



The Columbian Exchange

Total time

~45 minutes

Overview

Students will learn how the Columbian Exchange had major social, economic, and health impacts on the world. They will analyze how the Columbian Exchange shaped the world in which they live.

Objectives:

After this lesson students will be able to:

- **Discuss** the major economic and social effects of the Columbian Exchange on Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.
- **Identify** crops indigenous to the Americas, Europe, and Asia.
- **Describe** how the exchange of food crops during and after the Columbian Exchange impacted the foods we eat today.
- **Identify** crops in the school garden indigenous to North America and those that arrived here as a result of the Columbian Exchange.

Vocabulary:

- Indigenous
- Columbian Exchange
- New World
- Old World
- Continent

Introduction

Materials:

- Printed handout: "The Columbian Exchange" for each student
- Clipboards for each student
- Onions
- Garlic
- Lime
- Cilantro
- Cutting boards
- Knives
- Aprons
- Bowls for each chopped ingredient
- Wooden spoon
- Tape
- Printed images of dishes (6) for each table making 36 in total cutouts

On The Board:

- A map of the world
- Student Reflection Questions
- Vocabulary

Preparation:

- Teacher makes Guacamole ahead of time
- Teacher Prints out Handouts

Suggested Snack:

- Guacamole and corn chips: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/guacamole-recipe.html>

a. Learning Activity

- i. Teacher will prepare ahead of time guacamole in order to have their students taste test.
- ii. Start this lesson with a snack. Serve a very basic version of guacamole — leaving out the lime, onion, cilantro and garlic — with corn chips.
- iii. Have the students taste test and see if they notice anything different. Have them identify what's missing.
- iv. Teacher let students know that this is what guacamole would've tasted like before Columbian exchange.
- v. <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/guacamole-recipe.html>

Introductory Activity

Vocabulary:

- Indigenous = originates in / native to
- Columbian Exchange = the spread of animal, plants, people, disease and technology between the Old World and the Americas
- Old World = Europe, Asia & Africa (Western Hemisphere)
New World = North, South & Central America

Native American Experience During the Columbian Exchange:

In this section the presenter will be discussing/talking about The Columbian Exchange and its effect on the Indigenous people of the New World. These Native Americans were subjected to cruelty from the Spanish Explorers.

*Information regarding the experiences of Native Americas will be shown at the bottom of the Google Slides.

Source:

[Why Columbus Day Courts Controversy - HISTORY](#)

[Columbian Exchange | Diseases, Animals, & Plants](#)

Slaves from Africa

In this section the presenter will discuss the Columbian Exchange's impact on enslaved Africans. Included is an image of a slave ship and a depiction of cruel treatment of slaves at the hands of White masters.

Source:

<https://www.lcps.org/cms/lib/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/10599/Columbian%20Exchange%20and%20Triangular%20Trade.pdf>

Landmass Activity: (5 minutes)

- Ask students to look at the world map and identify the four land masses/continents: Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.
- Which continents participated in the slave trade during the Columbian Exchange? Americas, Europe, and Africa.
- Which land masses are the Old World? Which land masses are New World?

Answer: Europe, Africa, Asia

Answer: New World Americas

*If students ask about Australia: Australia is old world bc tied with Britain

*If students ask about Antarctica: Antarctica's first confirmed sighting in 1820, much later than Columbian Exchange (1400-1500)

Show Video (3 minutes)

[The Columbian Exchange - American History \(#ushistory\) in Social Studies Educational Video for Kids - YouTube](#)

Discussion of Video (5 minutes)

Students will analyze whether or not the Columbian Exchange was a fair trade. Afterwards, the class will discuss questions regarding the video.

- What happened to the Indigenous people when the Europeans arrived?
- Name 2 things European brought, 2 things they took back

Then students will create a chart listing the “before” and “after” of the Columbian Exchange.

Before and After The Columbian Exchange:

Discuss in-depth about the consequences of the Columbian Exchange by examining what the world was like before and after this event.

Before the Columbian Exchange:

- No tobacco in New World

- Diversity in plants and animals
- Aztec & Inca Empires at height of power

After the Columbian Exchange:

Columbian exchange homogenized biodiversity, which means less diversity in plants, crops, and animals. Native Americans killed by European brutality including diseases (measles, mumps, typhus, chicken pox). The New World brought pigs, cows, and horses to the Americas.

The Columbian Exchange & Modern Day



**(This is the handout “The Columbian Exchange”)

Present students with this handout. Discuss using this as reference.

- In this slide, use this image of the Columbian Exchange to connect with food that students are familiar with. Ask the class (not group tables) the questions below:
- Is your favorite fruit or vegetable traded in the Columbian Exchange? What is it and where did it originally come from?

If it's not there (ie strawberries), have students guess where it came from. Ask them why they think it is.

- *Seguay to dish!
- What do you think they have for dessert in New World if there wasn't sugar / honey? (Berries for example) *no right/wrong answers*

A Closer Look: New World Crops

- Introduction of Empires in the New World before the Columbian Exchange:
 - In the Americas, the Incan and Aztec empires were thriving. From an earlier lesson, “Food and Agriculture in the Ancient Americas,” teacher asks students to recall some of the major crops that originated in the Americas: avocados, corn, amaranth, quinoa, tomatoes, potatoes, cacao, chiles, beans, and squash.

Guess the Food Origin Activity (10 minutes)



- Start with **croissants** and ask students which country is associated with croissants. **Answer is France.** Let them know that croissant originated in **Austria**, then click to show the Austrian flag!
- Then **Chocolate** and ask students which country is associated with chocolate. **Answer is Switzerland.** Let them know that **Chocolate has Aztec origins.**
- Last, **Ketchup** ask students which country is associated with ketchup. **Answer is the United States.** Let them know that ketchup is actually from **China.**
- Repeat with chocolate and ketchup.
- **Answer Key:**
 - Chocolate- iconic to Switzerland but actually the cacao is an Indigenous cuisine rooted in the (Aztec)
 - Ketchup- iconic to the United States but actually from China
 - Croissant- iconic to French cuisine but actually from Austria
- -Afterward, have students group food groups into New World/Old World ingredients!

Activity: Locating Ingredients of Dishes (15 minutes)

- Teachers will print out and share multiple copies of the same dish (6) to be placed at each table before the activity starts. The 6 dishes should have duplicates of 6. More specifically 36 in total, but only 6 dishes. The dishes assigned should be familiar to students.

- Handout will be printed out beforehand: macaroni and cheese, peanut butter jelly, spaghetti and meatballs, chocolate caramel popcorn, pizza, hamburger.
- Project the world map on the board. It should be large enough so students can paste their cutout of their assigned dish to the continents.
- Distribute the Handout: “The Columbian Exchange.”
 - Emphasize that before the Columbian Exchange, certain crops and animals that are nowadays associated with certain places did not exist in those places.
- In the small groups, students identify and list the ingredients in their assigned dish.
- Friendly competition time! Allow students to pin their dishes on the world map based on where they think the ingredients of that dish came from. (For example, a student might pin the macaroni and cheese picture in Asian and in Europe since pasta originated in Asia and cheese originated in Europe).
- After everyone has pinned their dishes, have students explain why they pinned their dish to that continent. Have them explain the makeup of ingredients in that dish. Consult their list if necessary.

Discussion About Ingredient Finding with the World Map ~ 5 minutes)

As a class, discuss the origins of their ingredients. What were the surprising results? For example, were there any dishes whose origin was in one location? I.e. Asia, Europe?

- Ask students to look at the map and discuss **dishes** whose modern day **ingredient** did not actually originate from that region.
 - For example: When we think of Italy, we think of spaghetti. However, pasta was native to China, not Italy, before the Columbian Exchange.
- For reference or a talking point, before the Columbian Exchange there were :
 - no oranges in Florida.
 - no tomatoes in Italy.
 - no beef in America.
 - no pineapple in Hawaii.
 - no chile peppers in Thailand or India.
 - no chocolate in Switzerland.

Source: priority-columbian-exchange-no-tomatoes-italy-no-paprika-hungary

Closing Activity: Completing the Guacamole/Scavenger Hunt (10 min)

- Have 4-6 students stay to complete the guacamole while the rest go to the scavenger hunt for the remaining ingredients of the guacamole.
- Have the students finish preparing the guacamole recipe and include the missing ingredients (onion, garlic, cilantro, lime).

- c. The students have the opportunity to taste the guacamole with all the ingredients and understand the differences from the initial taste.
- d. In the scavenger hunt, students work with partners. Have 1 map (as mentioned in Materials) for each student group.
- e. Once crops are identified, regroup and share findings.
- f. Everyone enjoys the completed guacamole.

5. Student Reflection Questions

1. What is something that shocked you the most about the Columbian Exchange? And how do you view food differently?
2. If the Columbian Exchange never happened, how different would the world be?
3. Beside crops and animals, what else did the Columbian Exchange bring that impacted the world?
4. Based on your favorite dish, what did the origin of its ingredients reveal about the Columbian Exchange?