

CURRICULAR CONCEPT GUIDE: SECTION 1: 1491-1607

(Keep in mind: we are using sections 1 and 2 for contextual purposes.

Think of context when you are reviewing this guide.)

Key Concept 1.1: As native populations migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed distinct societies by adapting to and transforming their environments.

- I. Different native societies adapted to and transformed their environments through resource use and social structure.
 - A) The spread of maize cultivation from present-day Mexico northward and beyond supported settlement, modifications to the environment, and social diversification among societies.
 - B) Societies responded to the aridity of the western Great Plains by developing largely nomadic societies.
 - C) In the Northeast, the Mississippi River Valley, and along the Atlantic seaboard some societies developed mixed agricultural and hunter-gatherer sedentary societies.

Key Concept 1.2: Contact among Europeans and Native Americans resulted in the Columbian Exchange and significant social, cultural, and political changes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

- I. European expansion into the Western Hemisphere generated intense social, religious, political, and economic competition and changes among European societies.
 - A) European nations' efforts to explore and conquer the New World stemmed from a search for new sources of wealth, economic competition, and a desire to spread Christianity.
 - B) The Columbian Exchange brought new crops to Europe from the Americas, stimulating European population growth, and new sources of marketable commodities, which facilitated the European shift from feudalism to capitalism.
 - C) Improvements in maritime technology and more organized methods for conducting international trade, such as joint-stock companies, helped drive changes to economies in Europe and the Americas.
- II. The development of the Spanish Empire in the Western Hemisphere resulted in extensive demographic, economic, and social changes.
 - A) Spanish exploration and conquest of the Americas were accompanied and furthered by widespread deadly epidemics that devastated native populations and by the introduction of crops and animals not found in the Americas.
 - B) In the *encomienda* system, Spanish colonial economies exploited Native American labor to support plantation-based agriculture and extract precious metals and other resources.
 - C) European traders partnered with some West African groups to forcibly extract slave labor for the Americas. The Spanish imported enslaved Africans to labor in plantation agriculture and mining.
 - D) The Spanish developed a caste system that incorporated, and carefully defined the status of, the diverse population of Europeans and Native Americans in their empire.
- III. In their interactions, Europeans and Native Americans asserted divergent worldviews, often resulting in cultural conflict.
 - A) Mutual misunderstandings between Europeans and Native Americans often defined the early years of interaction as each group sought to make sense of the other.
 - B) As European encroachments on Native Americans' lands and demands on their labor increased, native peoples sought to defend and maintain their political sovereignty, religious beliefs, and cultural concepts through diplomatic negotiations and military resistance.
 - C) Extended contact with Native Americans fostered a debate among European religious and political leaders about how non-Europeans should be treated, as well as evolving religious, cultural, and racial justifications for the subjugation of Native Americans.