

Age of Contact: Unit Plan

(11 Estimated Instructional Days, or 17 days with Optional Extension and Review Activities)

Era Overview

The Age of Contact (1528-1690) was the era when Spaniards – and later the French – arrived in Texas searching for wealth and hoping to find native empires (like the Aztecs or the Incans) to conquer. What followed was a series of European explorations of Texas that failed to find gold or silver, but nonetheless wrought lasting effects on American Indians in Texas. European diseases brought by these explorers, such as smallpox, ravaged indigenous populations in Texas. Spanish explorers also introduced horses (which were not native to North America) to Texas and thereby began a process of transforming groups like the Apache, which soon adapted themselves into a powerful horse culture that could more effectively raid their neighbors and defend against enemies.

By the 1540s, Spain had determined that Texas contained no gold or silver, and therefore its only real value to the Spanish was in serving as a buffer that could prevent other European powers from coming too close to the silver mines in central Mexico that brought great wealth into the Spanish Empire. When the French explorer Robert La Salle landed on the coast of Texas in February 1685, Spain launched a series of expeditions into Texas with the sole intent of finding and stamping out La Salle's forces. Although La Salle's settlement failed by the late 1680s, Spain decided to set up permanent settlements in Texas to prevent France – or any other European power – from establishing a foothold in Texas. To that end, Spaniards set up their first missions in 1690 near the Caddo Indians in east Texas, although these missions soon failed and were abandoned by the Spanish in 1693.

Pacing

This unit is an eleven-day study of the Era of Spanish Exploration and the Age of Contact between the Spanish and the American Indians, specifically in Texas. There are an optional three days of extension activities which include primary source documents for analysis. There are three additional review lessons to prepare students for testing. Suggested pacing minutes are based on the average time it will take a class to complete each lesson; however, as the educator, use your best judgement based on the average pace of your class learning needs and styles.

Unit Pacing by Day

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
|----------------|---|---|---|--|
| 45 - 60 | <i>What are the defining characteristics and key concepts of Unit 2: The Age of Contact?</i> | This lesson introduces key concepts within the unit, including the cause of and reason for Spanish exploration of the Americas, and the effects and consequences of that exploration. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Spanish exploration was driven by the goals of God, Gold, and Glory. Exploration of the Americas made Spanish wealthy and powerful Spanish exploration had positive and negative effects including the introduction of new items through trade, Indigenous people accessing horses, and diseases drastically reducing the Indigenous population.</p> <p>Making inferences based on context. Summarizing chunked excerpts of a passage. Providing text evidence to support a response.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>The Big Picture</p> |
| 45 - 60 | <i>How do we know what we know about the encounters between the Spanish and the American Indians during the Age of Contact?</i> | This lesson introduces the types of primary source materials historians use to understand the era. Students will examine a primary source and analyze it for significance and bias. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>The Age of Contact was characterized by encounters between Spanish explorers and American Indians. The historical record of this time is almost exclusively composed of accounts from the Spanish point of view. Students will identify and examine primary source materials for bias.</p> <p>Students will be able to identify important events and individuals including Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca. Students will summarize the main idea of a primary source document and identify its significance.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>How do we know what we know?</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| <p>90 – 120</p> <p>Optional vocabulary quiz 30 – 45 min</p> | <p>What key words and phrases do we need to know within the context of our unit to be successful?</p> | <p>In this two-day lesson, students will be able to identify, define, and provide an example for key terms related to the unit. Students will read passages to summarize the significance of each term and use the context to determine its meaning. Students will recognize major themes within the unit.</p> <p>There is an optional vocabulary quiz to accompany the lesson.</p> | <p>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</p> <p>The Age of Contact era is characterized by changes brought about by European exploration of the Americas including new relationships between Europeans and American Indians, new trade routes, no resources, and new problems like disease. Spain was motivated to explore the Americas by God, Gold, and Glory. The primary driving force behind Spanish exploration was the search for gold, or wealth. Spain’s success in parts of the Americas drive it to begin to colonize parts of the Americas and turn their attention to more places like Texas.</p> <p>Reading for context Identifying, defining, and giving examples in context of key terms Creating visual representations of key terms</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Vocabulary</p> |
| <p>45 – 60</p> <p>Option of making this a 2-day activity at 90 – 120 min.</p> | <p>What is the cause-and-effect relationship between the most significant chronological events of the Unit 2: Age of Contact?</p> | <p>In this one-day lesson, students will read passages that present a chronological overview of the most significant events and cause-and-effect relationships between events in the Age of Contact. Students will create a</p> | <p>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</p> <p>The Age of Contact brought about many changes including the introduction of horses and deadly to diseases to American Indian populations throughout the Americas, and the colonization and seizing of land and resources that brought enormous wealth to Spain. Spain had no luck gaining the same wealth in Texas that they gained in modern-day Mexico and South America.</p> <p>Students summarize the significance of major events</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>What’s the Story?</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| | | timeline of each major event from the readings. | during the Age of Contact. Students identify and explain the significance of key events during the Age of Contact. Students make a claim about the most significant changes brought about by the Age of Contact. | |
| 45 – 60 | <i>What motivated Spanish conquistadors to explore the new world? What were the positive and negative results of their exploration?</i> | In this one-day lesson students will read short passages presenting 4 topics from the beginning of the Age of Contact: The Reconquista, Christopher Columbus, The Columbian Exchange, and Reasons for Exploration. Students will use these readings to complete their guided notes sheet. | <i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Identifying main ideas and key events in a reading. Summarizing the significance of an historical topic. Mapping important locations, routes, and information in the Age of Contact. Reading for context and specific information Spanish defeat of the Moors helped lead to the beginning of the Age of Contact Christopher Columbus’ voyages were significant in encouraging more exploration of the Americas. The Age of Contact was characterized by the Spanish search for riches in the Americas The Age of Contact began a system of trade between the Americas and Europe. Consequences of the Age of Contact include the arrival of horses into American Indian culture, and the spread of deadly Spanish diseases which killed millions. | Lesson: God, Gold, and Glory |
| 45 – 60 Optional Enrichment Activity | <i>How does each author characterize the relationship between the conquistadors and American Indians?</i> | In this one-day optional enrichment lesson, students will read primary source excerpts from Christopher Columbus and Bartolome de las | <i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Reading for main ideas. Using context to determine meaning. Making inferences about a text. Comparing and contrasting different points of view. Analyzing and assessing a text for the author’s point of | Lesson: God, Gold, and Glory Extension Lesson – Voices of Texas History |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| | <i>How might each author's bias and point of view affect his story?</i> | Casas to compare two different Spanish points of view regarding the Spanish relationship with American Indians in the Caribbean. | view and bias. There are many different points of view to every historical event and encounter between groups of people. Primary sources provide a small glimpse into the larger historical narrative. The author of each primary source is writing with his or her own agenda and point of view. While some conquistadors attempted to build relationships with the American Indians in the Caribbean, others caused the deaths of millions. | |
| 45 – 60 | What were some of the difficulties of the first Spanish explorers in the Americas, and were they successful at achieving their goals? | In this one-day lesson students will read short passages about 4 topics including Pineda's 1519 map of the Gulf of Mexico, Cortés' defeat of the Aztecs, Cabeza de Vaca's expedition through Texas, and Coronado's search for gold. Students will use these readings to complete their guided notes sheet. | <i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Spanish explorers faced many obstacles in their expeditions. Many encounters between the Spanish and the Indigenous people of the Americas were characterized by violence as a result of the Spanish desire for gold. Spain's initial success under Cortés led to many more conquistadors attempting to find gold north of Mexico. Conquistadors searching north of Mexico were unsuccessful locating gold. Identifying key information from a reading. Identifying and explaining the significance of an historical event. Using context and prior knowledge to answer open-ended questions about a text. | Lesson: The Search for Gold |
| 45 – 60 Optional Enrichment Activity | What significant events occurred in the expeditions of Cabeza de Vaca and Francisco | In this one-day optional enrichment lesson, students will read primary source excerpts from the | <i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i> Reading for main ideas. Using context to determine meaning. | Lesson: The Search for Gold Extension |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| | <p>Vazquez de Coronado?</p> <p>How were these events described by the people who recorded them?</p> | <p>expeditions of Cabeza de Vaca and Francisco Vazquez de Coronado to compare different Spanish points of view and asses for bias.</p> | <p>Making inferences about a text. Comparing and contrasting different points of view. Analyzing and assessing a text for the author’s point of view and bias. There are many different points of view to every historical event and encounter between groups of people. Primary sources provide a small glimpse into the larger historical narrative. The author of each primary source is writing with his or her own agenda and point of view. Expeditions north of Mexico into Texas and the southwest were not successful at locating gold.</p> | <p>Lesson – Voices of Texas History</p> |
| 45 – 60 | <p>How successful was Spain at accomplishing its goals of “God, Gold, and Glory” in Texas? What does Spain do as a result? How does the arrival of the French change Spain’s response?</p> | <p>In this one-day lesson students will read short passages about Hernando de Soto’s exploration of the American southeast, Luis de Moscoso Alvarado’s expedition into Texas, Juan de Oñate’s expedition to establish Spanish settlements in El Paso and Santa Fe, and the arrival of the French explorer La Salle in Texas. Students will use these passages to complete their guided notes sheet.</p> | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Mexico was the most profitable location for the Spanish in North America because of gold and silver. Due to the lack of gold, Spain considered Texas a frontier, with less value than its colonies in Mexico. Spain’s failure to acquire gold in Texas caused the Spanish to turn their attention more fully to Mexico. The arrival of the French in Texas caused Spain to turn their attention back to the region in order to prevent their enemy from gaining a stronghold in the region. Identifying key information from a reading. Identifying and explaining the significance of an historical event. Using context and prior knowledge to answer open-ended questions about a text.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>The Last Conquistadors & the French Arrive</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| <p>45 - 60</p> <p>Optional Enrichment Activity</p> | <p><i>What are the similarities and differences between how Spain and France interact with American Indian people, based on the primary source excerpts in class today?</i></p> | <p>In this one-day optional enrichment lesson, students will read primary source excerpts from the Hernando de Soto, Luis de Moscoso Alvarado, and La Salle. Students will use the excerpts to compare and contrast the relationships between the Spanish, French, and American Indians.</p> | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Reading for main ideas. Using context to determine meaning. Making inferences about a text. Comparing and contrasting different points of view. Analyzing and assessing a text for the author’s point of view and bias. There are many different points of view to every historical event and encounter between groups of people. Primary sources provide a small glimpse into the larger historical narrative. The author of each primary source is writing with his or her own agenda and point of view. There are many different points of view to every historical event and encounter between groups of people. Primary sources provide a small glimpse into the larger historical narrative. The author of each primary source is writing with his or her own agenda and point of view. Relationships between conquistadors and American Indians varied greatly The French treatment of the American Indians often contrasted significantly with the Spanish treatment of the American Indians in general.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>The Last Conquistadors & the French Arrive Extension Lesson – Voices of Texas History</p> |
| <p>45 - 60</p> | <p>What evidence can we see today of Spanish or American Indian culture and influence on Texas geography?</p> | <p>In this one-day lesson, students will use short reading passages to identify locations with Spanish and Indigenous cultural</p> | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Texas geographic features have been influenced by a variety of cultures throughout history, including Spanish and American Indian. The evidence of Spanish and American Indian culture appears in the names of human</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Texas Today</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| | | significance and label these locations on a map of Texas. | <p>and geographic features.</p> <p>Identifying significant contemporary human and geographic features of Texas.</p> <p>Reading for context and specific information.</p> <p>Correctly identifying and labeling features on a map using relative and absolute location.</p> <p>Identifying the significance of a reading passage.</p> | |
| 45 – 60 | How did Spain attempt to keep Texas out of the hands of the French, and what challenges did the Spanish face in carrying out this goal? | In this one-day lesson, students will read three short primary source excerpts from a letter from Francisco Hidalgo, a Spanish friar struggling to establish missions in east Texas. Students will answer comprehension questions about each text. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>The arrival of French explorers in Texas renews Spain's interest in the region. Spain's new goal for establishing its control of Texas is creating missions to keep out the French and convert and assimilate American Indians into the Spanish faith and culture. Spain encounters several challenges to accomplishing this goal including a lack of manpower and resources, and American Indian disinterest in conversion and assimilation.</p> <p>Primary sources provide one point of view about an historical topic or event.</p> <p>Reading for key information and context to determine significance and meaning of vocabulary.</p> <p>Identifying, summarizing, and paraphrasing key concepts and overall significance of a text.</p> <p>Using context to determine an author's point-of-view and meaning.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Looking Ahead</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
|---------|---|--|---|--|
| 45 – 60 | What significant information do we need to know in order to be successful on the unit 2 test? | In this optional, one-day review lesson, students will review significant information for the unit 2 test. Flashcards accompany this lesson for additional opportunities to practice and review information. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>The Age of Contact is characterized by Spain’s search for wealth, territory, and resources in the Americas. Significant dates include Pineda mapping the Gulf of Mexico in 1519. Significant people include Cortés, Cabeza de Vaca, Coronado, Oñate, de Soto, Moscoso, and La Salle. Territory conflict between France and Spain. Spain’s attempts to solidify its claim to Texas when the French arrive.</p> <p>Identifying the significance of key terms, concepts, people, and events of the Age of Contact Summarizing and paraphrasing significant content from the unit Creating short, constructed responses</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Review - Study Guide & Flash Cards</p> |
| 45 – 60 | How do the key terms and concepts from Unit 2: Age of Contact connect to each other? | In this optional, one-day review lesson, students will review significant information for the unit 2 test by making connections between terms, people, places, and concepts from the unit. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Terms, concepts, people, and other social studies information from different assignments are connected in a variety of different ways. Connecting terms and concepts from across the entire unit. Justifying and providing a rationalization for those connections. Student debate over the best placement of terms on their Mind Maps. Creating a visual representation of Social Studies information.</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Review - Mind Map</p> |

| Minutes | Essential Questions | Description | Student Learning Experiences | Lesson |
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| 45 - 60 | What key terms and concepts do we need to know to be successful on our unit 2 test? | In this optional, one-day review assignment, students will play BINGO using key terms they write on their BINGO card and clues about each term. | <p><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>The Age of Contact is characterized by Spain's search for wealth, territory, and resources in the Americas. Significant dates including Pineda mapping the Gulf of Mexico in 1519. Significant people include Cortés, Cabeza de Vaca, Coronado, Oñate, de Soto, Moscoso, and La Salle. Territory conflict between France and Spain. Spain's attempts to solidify its claim to Texas when the French arrive.</p> <p>Identifying the significance of key terms, concepts, people, and events of the Age of Contact Study and review of key concepts Identifying information based on key words and phrases</p> | <p>Lesson:</p> <p>Review - Bingo</p> |