

Lesson Plan

Unit: The Motivation to Explore

Title of lesson: What Made Columbus Determined to Explore?

Timeframe: 1 session, 45 minutes

Standards addressed:

National Standards:

History 2.F Appreciate historical perspectives

History 3.C Analyze cause-and-effect relationships.

Alaska State Content Standards:

History B.2 Understand the people and the political, geographic, economic, cultural, social, and environmental events that have shaped the history of the state, the United States, and the world;

Geography A.1 Use maps and globes to locate places and regions

Alaska State Performance Standards:

Reading: E.B.1 Infer meaning

E. D. 2 Express opinions about a text and support ...with textural evidence

Writing: E.A. 1 Write a well organized two-paragraph composition that addresses a single topic.

E.A. 4 Use a variety of fiction and non-fiction forms when writing for different audiences

Social Studies Knowledge, Skills, Dispositions:

❖ Knowledge: Motivations for Columbus to explore

❖ Skills: Classify information
Analyze information
Extract significant ideas

❖ Dispositions: Communicate own beliefs, feelings, and convictions
Work cooperatively with a partner

Learning objectives: At the completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

❖ Explain the reasons Columbus wanted to explore.

Cooperative skills addressed:

❖ Discussion-pair share, small group, large group

Technology inclusion: None in this lesson

Materials needed: Strips with written text; wall map; journals; white board or bulletin board for displaying strips

Lesson Plan I (Introductory lesson of several lessons on Columbus)

1. **Prior assignment/preparation –**
 - a. Familiarity with world map, continents, trade routes and western European countries of period 1400
 - b. Prior participation in discussion of reasons of exploration including products, trade routes, spices, fame, and wealth
 - c. Prior study of Marco Polo's travels and Prince Henry and navigation changes
2. **Opening activity:**
 - a. What makes you want to try something new or challenging? What people or things encourage you, help you be strong, or make you be determined when you try something new or challenging? (Relate to learning a skill, completing a difficult project, completing a chore, or learning something for a competition or to keep up with a friend.) Journal or pair-share followed by group report (Real-world connection)
3. **Specific lesson design:**

(Note to teacher: Lesson has cards with a number of factors influencing Columbus, giving him an edge, or making him particularly determined to explore for new trade routes. You can hand these out at the beginning, face down, to a number of students to be looked at and used after the class does the initial brainstorming, you can hand them out after the brainstorming. Have students compare their answers with the cards, verifying the answers they got and adding on the answers that are new.)

 - a. Using the information from the opening activity and drawing on prior learning, what events, people, or things would make an explorer determined to explore? Think about this remembering what you know about the time and the developments during the time of Prince Henry, the Navigator.
 - b. Introduction of support of Columbus. "Columbus had some of these that you have mentioned and some surprising supports and encouragements for his exploration." (Cards with text about each one distributed in the group to be read in confirmation of student suggestions from b. or in case one is not mentioned, and placed on board or timeline for display. Students list a number of these supports in their notebook.

Content of cards: Became a sailor at age 14; Survived a sinking ship by swimming to shore landing near Prince Henry's academy of seamanship; Had a sense of being saved to make the great discovery to the west; Used Portugal as his homebase—Lisbon was the most western city and the meeting place of all mariners bent on discovery; Was around people who talked about sailing Westward; Had a brother who was a mapmaker; Had a sense that it was his fate to discover the Indies from the west; Married the daughter of one of Prince Henry's first explorers for the coast of Africa; Settled with her and his brother-in-law on the island of Madeira and became familiar with much of the South Atlantic (for more information about this connection, read Jean Fritz's 100 Years of Exploration); Studied mapmakers like Ptolemy; Read Marco Polo studiously; Had

imagination full of possibilities of discovery; Wanted honor and wealth (in that order).)

- c. Discuss similarities in supports (between students and Columbus).
- d. Classify the encouragements and forces that made Columbus explore. Some possibilities are: luck or chance, work, beliefs, knowledge, acquaintances; other groupings could be done.
- e. Make an addition to the Explorer's sourcebook along any of these ideas:
journal entry about similarities between student and Columbus;
discuss the three most important forces in pushing Columbus to explore;
make a cartoon summing up the forces pushing Columbus to explore.

4. Assessment –

- a. Student notes
- b. Student participation
- c. Student journal entry at end

Lesson Plan II

Standards Addressed:

National:

History 2.B: Reconstruct Literal Meaning of a historical passage

History 4.A: Formulate historical questions

Alaska State Content Standards:

History B.2 Understand the people, etc. that have shaped the history...

History C.2, Use historical data from a variety of primary sources

History C.3 Apply thinking skills...to understand the historical record

Learning Objectives: At the end of this lesson, students will have:

- ❖ Read and discussed a replica of the primary document of Columbus' demands and agreement with the Spanish King and Queen.
- ❖ Compared this document to the list of reasons that motivated Columbus to explore, verifying earlier perceptions of the importance of some of those reasons (fame and wealth).
- ❖ Analyzed this document as a contract between Columbus and the King and Queen of Spain.

Cooperative Skills:

- ❖ Shared reading
- ❖ Cooperative groups

Lesson Plan:

1. Prior assignment/Preparation:

Discuss the previous factors in the life of Columbus. Either through a reading or teacher input, discuss the attempts he made to get backing for his trips. (There could be other lessons, reading, or timeline work between these two lessons to provide more background.)

2. Opening Activity:

Discuss contracts, such as who has had one, what do they mean, and why we have them.

3. Specific Lesson:

- a. “You may have heard how Columbus tried and tried to get someone to help supply him with ships, men, and equipment so he could sail to the west to China (Cathay, he called it) and to Japan (Cipango). He went to the king of Portugal, to the king and queen of Spain, to a duke and a count. All turned him down. Historian say that part of it was that he wasn’t clear about his plans. When you say you’re going to go someplace or do something, don’t your parents want to know the details? Finally an important astronomer and a famous ship owner decided to help Columbus. They helped Columbus get another meeting with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. They wanted to know not his plan, but the price he wanted to discover these lands. Columbus told them. See what you think about it. He made a contract to present to them and called it the “Sante Fe Capitulations”. It is written with some wording from that time so we’ll read it together. Then we’ll look at it to see how it works as a contract.”

(Note: There are two versions; one is in replica form with no explanation of words and a little harder to read. One is in regular print with words annotated on the side to help.)

- b. Read the contract together, making sure that students understand the text. Then have them work in pairs or threes to find out whether the contract works for Columbus, for the king and queen and Spain, and what it says about Columbus. Record on chart paper to present.
- c. Regroup and take turns sharing results. Make sure each group gets represented.
- d. Reflection: Journal entry answering these questions:
In what ways was Columbus’ contract good and in what ways was it bad?
How did you feel about Columbus before you read it and how did you feel about him after?

4. Assessment:

Journal entry – must have comments answering all parts of both questions.
Cartoon or drawing: Compare Columbus’ contract and a contract with your parents for you about chores or some job you have to do.

5. Additional lessons

- a. Read the novel Pedro’s Journey, by Pam Conrad, out loud by the teacher, or as a group shared read, or as part group and part partner read. Discuss, journal, and use for a variety discussion, thinking, and art activities. (Supplemental suggestions and activity pages can be found in Learning Through Literature—U.S. History, 1994, by Teacher Created Materials, #472.)

Bibliography:

Baicker, Karen. Primary Sources Teaching Kit, Explorers. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 2002.

“Columbus, Christopher.” The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. 1984 ed.

Conrad, Pam. Pedro’s Journey. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1991.

Hakim, Joy. A History of US: The First Americans. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Suggested Resources:

Roberts, Patricia. Literature-Based History Activities for Children, Grades 4-8. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997.

Learning Through Literature—U.S. History. Teacher Created Materials, #472, 1994.

“What Was Columbus Thinking?” EDSITEment, 2001 and updated.
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id= (20 June, 2004)