States.

Young children are not developmentally able to understand such abstract concepts, but surely by fifth or sixth grade, children should begin to understand that there are three sovereigns (federal, states, and tribes), not two (federal, state), when they study governments in or of the United States. Facts about tribes or nations should be required knowledge, just as we learn facts about states (i.e., how many, capitals or headquarters, geographic land bases, governing systems, economic resources).

In the United States, “American Indian” and “Alaska Native” are the legislative terms used to describe indigenous peoples as a collective group. American Indians are the indigenous peoples of the contiguous forty-eight states. Aleuts, Eskimos (Inupiat and Yupik), and Indians (Athabaskan, Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian)—who are all indigenous peoples of Alaska—are not American Indians but are collectively known as Alaska Natives. The term “Native American” emerged as ethnic studies programs developed on college campuses in the late 1960s. The term includes Native Hawaiians, who are also indigenous to the land boundaries of the United States by virtue of statehood.

The term “American Indian/Alaska Native,” or the shortened term “Native,” is used by the National Indian Education Association and other organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians. In the United States, as in Canada, the term “indigenous” is regularly used, especially by those who reject the association with European explorers implied in the words “American” and “Indian.” There is no general agreement among indigenous peoples regarding the collective term used as a name for themselves; however, all groups are very clear about the specific name for themselves as a people. The people of the Navajo Nation in the southwestern four-corner states refer to themselves as Diné. The people in Arizona (and Mexico) formerly known as Papago prefer to be called by their name for themselves, and are now officially known as Tohono O’odham. Several “Sioux” tribes have renamed their reservations, deleting the name Sioux and changing it to reflect their Lakota, Dakota, or Nakota designation.

In sum, it is important for teachers and students to be aware that “Indian” and “Native American” are not the only terms used to name indigenous peoples of North America. This discussion about names is an important illustration of how complicated the study of indigenous peoples of the United States can be, and why, as indigenous educators, we reject the generalized approach that many textbooks and other materials present for teachers to use.

An Expanding View of Native Americans Everyone knows that the histories of indigenous peoples predate American history; the history of this country did not begin in 1492. More often than not, the presentation of “Indian” history in the context of American history is inaccurate and/or incomplete. For example, what was happening with American Indian tribes during the Civil War period? The long walk of the Navajo, the Sioux uprising in Minnesota, and the Sand Creek massacre are just three significant events that occurred during that time period, in addition to the actual involvement by individuals and groups in the Civil War. Most textbooks fail to mention the activities of indigenous peoples during this time period.

When we examined the “expanding horizons” (also referred to as “expanding communities” and “expanding environments”) approach presented in most elementary social studies textbooks and curricula, we wondered where teaching about “Indians” or “Native Americans” fit into the kindergarten-primary grades curriculum? If the movement is from concrete to abstract—or from the egocentrism of self to family to neighborhood to community, and so on—then where does a unit on “Indians” fit into this scheme, especially if indigenous people are not a part of the child’s physical environment?

We question whether young children are capable of understanding past to present as it relates to “Indians.” We understand that in kindergarten, when holidays play an important role in the school year, the study of Indians is inevitably connected with the Thanksgiving holiday. We believe that many of the stereotypes children carry with them result from the concrete fun-filled activities (e.g., making houses, clothing, and food) that early childhood and primary teachers use to teach about a topic that is replete with abstract concepts (such as that “Indians” represents the past and the present) and includes numerous cultural manifestations.

There are many well-intentioned people who create curriculum materials for use in teaching about Indians or Native Americans. We examined several curricula, and one in particular that attempts to bridge the past-to-present concept for young children. The authors were careful to point out that one of the most common of all stereotypes is the feathered headdress of the Plains Indian portrayed in photographs and on television. Despite efforts not to reinforce stereotypes, one of the activities was for children to make a headdress! There was no text explaining that all Indians do not wear headdresses, and that children certainly do not.
Teachers must ask themselves, What do I really want children to learn from a concrete activity? For example, would teachers continue to encourage children to make and wear headbands encircled with feathers if it were known that (1) Indian children did not wear feathers until they earned them as young adults, (2) there is variance in who can wear feathers, (3) there is variance in the number and way in which feathers are worn, and (4) all tribes did not wear feathers in their hair.

Ramsey reminds us that young children “can enjoy exploring tools, foods, and clothing of many different groups but are unlikely to understand the relationship between traditional and contemporary lifestyles or to comprehend the impact of geography.” Furthermore, Ramsey tells us that young children focus on one attribute at a time in making sense of their world. Choctaw, Japanese, or Norwegian, therefore, have little meaning for children, beyond the association with the concrete curriculum activity.

We suggest that teachers begin with the present and, using children as a point of reference, begin to discuss similarities and differences among children as they learn about each other. For example, how does a child’s own family give thanks? How do other families give thanks? We believe learning should focus on the values expressed in the different ways and times people give thanks, rather than the “cute” commercial holiday materials and activities. By doing so, we begin to plant the seeds of tolerance and respect for differences.

In Conclusion The purpose of this article was to raise questions about what, when, how, and why we teach about American Indians and Alaska Natives in our nation’s schools. If the goal of social studies is to study human experience and behavior in order to produce competent, responsible, and well-informed citizens, then we must do that in every sense of the word. Well-informed, thoughtful teachers will teach children to be well informed and thoughtful. We offer the following recommendations to assist teachers and teacher educators to gain more knowledge:

1. Teaching about native or indigenous peoples (and people of other cultures) should be incorporated into the curriculum naturally as we teach about family and school, neighborhoods, communities, regions, our country, hemispheres, and the world.

2. Teaching about native or indigenous peoples should not occur as the topic of a separate unit.

3. Teachers should use critical thinking skills to question the authenticity of textbook and curriculum materials, as well as information on the Internet.

4. Teachers must be willing to ask native people to help. If contact with native people locally is not a consideration, or the department of education does not have information, please contact us directly; we will help you find authentic sources and resources.

As we near the end of another century of misunderstanding American Indian and Native American peoples, it is time for educators to join our efforts and re-examine the curriculum issues of, what, when, how, and why we should teach about “Indians.”

Notes


2. Dr. William Demmert, who is Tlingit and Sioux, provided this information and recommends for further reading The Native People of Alaska by Steve J. Langdon and Alaska Native Land Claims by Robert D. Arnold.

3. Their name for themselves often means “the people.”

4. For a unit on American Indians and the Civil War period, contact Karen Gayton Swisher, Haskell Indian Nations University, Box 5014, 155 Indian Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66046-4800.

Print In addition to books and material published by various tribes, the following sources are recommended for finding authentic information:


Native Education Directory Organizations and Resources for Educators of Native Americans and various Digests published by ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory. (Address: P. O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325-1348.)

*Rethinking Columbus*, a special edition of *Rethinking Schools*. (Address: 1001 East Keefe Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53212.)


**Websites** The following web sites have information useful to classroom teachers:

Techniques for Evaluating American Indian Web Sites at [http://www.u.arizona.edu/~ecubbins/webcrit.html](http://www.u.arizona.edu/~ecubbins/webcrit.html)

Selective Bibliography and Guide for “I” Is Not for Indian: The Portrayal of Native Americans in Books for Young People at [http://www1.pitt.edu/~lmitten/ailabib.htm](http://www1.pitt.edu/~lmitten/ailabib.htm)

American Indian Library Association at [http://www1.pitt.edu/~lmitten/aila.html](http://www1.pitt.edu/~lmitten/aila.html)

[http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/unbiased.teaching.k12.2.html](http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/unbiased.teaching.k12.2.html)

[http://www.unr.edu/nnap/NT/i8_9.htm](http://www.unr.edu/nnap/NT/i8_9.htm)

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CHAPTER 3

Arts, Crafts, and Activities: What Not to Do

In planning instructional activities, teachers frequently rely on "standard" activities without considering accuracy, authenticity, and sensitivity to the culture that the activity is supposed to represent. As a consequence, what they are teaching can be offensive to American Indian people and reinforce negative or insensitive stereotypes. This brief section will alert the teacher to some of the most common issues related to arts, crafts, and activities and suggest simple alternatives.

ISSUES RELATED TO TEACHING NATIVE SUBJECTS

One logical method of checking or analyzing your plans or ideas as you prepare to teach about Native peoples and their cultures is to use this simple test: Substitute another ethnic or cultural group in your activity or plans. For example, could you exchange a similar Italian, Jewish, or Hispanic name, ceremonial or religious object, food, or dance for the corresponding Indian topic in the activity you were planning for the classroom? Remember that good information, common sense, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity are your best guides.

Taking Indian Names and Playing Indian

It is common in the early grades to ask children to create or assume "Indian" names—often silly names which demean Indian people. Arlene Hirschfelder, when speaking of the Y-Indian Guides, reminds us in this way:

Many Indian people felt that even having the parent/child groups (Y-Indian Guides, a YMCA-sponsored "club" for young boys) pretending they were Indians was offensive. To them taking Indian names, tribal names, wearing headbands, feathers and in general pretending that they are Indian is offensive and mocks the Indian person. This would not happen with any other group, for you wouldn't have parent/child groups pretending they are Catholic, Jewish, Chinese, Black or Protestant for a night every two weeks.

[Hirschfelder, 1982, p. 206]

When studying the Holocaust, would you ask the children to take a Jewish name? Of course not. When studying Native cultures, what is the purpose of asking students to take an "Indian" name? Yet this is a common, but unacceptable, practice, particularly in elementary classrooms.

In terms of authenticity, asking students to create an Indian name for themselves is not appropriate. The commonly understood descriptive name, such as Sitting Bull or Rain-in-the-Face, is not representative of Indian names, but only of a certain tribe or tribes in the Plains culture area. For example, many surnames of full-blooded Indians of the Southwest are Spanish, and in the areas in which the French explored, they are French. Some names of Native people reflect a particular tribe, language, and heritage. The surnames Yazzie and Begay are as common on the Navajo Reservation as Smith and Jones are to many non-Indian children.
Many names were given to Indian children by missionaries because their own tribal names were too difficult for the missionaries to spell or to learn to speak. In the past, names also changed when Indian people intermarried. For example, during the early years of European invasion in the Southeast culture area and later when the Cherokees first endeavored to become acceptable to the U.S. government, there was much intermarriage, particularly with the Scots and English. John Ross, John Ridge, Major Ridge, Elias Boudinot, and Stand Watie are the names of Cherokee leaders during the time of the Trail of Tears. Names continue to change as people move, intermarry, or change their lives.

Finally, names often have to do with personal visions or achievements and are sacred in nature. To ask students to trivialize Indian names keeps them focused on stereotypes and is both inaccurate and insensitive.

Titles are another issue. Indian tribes did not have titles and roles of European royalty. There were no Indian kings, queens, princes, or princesses. These titles are European, not American Indian.

Playing Indian is yet another way to perpetuate stereotypes. Playing Indian usually means whoops, hollers, words such as “ugh,” “how,” and shifted language such as “many moons ago,” tomahawks, headbands, feathers, and face paint. One wonders that students who have experienced such a background can ever understand that Indian people were and are mothers, fathers, teachers, ranchers, artists, athletes, or physicians.

It is basic to recognize and understand that being an Indian is not a role that one can assume. Being a cowboy or a clown or an astronaut or a witch is a role or occupation. To be an Indian is to be a human being with a family, a culture, and a national identity. It is a heritage and birthright, not a role or an occupation.

Sacred Objects

It is important to understand that Indian spirituality defines Indian existence and is fundamental to traditional Indian lifeways. When teaching about Indians, particularly when teachers strive to take an interdisciplinary approach, it is only too common to use objects that are sacred to Indian people in art activities or on bulletin boards. Admittedly, there are no firm guidelines to follow. But some regard for the sacred nature of certain objects is vital.

Separation of church and state is a basic premise of American public education. Considering sacred objects and sacred ways in the larger context of the constitutional separation of church and state may be a new but important perspective. Just as we would not teach Catholic rituals or use Catholic symbolism when teaching about predominantly Catholic nations, we should not teach Indian rituals or use sacred Indian symbolism when teaching about Indian cultures.

Kachinas and Masks

Kachinas are spiritual beings and should no more be a part of an art project than should facsimiles of the Virgin Mary. It is not unusual to see students coloring elaborate kachinas or constructing them with paint, feathers, 3-gallon ice cream cartons, oatmeal containers, salt containers, or other large cardboard cylinders. This practice is not respectful of Indian people and their sacred ways.

One could legitimately argue that kachinas (and sandpaintings, pipes, and medicine bags) are made and sold commercially by both Indians and non-Indians. We must recognize that this practice causes unintentional harm to Indian people by those who are ill-informed or more interested in the commercial than the sacred. Schools have an obligation not to perpetuate this insensitive and disrespectful practice.

The same statement also applies to Iroquois face masks. Those who were members of certain societies wore the masks as representatives of sacred spirits. The making and wearing of face masks is not like Halloween; it is sacred and ceremonial and is not an appropriate educational activity.

Sandpaintings

The drypaintings or sandpaintings of the Navajo are integral parts of most sacred ceremonies. There are between six hundred and one thousand separate designs of drypaintings that are recognized by the Navajo people. The painting is made with sand, cornmeal, flower pollen, powdered roots, stone, and bark on sand or, on occasion, cloth or buckskin. The paintings which are used for healing in ceremonies are created, used, and destroyed within a twelve-hour period.
When drypaintings are made for exhibition, the color and direction are usually reversed and many changes are made. Navajo singers or healers consider the creation of an authentic drypainting for exhibition to be profane. Although the commercial use of drypaintings is a lucrative industry among Indian and non-Indian people, we would encourage teachers to tell students of the sacred nature of the paintings and that the paintings they have seen are not authentic or sacred. In classroom practice, it would be more respectful to use geometric designs or contemporary symbols, rather than those that could be considered, if not authentic, perhaps sacred.

Pipes

Although we often speak of the peace pipe, it is with little understanding of the significance of the pipe in Indian spiritual life. The peace pipe was actually a calumet, a certain kind of pipe supposed to be possessed of sacred power. Calumets were made in pairs and were used by many tribes when peace treaties were made. These pipes were known as flags of truce and used to assure safe passage.

Pipes were also used as medicine pipes and in sacred ceremonies. The pipe stem was considered to be a link to the supernatural.

In the very process of filling and using the pipe, all wisdom, represented by the powers of the six directions, and all things, represented by the grains of tobacco, were drawn inward to a single focal point and placed in the bowl or heart of the pipe. So that when filled the pipe contained, or really became, the universe. But it was also men, for the one who filled and smoked the pipe united himself with it and brought the wisdom and power of the six directions of space within himself. By this gathering together he ceased to be separated from them, and in another way increased in holiness.

(Mails, 1991, p. 104)

Because the pipe, the gift of White Buffalo Calf Woman, is so sacred, it should not be used casually in classroom instruction.

Eagle Feathers

The eagle and its feathers are sacred to most Indian people and are used in special, reverent ways. Although real eagle feathers are not available to non-Indians and would not be used in the classroom, pseudo eagle feathers, such as turkey feathers and construction paper replicas, are used. We would encourage the teacher not to use imitations of eagle feathers, but instead use the feathers of other birds or imitations of them that are available.

Native Americans do not usually wear feathered headdresses or war bonnets. In fact, these were only worn during war dances, in battles or raids, and in ceremonies. The large eagle feather war bonnet was never worn by women or young men. Those men who wore the war bonnets earned the feathers. Television, movies, and contemporary advertising have reduced war bonnets of the Plains Indians to yet another trivial stereotype.

Tipis

When does making a tipi become "playing Indian" and when is it an instructional activity that helps students understand the significance and craftsmanship of the tipi? The answer lies in the ability of the teacher to ensure that students are increasing their knowledge about the culture, the ways of life, and the ingenuity of the tipi. This only happens when the teacher is well informed. The following books are important in this endeavor:


Songs and Dance

The concern related to Indian songs and dance is the differentiation between the sacred and the social. When teaching the Snake Dance of the Hopi or the Yei-Be-Chai of the Navajo we are teaching about the sacred rites of Indian people. These dances are sacred ceremonies and are not to be imitated.

However, the Round Dance, the Squaw Dance, and the contemporary Powwow are examples of social and sometimes competitive dancing. At a powwow, intertribal dances are open to visitors and non-Indians. It is acceptable to teach social dance steps and to enjoy
Indian music. A good video such as *Keep Your Heart Strong*, about the contemporary powwow, is an excellent model and the teacher and students could benefit enormously from observing an appropriate model of social dancing before attempting it.

**Holidays**

Holidays, especially Thanksgiving, are worthy of mention because of the flagrant inaccuracies that are often perpetuated. The Thanksgiving story is enacted in nearly every elementary classroom with Pilgrims (who are dressed suitably for northeastern fall weather) and half-naked (and undoubtedly very cold) Indians in Plains regalia. When holidays such as Thanksgiving and Columbus Day are commemorated in classrooms, teachers should take special care to present Indian people accurately and authentically. Questions such as the following should be asked:

1. What tribe is represented?
2. Is their clothing authentic to the time and the tribe? Is it appropriate for the season?
3. What were their roles in the event?
4. Were only men represented? Were women and children likely to have been present?
5. Is the event presented from a European or Euro-American perspective?

The Columbian Quincentenary has raised the consciousness of educators regarding language and perspective in teaching about historical events. Were Europeans explorers or invaders? Were Indian people naked savages? What did "civilized" really mean? It is time to rethink Thanksgiving and Columbus Day and to search for more accurate information about these events of our history. Fortunately, the Quincentennial did provide a multitude of resources which are recommended in *Indian Country: A History of Native People in America*. Another excellent single resource is the following publication:


**ALTERNATIVES**

Although the sacred exists in everything, there are many acceptable activities that can be instructive, enjoyable, and respectful of Indian people. Baskets, bowls, pots, beading, cooking, weaving, clothing, music, social dance, stories, games, homes, methods of transportation, social and political structures, learning, planting, harvesting, language, symbols, everyday life, and decorative arts are all suitable topics for active involvement of students.

The best thing to do if you are uncertain about a particular topic, book, resource, or instructional activity is to contact a Native person for advice. Again, we urge that whenever possible, Indian people are used as curriculum consultants and guest teachers.
LOOK AT PICTURE BOOKS:
1) In ABC books, is “E” for “Eskimo” or “I” for Indian Present?
2) In Counting books, are “Indians” counted?
3) Are Children shown as “playing Indian”?
4) Are animals dressed as “Indians”?
5) Do “Indians” have ridiculous names, like “Indian Two Feet,” or “Little Chief”?

LOOK FOR STEREOTYPES:
1) Are Native peoples shown as human beings, members of highly defined and complex societies?
2) Are Native societies presented as separate from each other, with each culture, language, religion, dress, unique?
3) Is attention paid to accurate, appropriate design and color: are clothes, dress, houses drawn with careful attention to detail?

LOOK FOR LOADED WORDS:
1) Is the language respectful?

LOOK FOR TOKENISM:
1) Are Native people depicted as genuine individuals?

LOOK FOR DISTORTION OF HISTORY:
1) Is history put in the proper perspective: the Native struggle for self-determination and sovereignty against the Euro-American drive for conquest?

LOOK FOR VICTIMIZATION:
1) Does the story show the ways in which Native people actively resisted the invaders or continue to work for self-determination and sovereignty today?
2) Are Native heroes those who are admired because of what they do for their own people?

LOOK AT THE LIFESTYLES:
1) Is the focus on respect for Native peoples and understanding of the sophistication and complexity of their societies?
2) Is the continuity of cultures represented, with values, religions, morals, an outgrowth of the past, and connected to the present, and taking the people into the future?
3) Are Indian religions and traditions described accurately, in the context of their civilizations?
4) Does the writer show any understanding of the relationship between material and non-material aspects of life?
5) Are Native societies described as coexisting with nature in a delicate balance?

LOOK AT DIALOG:
1) Do the People use language with the consummate and articulate skill of those who come from an oral tradition?
LOOK FOR STANDARDS OF SUCCESS:

1) Are Native adults seen as mature individuals who work hard and make sacrifices, in order to take care of their families, and for the well-being of the people?

2) Are Native people and their communities seen as their own cultural norm?

3) Are Native values of cooperation, generosity, sharing, honesty, and courage seen as integral to growth and development?

LOOK AT THE ROLE OF WOMEN:

1) Are women portrayed as the integral and respected part of Native societies that they really are?

LOOK AT THE ROLE OF ELDERS:

1) Are elders treated as loved and valued custodians of a People’s history, culture, and life ways? Are they cherished in the words of the writer as they were and are in the reality of the lives of the People?

LOOK FOR THE EFFECTS ON A CHILD’S SELF-IMAGE:

1) Are there one or more positive role models with which a Native child can identify?

LOOK AT THE AUTHOR’S OR ILLUSTRATOR’S BACKGROUND:

1) Is there anything in the author’s and illustrator’s background that qualifies them to write about Native peoples? Do their perspectives strengthen the work?

LOOK FOR THE AUTHOR’S OR ILLUSTRATOR’S RELATIONSHIP TO THE STORY:

1) Does the author situate the stories in the context of her culture and family?

2) Does the author acknowledge and honor the source of the story?

3) Does the author’s acknowledgment genuinely reflect her own relationship to the story?

4) Is the illustrator genuinely connected to the story?

LOOK FOR THE AUTHOR’S OR ILLUSTRATOR’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE STORY:

1) Does the author understand and relate the deep significance of the story?

2) Does the author’s note clearly and distinctly tell the origins of the story?

3) Does the author adhere to the original oral story?

4) Does the author honor the continuing existence of the culture and the life of the people from an insider perspective?

5) Does the author’s own cultural belief system honor the belief system of the people whose story is being told?

6) Does the author’s humor reflect the culture from which both the author and the story originate?

7) Is the author genuinely connected to the story?

8) Is the author a cultural insider directly connected to the community?

9) Does the author accept the validly of Native oral stories as true tribal histories?
BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Resources

Critical Bibliography of North American Indians K-12  
http://nmnhwww.si.edu/anthro/outreach/Indbibl/bibliogr.html


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”Hart, Avery. Who Really Discovered America? Unraveling the Mystery and Solving the Puzzle. VT; Williamson Pub., 2003. Lively guide teaches how to investigate history while exploring various theories about discovery of America. (9+)


Library of Congress. “1492: An Ongoing Voyage” http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/ Exhibition describes both pre/post contact America. Compelling questions, such as: Who lived in Americas before 1492? Who followed Columbus?
Loewen, James W. *Lies My Teacher Told Me About Christopher Columbus*. NY: New Press, 1992. Reveals real story of Columbus’ role by juxtaposing range of high school textbooks with excerpts from primary sources. (A)


Rohmer, Harriet and Jesus Guerrero Rea. *Atariba & Niguayona: A Story from the Taino People of Puerto Rico*. CA: Children’s Book Press, 1988. Unlike heroes of conquest who tried to destroy Taino culture, hero of this story is successful because he is attentive to the natural voices around him. (6+)

Taíno—various articles from El Museo del Barrio NYC [http://stage.elmuseo.org(elm_api/22/287/#398](http://stage.elmuseo.org/elm_api/22/287/#398)

Weston, Beth. “Columbus Sets Sail” in *Cobblestone-Early Explorers*, V 32 N7, September 2011 (8+)

**Primary Source**


**Videos**

“Columbus Controversy: Challenging How History Is Written.” [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icek-NPezHA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icek-NPezHA) Examines views on Columbus, encounters with Taíno, hero image in US. Two historians discuss different views of effects of Columbus’ arrival on Taino and other Native people. [8+]

“Columbus Day Legacy” Bennie Klain—Visionmaker Films at [www.visionmaker.org](http://www.visionmaker.org)


**Caribbean Tribal Websites** (**Federally Recognized Tribe**)
