

Voki Lesson Plan



Class Title: History

Lesson Title: Who was Christopher Columbus?

Grade Level: 5th

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Description: Early European explorers and the “founders” of the Americas are often surrounded by myth rather than fact, which has made American history an eclectic mix of fantasy and truth that can often prove confusing for students. Although we celebrate Columbus Day in the U.S., the reasons for celebration are obscure yet remain unquestioned by majority of elementary social studies and history classes. This lesson plan is based on rediscovering the early history of the Americas and specifically focused on rethinking Christopher Columbus and his exploration of the “Indies.”

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Learn about Christopher Columbus and his achievements.
2. Rethink history and try to separate myth from fact.
3. Learn about the origins of Columbus Day.
4. Think critically about the legitimacy of celebrating Christopher Columbus' achievements.

Materials:

1. Print and digital resources about Christopher Columbus and early explorations preapproved by the teacher. Each resource should focus on a specific topic included in the reason for Columbus' voyages. (Christianity, taxation on Indian spices and other goods, trade routes from Spain to India, indigenous life and politics before the arrival of the conquistadors, etc.)
 - a. History.com contains many great resources for this lesson.
2. A computer for each student
3. Voki.com or Voki Classroom (example:
<http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=4485277&height=400&width=300>)

Class Duration: 1 Week

Activities:

Share your Voki lesson plans and download others at www.voki.com/lesson_plans.php.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Teacher should gather a variety of primary resources and opinion pieces regarding Columbus and his discoveries.
2. Print materials can be arranged on a table in one area of the classroom.

Class Work:

DAY 1

1. To begin with, the teacher should lead a class discussion focusing on what students have already learned or know about Christopher Columbus. Some important questions to ask are:

- a. Where is Christopher Columbus from?
- b. Who supported him financially on his travels?
- c. What was the purpose of his expedition according to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella?
- d. What did Christopher Columbus discover?
- e. What did he think he discovered?
- f. What did he do when he arrived?
- g. How did he treat the inhabitants of the island?
- h. What was life like for the inhabitants before the Europeans came over?

DAY 2

2. After the preliminary discussion, the teacher can divide students into pairs or small groups.
3. Teacher tells students to discover the facts of a story that has become more of a myth.
4. Student groups go to the table of materials and choose one article to read. The article should be about one specific topic regarding Columbus' voyages.
5. Once the students have read and fully understand their article, they should go online and find other articles that support what they read as well as a few articles of opposition.
6. The students should spend time (the whole class) doing this research while the teacher continually encourages discussion within the groups.

DAY 3

7. Students get into their respective groups and each group meets with the other groups in the class for 5-10 minutes to teach them what they learned through their research.
8. After each group has met with the other groups in the class, each group should compose a 1-2 page report that talks about the articles they read, what they learned, and describe how their idea of history has changed since reading articles from different sources.
9. Each student then individually creates a Voki that elaborates on the pros and cons of celebrating Columbus Day.
10. Students turn in their group report and submit their Voki on Voki Classroom (or Voki).