

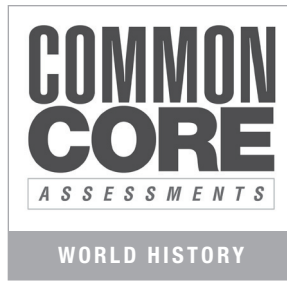
WORLD HISTORY

The
Age of Exploration

**COMMON
CORE**

A S S E S S M E N T S

MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY



The Age of Exploration

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Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about the Age of Exploration. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical world history class.

★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- **A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of world history**

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards—Assessment 1 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 1, Assessment 2 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 2, and so on. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- **Based on primary or secondary sources**

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone. Links to online versions of print media are available in the Bibliography. Please note that these links were valid at the time of production, but the websites may have since been discontinued.

Teacher Introduction

- **Brief tasks promoting historical literacy**

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the students' mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- **Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments**

A *basic* and an *advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *basic* assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *advanced* assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *basic* version.

- **Easy to use as both learning and assessment tools**

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess students' historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- **Evaluating student responses**

Brief but specific suggestions are provided, defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly, they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

Assessment 1 *Basic Level*

Eastern Trade and John Cabot

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 1. (6–8)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that both documents refer to the high value placed on spices and to the fact that they came to Europe from the East via a very complex and costly caravan trading system. For example, Document 1 explains that as these goods “traveled overland from Asia to Constantinople or Alexandria in Egypt, they passed through many hands.” In Document 2, the ambassador describes caravan traders as saying repeatedly that the spices came “from remote countries to their home by other caravans, and that the same information was repeated by those who brought the spices in turn to them.” Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should note that Document 1 explains why the complex caravan trade pushed up prices for spices, yet also why Europeans still wanted those spices badly enough to pay the high prices. It also explains why the location of the Italian city-states helped them monopolize the spice trade in Europe and why England could undercut that monopoly via an all-water route to Asia across the Atlantic—or as Document 2 puts it, “to make London a greater place for spices than Alexandria.”

Eastern Trade and John Cabot

Directions: This exercise asks you to read a secondary source document and a primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The people of Europe had become familiar with spices and other products of the East as a result of the Crusades. . . . In addition to spices, Crusaders were amazed at the variety of silks, glassware, gems, dyes, perfumes, and rugs they saw for the first time. As a result, a lively trade developed between the West and the East.

Although Europeans enjoyed the flow of Eastern goods into their countries, they did not relish the prices they had to pay for them. Trade between Western Europe and the East was monopolized by the Italian city-states of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Located on the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas and therefore within easy sailing distance to Constantinople and other places where trade caravans arrived, merchant ships of these cities picked up Eastern goods and brought them to Europe. There they charged very high prices for everything they sold. One can't completely blame the Italians, though. By the time goods traveled overland from Asia to Constantinople or Alexandria in Egypt, they passed through many hands. Each time, the price went up. This was especially true of spices. When these much-coveted food enhancers and preservers finally reached the tables of Europe, they cost 20 times more than the original cost in the East.

The desire of European nations to bypass the Italian monopoly and seek an all-water route to the East was another factor that brought on the Age of Exploration. Then in 1453 Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine, or Eastern, Roman Empire fell to the Turks. This made a new route to the East even more imperative. The Turks imposed heavy tolls on European traders and often attacked European merchant ships in the Mediterranean. Faced with this additional obstacle, the rulers of Europe began to finance expeditions in search of new trade routes.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document. It deals with patterns of trade between Europe and Asia in the centuries before the Age of Exploration of the 1500s and 1600s. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from a past time. It is a later account by someone writing about that time. This secondary source passage is a revised version of the Introduction to "The Lure of the East," Chapter 4 in *Exploration and Discovery* by Walter Hazen (Culver City, CA: Good Year Books, 2005).

Document 2: A Primary Source

In England now is a popular Venetian named John Cabot, a man of considerable ability, most skillful in navigation. Having obtained from King Henry VII the royal privileges which gave him the use of the land found by him, provided the right of possession was reserved to the Crown, Cabot departed in a little ship from the port of Bristol, in the western part of this kingdom, with eighteen persons, who placed their fortunes with him.

Cabot's English partners say that they can bring so many fish that this kingdom will have no more business with Iceland, from which comes a very great trade in the fish called stockfish. But Cabot has his thoughts directed to a greater undertaking, for he thinks of going, after this place is occupied, along the coast farther toward the east until he is opposite the island called Cipango [Japan], where he believes all the spices of the world grow, and where there are also gems. And he says that he was once at Mecca, where from remote countries spices are carried by caravan, and that those carrying them, being asked where those spices grew, said they did not know, but that they came with other merchandise from remote countries to their home by other caravans, and that the same information was repeated by those who brought the spices in turn to them. . . . His Majesty, King Henry VII, places confidence in what John Cabot says, and since his return, provides well for him, as Cabot tells me.

And in the spring he says that King Henry will arm some ships so that he may go to this country and plant a colony there. And in this way he hopes to make London a greater place for spices than Alexandria. And the principals of the business are citizens of Bristol, great mariners that now know where to go.

Source Information: John Cabot was an Italian navigator (he signed his name “Zuan Chabotto”), but he sailed for King Henry VII of England. In his 1497 voyage, he reached parts of North America. Little is known about this voyage, but Milan’s ambassador in England wrote a letter about it to Ludvico Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan. The letter is dated December 18, 1497. Document 2 is a shortened and adapted passage from that letter. The letter is included in *Selections from the Sources of English History*, edited by Charles W. Colby (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1899), pp. 133–35.

Assessment Questions

1. In what ways do both of these documents agree about the nature of the spice trade in the years before European overseas exploration? Cite specific details to support your answer.
2. England’s King Henry VII backed Cabot’s voyages. How does Document 2 help you better understand what he might have hoped to gain from Cabot’s discoveries? Cite details from the documents to support your answer.

Assessment 1 *Advanced Level*

Eastern Trade and John Cabot

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 1. (9–10)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- 1. (11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past. As called for by the Common Core standard for grades 11–12, it also prompts students to relate the textual details to “an understanding of the text as a whole.”

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that both documents refer to the high demand for spices in Europe, and Document 1 explains their value “as food enhancers and preservers.” Both documents also describe how the spices came to Europe from the East via a very complex and costly caravan trading system. Document 1 explains that as these goods traveled overland from Asia, “they passed through many hands,” with the price going up each time the goods were exchanged. The ambassador from Milan describes the caravan trade in a similar way in Document 2. Document 1 also describes the geographical factors that gave Italian city-states a monopoly of this trade in Europe. All this helps explain why England and other Western European nations on the Atlantic would see overseas exploration as a way to find routes to Asia that bypass the overland trade. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question could vary. Most should note what Document 2 says about the Italian city-states' control of the spice trade. The Duke of Milan would probably want to know about any competitive threat to that control. On the other hand, the ambassador may simply want to inform the duke of something that might strengthen another European state. And so on.

Eastern Trade and John Cabot

Directions: This exercise asks you to read a secondary source document and a primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: (9–10) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. **(11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The people of Europe had become familiar with spices and other products of the East as a result of the Crusades. . . . In addition to spices, Crusaders were amazed at the variety of silks, glassware, gems, dyes, perfumes, and rugs they saw for the first time. As a result, a lively trade developed between the West and the East.

Although Europeans enjoyed the flow of Eastern goods into their countries, they did not relish the prices they had to pay for them. Trade between western Europe and the East was monopolized by the Italian city-states of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Located on the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas and therefore within easy sailing distance to Constantinople and other places where trade caravans arrived, merchant ships of these cities picked up Eastern goods and brought them to Europe. There they charged very high prices for everything they sold. One can't completely blame the Italians, though. By the time goods traveled overland from Asia to Constantinople or Alexandria in Egypt, they passed through many hands. Each time, the price went up. This was especially true of spices. When these much-coveted food enhancers and preservers finally reached the tables of Europe, they cost 20 times more than the original cost in the East.

The desire of European nations to bypass the Italian monopoly and seek an all-water route to the East was another factor that brought on the Age of Exploration. Then in 1453 Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire, fell to the Turks. This made a new route to the East even more imperative. The Turks imposed heavy tolls on European traders and often attacked European merchant ships in the Mediterranean. Faced with this additional obstacle, the rulers of Europe began to finance expeditions in search of new trade routes.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document. It deals with patterns of trade between Europe and Asia in the centuries before the Age of Exploration of the 1500s and 1600s. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from a past time. It is a later account by someone writing about that time. This secondary source passage is a revised version of the Introduction to "The Lure of the East," Chapter 4 in *Exploration and Discovery* by Walter Hazen (Culver City, CA: Good Year Books, 2005).

Document 2: A Primary Source

In England now is a popular Venetian named John Cabot, a man of considerable ability, most skillful in navigation. Having obtained from King Henry VII the royal privileges which gave him the use of the land found by him, provided the right of possession was reserved to the Crown, Cabot departed in a little ship from the port of Bristol, in the western part of this kingdom, with eighteen persons, who placed their fortunes with him.

Cabot's English partners say that they can bring so many fish that this kingdom will have no more business with Iceland, from which comes a very great trade in the fish called stockfish. But Cabot has his thoughts directed to a greater undertaking, for he thinks of going, after this place is occupied, along the coast farther toward the east until he is opposite the island called Cipango [Japan], where he believes all the spices of the world grow, and where there are also gems. And he says that he was once at Mecca, where from remote countries spices are carried by caravan, and that those carrying them, being asked where those spices grew, said they did not know, but that they came with other merchandise from remote countries to their home by other caravans, and that the same information was repeated by those who brought the spices in turn to them. . . . His Majesty, King Henry VII, places confidence in what John Cabot says, and since his return, provides well for him, as Cabot tells me.

And in the spring he says that King Henry will arm some ships so that he may go to this country and plant a colony there. And in this way he hopes to make London a greater place for spices than Alexandria. And the principals of the business are citizens of Bristol, great mariners that now know where to go.

Source Information: John Cabot was an Italian navigator (he signed his name “Zuan Chabotto”), but he sailed for King Henry VII of England. In his 1497 voyage, he reached parts of North America. Little is known about this voyage, but Milan’s ambassador in England wrote a letter about it to Ludvico Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan. The letter is dated December 18, 1497. Document 2 is a shortened and adapted passage from that letter. The letter is included in *Selections from the Sources of English History*, edited by Charles W. Colby (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1899), pp. 133–35.

Assessment Questions

1. In the 1400s and 1500s, several Western European nations bordering the Atlantic Ocean began to support overseas exploration. How do these documents help explain those nations’ growing interest in such exploration? Cite specific details from both documents to support your answer.
2. Why do you suppose Milan’s ambassador in England thought the Duke of Milan would be especially interested in Cabot’s voyages of exploration?

Assessment 2 *Basic Level*

Vasco da Gama

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (6–8)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that the central purpose of the passage is to explain to the zamorin why Portugal sent da Gama to India. That explanation stresses the king of Portugal's desire to find the Christians he believed were living in India and establish friendly contact with them and their king. Answers to the second assessment question should note how da Gama stresses Portugal's wealth in order to reassure the zamorin that the Portuguese have no need to take anyone else's gold or silver. He also explains the great efforts the king of Portugal made to get to India, proving his strong desire to make contact with other Christians there. He insists the king wants to be the zamorin's "friend and brother." However, best answers may detect an effort also to impress the zamorin with Portugal's power and wealth so as to earn respect and protection.

Vasco da Gama

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

A Primary Source Document

And the captain told him he was the ambassador of a King of Portugal, who was Lord of many countries and the possessor of great wealth of every description, exceeding that of any king of these parts; that for a period of sixty years his ancestors had annually sent out vessels to make discoveries in the direction of India, as they knew that there were Christian kings there like themselves. This, he said, was the reason which induced them to order this country to be discovered, not because they sought for gold or silver, for of this they had such abundance that they needed not what was to be found in this country. He further stated that the captains sent out travelled for a year or two, until their provisions were exhausted, and then returned to Portugal, without having succeeded in making the desired discovery. There reigned a king now whose name was Dom Manuel, who had ordered him to build three vessels, of which he had been appointed captain-major, and who had ordered him not to return to Portugal until he should have discovered this King of the Christians, on pain of having his head cut off. That two letters had been entrusted to him (to be presented in case he succeeded in discovering him, and that he would do so on the ensuing day; and, finally, he had been instructed to say by word of mouth that he [the King of Portugal] desired to be his friend and brother.

Source Information: Sailing for Portugal in 1497, Vasco da Gama became the first European to reach India by sea. The king of Portugal sent him to find an all-water route around Africa to Asia, bypassing Italian and Muslim merchants who controlled the trade in Asia's spices. Da Gama landed near Calicut on the southwestern shore of India. At first, he and his crew mistakenly thought the region's people were Christians. At one point, da Gama met with the king of that region, the zamorin. The king showed him traditional hospitality, though local Muslim merchants were suspicious. One of da Gama's shipmates kept a record of the entire voyage. This document is adapted from a part of that record. It describes the moment in da Gama's meeting with the zamorin when he explained why he was sent to India. This passage can be found in *The Library of Original Sources*, edited by Oliver J. Thatcher (Milwaukee, WI: University Research Extension Co., 1907), p. 34.

Assessment 2 *Advanced Level*

Vasco da Gama

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- 2. (11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. Moreover, when it comes to the unique demands of thinking historically we do also want students to use knowledge of historical context to help them interpret sources. But that sort of contextualizing also demands that students suspend their own present-day ideas while studying a source. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that da Gama claims Portugal has peaceful goals. The Portuguese wanted to find the Christians living in India and establish friendly contact with their king. Moreover, Portugal's great wealth means it has no need to take anyone else's gold or silver. Da Gama explains the great efforts the king of Portugal made as proof of his strong desire to contact other Christians and assure the zamorin of his desire to be a "friend and brother." Da Gama downplays completely any desire to gain greater control over the trade in Asia's goods and/or thwart Muslim merchants. Answers to the second assessment question should note that by stressing Portugal's great wealth and power, da Gama is also implying it could be dangerous for the zamorin to oppose Portugal. His emphasis on how long it took and how difficult it was to reach India could be intended to impress the zamorin with Portugal's iron will and readiness to assert itself generally.

Vasco da Gama

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 2: (9–10) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. **(11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

A Primary Source Document

And the captain told him he was the ambassador of a King of Portugal, who was Lord of many countries and the possessor of great wealth of every description, exceeding that of any king of these parts; that for a period of sixty years his ancestors had annually sent out vessels to make discoveries in the direction of India, as they knew that there were Christian kings there like themselves. This, he said, was the reason which induced them to order this country to be discovered, not because they sought for gold or silver, for of this they had such abundance that they needed not what was to be found in this country. He further stated that the captains sent out travelled for a year or two, until their provisions were exhausted, and then returned to Portugal, without having succeeded in making the desired discovery. There reigned a king now whose name was Dom Manuel, who had ordered him to build three vessels, of which he had been appointed captain-major, and who had ordered him not to return to Portugal until he should have discovered this King of the Christians, on pain of having his head cut off. That two letters had been entrusted to him (to be presented in case he succeeded in discovering him, and that he would do so on the ensuing day; and, finally, he had been instructed to say by word of mouth that he [the King of Portugal] desired to be his friend and brother.

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Assessment Questions

1. The central idea of this passage is a kind of reassurance offered to the zamorin. Can you explain why the passage might be reassuring to the zamorin?

2. Do you think da Gama also implied a kind of warning here as well? Why or why not?

Assessment 3 *Basic Level*

Christopher Columbus

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (6–8)** Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 3 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. This activity assesses the student’s ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a text.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should note that Columbus identifies the place he has discovered as “the Indies,” and the inhabitants of these lands as “Indians.” At one point he says Cuba could be “the mainland, the province of Cathy.” He was sure he “could not fail to find great cities and towns,” and so on. Answers to the second assessment question should first note the way Columbus honors the king and queen by naming islands after them and praising them enthusiastically. He then stresses the great size of the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola and describes their valuable features and resources, often in exaggerated phrases—for example, saying their lands are fertile “to a limitless degree,” their many harbors are “beyond comparison,” their hills are full of “thousands of trees,” the arable land is “rich for planting and sowing,” etc. Even though he does not venture into the interior much at all, he insists “there are mines of metals, and the population is without number,” suggesting a plentiful supply of labor to mine the gold he is sure is there.

Christopher Columbus

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

A Primary Source Document

Sir: Since I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies, with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. There I found very many islands, filled with people, and I have taken possession of all of them for their highnesses, by proclamation and with the royal standard unfurled. No opposition was offered to me.

To the first island I gave the name “San Salvador,” in remembrance of the Divine Majesty who had marvelously bestowed all this. The Indians call it “Guanahani.” To the second island, I gave the name “Santa Maria de Concepcion,” to the third, “Fernandina,” to the fourth, “Isabella,” to the fifth island, “Juana” [Cuba], and so each received from me a new name.

When I came to Juana, I followed its coast west and found it to be so large that I thought that it must be the mainland, the province of Cathay [China]. I found no towns or villages on the seashore, but small hamlets only, to whose people I could not speak, because they all fled immediately. I went forward on the same course, thinking I could not fail to find great cities and towns.

After many leagues [a league is about 3.5 miles], I retraced my path to a remarkable harbor. From that point, I sent two men inland to learn if there were a king or great cities. They travelled three days’ journey, finding many small hamlets and countless people, but nothing of importance.

I understood sufficiently from other Indians, whom I had already taken, that this land was an island, and I therefore followed its coast eastward for one hundred and seven leagues to where it ended. From that point, I saw another island, distant about eighteen leagues, and to it I gave the name “Hispaniola.” I went there and followed its northern coast eastward for one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues. This island and all the others are very fertile to a limitless degree, and this island is extremely so. In it there are many harbors on the coast of the sea, beyond comparison with others that I know in Christendom, and many rivers, good and large, which is marvelous. Its lands are high; there are in it many sierras and very lofty

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mountains. All are accessible and are filled with trees of a thousand kinds and tall. I am told that they never lose their foliage, and this I can believe, for I saw them as green and lovely as they are in Spain in May, and some of them were flowering, some bearing fruit. There are six or eight kinds of palm, which are a wonder to behold. There are marvelous pine groves, wide and smiling plains, and honey. There are birds of many kinds and fruits in great diversity. In the interior, there are mines of metals, and the population is without number. Española is a marvel.

The sierras and the mountains, the plains, the arable and pasture lands, are so lovely and so rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbors are such as cannot be believed, and so with the rivers, many and great, and of good water, the majority of which contain gold. On this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

Source Information: When Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage across the Atlantic, he wrote a letter announcing his discoveries. The letter is dated February 15, 1493, while Columbus was still at sea. Columbus says he sent one copy to the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile and a second copy to Luis de Santangel, finance minister to King Ferdinand II. The king and queen were waiting for word that Columbus had discovered a westward route to Asia with its fabulous wealth and new trading opportunities. This document is a shortened and adapted excerpt from the opening paragraphs of the version of the letter addressed to Luis de Santangel. It appears in *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus, Being the Journals of His First and Third, and the Letters Concerning His First and Last Voyages . . . Written by Andres Bernaldez*, translated and edited by Cecil Jane (London: Argonaut Press, 1930).

Assessment Questions

1. What evidence can you find in this letter that shows Columbus still thinks he has reached Asia?
2. Columbus had not found Asia's cities, valuable spices, or gems. His letter could be an effort to assure the king and queen of Spain that what he did find was nevertheless highly valuable. Describe as completely as you can his development of this idea throughout these paragraphs.

Assessment 3 *Advanced Level*

Christopher Columbus

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 3. (11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 3 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. The activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a complex text. It also asks them to evaluate the explanation offered in the passage and consider how adequate it is.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should note that while Columbus still thinks he landed in or near Asia, he was unable to find its big cities or its trading networks for spices and other valuable resources. Because the king and queen of Spain were hoping to tap the riches of the Asian markets, Columbus might have felt a need to assure them of the value of what he had found. Hence, he stresses the size of the two big islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, the fertile soil and rich variety of natural resources on those islands, including mines and gold he is sure can be found in the interior, along with a large population of potential laborers, etc. Answers to the second assessment question could start by focusing on the honors Columbus bestows profusely on the king and queen by naming islands after them and praising them enthusiastically. He stresses the great size of the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola. He describes all their resources in passionate terms—for example, claiming the lands are fertile “to a limitless degree,” the harbors are “beyond comparison,” the hills are full of “thousands of trees,” the palms “are a wonder to behold,” the arable land is “rich for planting and sowing,” etc. Even though he did not go into the interior himself, he insists it is full of “many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.”

Christopher Columbus

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: (9–10) Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. **(11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

A Primary Source Document

Sir: Since I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies, with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. There I found very many islands, filled with people, and I have taken possession of all of them for their highnesses, by proclamation and with the royal standard unfurled. No opposition was offered to me.

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The sierras and the mountains, the plains, the arable and pasture lands, are so lovely and so rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbors are such as cannot be believed, and so with the rivers, many and great, and of good water, the majority of which contain gold. On this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

Source Information: When Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage across the Atlantic, he wrote a letter announcing his discoveries. The letter is dated February 15, 1493, while Columbus was still at sea. Columbus says he sent one copy to the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile and a second copy to Luis de Santangel, finance minister to King Ferdinand II. The king and queen were waiting for word that Columbus had discovered a westward route to Asia with its fabulous wealth and new trading opportunities. This document is a shortened and adapted excerpt from the opening paragraphs of the version of the letter addressed to Luis de Santangel. It appears in *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus, Being the Journals of His First and Third, and the Letters Concerning His First and Last Voyages . . . Written by Andres Bernaldez*, translated and edited by Cecil Jane (London: Argonaut Press, 1930).

Assessment Questions

1. Some historians think Columbus's real aim in this letter is to reassure the king and queen of Spain about the value of what he has discovered. Why might he have felt a need to reassure them, and what kinds of reassurance does the letter offer?
2. How does Columbus resort to exaggeration, repetition, or emotional language to help in developing a case designed to give the king and queen this sort of reassurance?

Assessment 4 *Basic Level*

Gosnold's Expedition

★ Craft and Structure

4. (6–8) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should produce a list of definitions such as this one:

sounded: measured the depth of the sea

seventy fathoms: a fathom is six feet, hence about 420 feet

divers things: various kinds of things

we descried land: we could see land

lying twelve leagues west: located twelve leagues to the west—a league at sea being generally about 3.5 miles.

shallop: a small, open boat used in shallow waters

for want of language: being unable to understand their language

being as we thought an island, by reason of a large sound that appeared westward

between it and the main: we thought it was an island because of the large area of shallow water to the west between it and the mainland

shoal: shallow water

Answers to the second assessment question should produce a short paragraph such as this example:

On the thirteenth, we measured the sea depth as seventy fathoms (about 420 feet). We saw great beds of weeds, wood, and many other things floating by. Early on the fourteenth, we saw land several miles to the north and west. We named a rock on it Savage Rock (because savages first appeared there). Near it was a point with very tall trees. From the rock, a shallow boat with eight people came towards us. We thought they were Christians in distress at first, but we soon saw they were savages. They hailed us, we answered and they came aboard. They wore only loose deer skins and seal skins. Some had a few things made by Christians. They described the nearby coast and named Placentia of Newfoundland. They understood some of our words, more than we did of theirs. On the fifteenth day, we again saw land. We thought it was an island, because water divided it from the mainland. We called it Shoal Hope. We anchored near this cape. After we took huge amounts of codfish, we altered the name to Cape Cod. Here we saw herring, mackerel, and other small fish in great abundance.

Gosnold's Expedition

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

A Primary Source Document

The thirteenth, we sounded in seventy fathoms, and observed great beds of weeds, much wood, and divers things else floating by us. The fourteenth, about six in the morning, we descried land that lay north, the northerly part we called the north land, which to another rock upon the same lying twelve leagues west, that we called Savage Rock (because the savages first showed themselves there); five leagues towards the said rock is an out point of woody ground, the trees thereof very high and straight, from the rock east-north-east. From the said rock came towards us a Biscay shallop with sail and oars, having eight persons in it, whom we supposed at first to be Christians distressed. But approaching us nearer, we perceived them to be savages. These coming within call, hailed us, and we answered. Then after signs of peace, and a long speech by one of them made, they came boldly aboard us, being all naked, saving about their shoulders certain loose deer skins, and near their wastes seal skins tied fast. . . . one or two more had also a few things made by some Christians; these with a piece of chalk described the nearby coast, and could name Placentia of Newfoundland; they spoke divers Christian words, and seemed to understand much more than we, for want of language could comprehend.

The fifteenth day we had again sight of the land, which made ahead, being as we thought an island, by reason of a large sound that appeared westward between it and the main, for seeing a large opening, we called it Shoal Hope. Near this cape we anchored in fifteen fathoms, where we took great store of codfish, for which we altered the name, and called it Cape Cod. Here we saw herring, mackerel, and other small fish, in great abundance.

Source Information: The English were slow to develop an interest in North American colonization. In 1602, an English explorer named Bartholomew Gosnold sailed down the coast of New England on the vessel *Concord*. Gosnold was the first European to set foot on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He briefly established a settlement at Cuttyhunk Island, southwest of Cape Cod. It lasted only a few weeks. This passage is a shortened and adapted excerpt from an account of Gosnold's expedition by one of its members, Gabriel Archer. This account is in the first part of *Gosnold's Settlement at Cuttyhunk* by Gabriel Archer (Boston: Old South Work, 1902), pp. 1–11.

Assessment Questions

1. In primary sources from earlier centuries, language can be a bit confusing. Notice the underlined phrases in this passage. In a list, explain the meaning of each as best you can, using your vocabulary knowledge or the meaning suggested by the context of the passage.
2. In a short paragraph, rewrite the passage to cover its main points in language that makes it easier for a younger student to read.

Assessment 4 *Advanced Level***Gosnold's Expedition**★ *Craft and Structure*

- 4. (9–10)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- 4. (11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should produce a paragraph such as this one:

On the thirteenth, we measured the sea depth as seventy fathoms (about 420 feet). We saw great beds of weeds, wood, and many other things floating by. Early on the fourteenth, we saw land several miles to the north and west. We named a rock on it Savage Rock (because savages first appeared there). Near it was a point with very tall trees. From the rock, a shallow boat with eight people came towards us. We thought they were Christians in distress at first, but we soon saw they were savages. They hailed us, we answered and they came aboard. They wore only loose deer skins and seal skins. Some had a few things made by Christians. They described the nearby coast and named Placentia of Newfoundland. They understood some of our words, more than we did of theirs. On the fifteenth day, we again saw land. We thought it was an island, because water divided it from the mainland. We called it Shoal Hope. We anchored near this cape. After we took huge amounts of codfish, we altered the name to Cape Cod. Here we saw herring, mackerel, and other small fish in great abundance.

Answers to the second assessment question should notice the many uncertainties the crew had to confront. They had to take soundings constantly to avoid shallow water and to see what the ocean bottom was like. Their complete ignorance of the shape of the nearby land can be inferred from their efforts to interpret indirect clues such as objects in the water, or to make accurate judgments of what might or might not be the mainland. They were apparently the first Europeans to land at Cape Cod, which they named after first mistaking it for an island. They did not recognize the Indians (“savages”) they met or understand their language at all. However, the Indians did understand some “Christian words,” which suggests some interactions and trade had occurred with other Europeans in the area.

Gosnold's Expedition

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: (9–10) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. **(11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

A Primary Source Document

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The fifteenth day we had again sight of the land, which made ahead, being as we thought an island, by reason of a large sound that appeared westward between it and the main, for seeing a large opening, we called it Shoal Hope. Near this cape we anchored in fifteen fathoms, where we took great store of codfish, for which we altered the name, and called it Cape Cod. Here we saw herring, mackerel, and other small fish, in great abundance.

Source Information: The English were slow to develop an interest in North American colonization. In 1602, an English explorer named Bartholomew Gosnold sailed down the coast of New England on the vessel *Concord*. Gosnold was the first European to set foot on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He briefly established a settlement at Cuttyhunk Island, southwest of Cape Cod. It lasted only a few weeks. This passage is a shortened and adapted excerpt from an account of Gosnold's expedition by one of its members, Gabriel Archer. This account is in the first part of *Gosnold's Settlement at Cuttyhunk* by Gabriel Archer (Boston: Old South Work, 1902), pp. 1–11.

Assessment Questions

1. Some of the language in this passage may be confusing. In a short paragraph, rewrite the passage to make it easier for a younger student to read.

2. What can you infer from this source about the challenges of exploration for mariners from Europe in the early 1600s? Cite specific details in the document and what you infer from them.

Assessment 5 *Basic Level***Cortés's Letter to Charles V**★ *Craft and Structure*

5. (6–8) Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as to its various stylistic features. These formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that the passage fits best with the "description/detailing of events" text structure. Cortés seeks to depict the huge marketplace of Tenochtitlán in very great detail by describing several, broad categories of products or services available (food, clothing, medicine, services, etc.) and then giving many specific examples, details, of each type. No chronological pattern is used; this is a snapshot at one point in time. Nor are any steps in a process given, such as instructions as to how to get around in this marketplace. Description and detail make up the organizing pattern. Answers to the second assessment question should note how often Cortés refers to the great size of the marketplace and the rich assortment of its goods and services. He often makes favorable comparisons of the market to places in Spain. His extensive detailing of the things sold in this marketplace helps to build up a very vivid picture of its impressive size and richness.

Cortés's Letter to Charles V

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 5: Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

A Primary Source Document

This city has many public squares, in which are situated the markets and other places for buying and selling. There is one square twice as large as that of the city of Salamanca, surrounded by porticoes, where are daily assembled more than sixty thousand souls, engaged in buying and selling; and where are found all kinds of merchandise that the world affords, embracing the necessaries of life, as for instance articles of food, as well as jewels of gold and silver, lead, brass, copper, tin, precious stones, bones, shells, snails, and feathers.

There is a street for game, where every variety of birds in the country are sold, as fowls, partridges, quails, wild ducks, fly-catchers, widgeons, turtle-doves, pigeons, reed-birds, parrots, sparrows, eagles, hawks, owls, and kestrels; they sell likewise the skins of some birds of prey, with their feathers, head, beak, and claws. There are also sold rabbits, hares, deer, and little dogs, which are raised for eating.

There is also an herb street, where may be obtained all sorts of roots and medicinal herbs that the country affords. There are apothecaries' shops, where prepared medicines, liquids, ointments, and plasters are sold; barbers' shops, where they wash and shave the head; and restaurateurs, that furnish food and drink at a certain price. There is also a class of men like those called in Castile porters, for carrying burdens. Wood and coal are seen in abundance, and braisers of earthenware for burning coals: mats of various kinds for beds, others of a lighter sort for seats, and for halls and bedrooms.

There are all kinds of green vegetables, especially onions, leeks, garlic, watercresses, nasturtium, borage, sorrel, artichokes, and golden thistle; fruits also of numerous descriptions, amongst which are cherries and plums, similar to those in Spain; honey and wax from bees, and from the stalks of maize, which are as sweet as the sugar-cane; honey is also extracted from the plant called maguey, which is superior to sweet or new wine; from the same plant they extract sugar and wine, which they also sell.

Different kinds of cotton thread of all colors in skeins are exposed for sale in one quarter of the market; which has the appearance of the silk-market at Granada, although the former is supplied more abundantly. Painters' colors, as numerous as can be found in Spain, and as fine shades; deerskins dressed and undressed, dyed different colors; earthen-ware of a large size and excellent quality; large and small jars, jugs, pots, bricks, and an endless variety of vessels, all made of fine clay, and all or most of them glazed and painted.

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Maize or Indian corn, in the grain and in the form of bread, preferred in the grain for its flavor to that of the other islands and terra-firma; pates of birds and fish; great quantities of fish, fresh, salt, cooked and uncooked; the eggs of hens, geese, and of all the other birds I have mentioned, in great abundance, and cakes made of eggs; finally, everything that can be found throughout the whole country is sold in the markets.

Every kind of merchandise is sold in a particular street or quarter assigned to it exclusively, and thus the best order is preserved. They sell everything by number or measure; at least so far we have not observed them to sell anything by weight. There is a building in the great square that is used as an audience house, where ten or twelve persons, who are magistrates, sit and decide all controversies that arise in the market, and order delinquents to be punished. In the same square there are other persons who go constantly about among the people observing what is sold, and the measures used in selling; and they have been seen to break measures that were not true.

Source Information: Hernán Cortés was a Spanish nobleman who sought his fortune in the Americas and who conquered the Aztecs in Mexico in a campaign that lasted from 1519 to 1521. In November 1519, his forces were allowed into the huge capital city of the Aztecs, Tenochtitlán. He and the other Spaniards with him were amazed at the city's causeways, streets, festivals, temples, pyramids, and palaces. They were also impressed with its vast marketplace. This document's passage about that marketplace is slightly shortened and adapted from a part of Cortés's second letter to Spain's ruler, Emperor Charles V. (Cortés wrote five letters to Charles V, in part to justify the actions he took.) The entire second letter appears in *The Library of Original Sources*, edited by Oliver J. Thatcher (Milwaukee, WI: University Research Extension Co., 1907), pp. 318–27.

Assessment Questions

1. "Text structure" refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are three types of text structure:
 - *Description/Detailing of Events:* A topic is stated and important or illustrative descriptions, traits, examples or characteristics are listed.
 - *Time Order/Chronology:* A narrative structure describing how a group of events unfolds over time.
 - *Sequence or Process:* Steps of a process or procedure are specified, as with a recipe or other set of complex instructions.

Of these three text structures, choose the one you think most accurately describes the text structure of this document. Explain your choice.

2. How can you tell that Cortés admired Tenochtitlán's marketplace, and how does the text structure help him express this admiration?

Assessment 5 *Advanced Level*

Cortés's Letter to Charles V

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 5. (9–10) Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
- 5. (11–12) Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as to its various stylistic features. Students should see how structure is deliberately used to enable the text to achieve certain goals. Such formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that this passage is mainly a very detailed description of the huge marketplace of Tenochtitlán. The text is not structured around a more general principle, such as "cause and effect," "compare and contrast," "chronology," or "generalization/examples." It does group its details very loosely in terms of key categories of products or services available (foods, clothing, medicine, services, etc.) but is mainly a series of very detailed descriptions and listings of goods and services available. Answers to the second assessment question should see that the great detail of this description serves to convey Cortés's strong admiration for the great size of the marketplace and the enormous variety and abundance of goods and services. Cortés makes favorable comparisons of the market to places in Spain. Some may feel there is an implicit "compare and contrast" structure in this, but these are only occasional asides in the rich description stressed throughout the text.

Cortés's Letter to Charles V

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 5: (9–10) Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis. **(11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

A Primary Source Document

This city has many public squares, in which are situated the markets and other places for buying and selling. There is one square twice as large as that of the city of Salamanca, surrounded by porticoes, where are daily assembled more than sixty thousand souls, engaged in buying and selling; and where are found all kinds of merchandise that the world affords, embracing the necessaries of life, as for instance articles of food, as well as jewels of gold and silver, lead, brass, copper, tin, precious stones, bones, shells, snails, and feathers.

There is a street for game, where every variety of birds in the country are sold, as fowls, partridges, quails, wild ducks, fly-catchers, widgeons, turtle-doves, pigeons, reed-birds, parrots, sparrows, eagles, hawks, owls, and kestrels; they sell likewise the skins of some birds of prey, with their feathers, head, beak, and claws. There are also sold rabbits, hares, deer, and little dogs, which are raised for eating.

There is also an herb street, where may be obtained all sorts of roots and medicinal herbs that the country affords. There are apothecaries' shops, where prepared medicines, liquids, ointments, and plasters are sold; barbers' shops, where they wash and shave the head; and restaurateurs, that furnish food and drink at a certain price. There is also a class of men like those called in Castile porters, for carrying burdens. Wood and coal are seen in abundance, and braisers of earthenware for burning coals: mats of various kinds for beds, others of a lighter sort for seats, and for halls and bedrooms.

There are all kinds of green vegetables, especially onions, leeks, garlic, watercresses, nasturtium, borage, sorrel, artichokes, and golden thistle; fruits also of numerous descriptions, amongst which are cherries and plums, similar to those in Spain; honey and wax from bees, and from the stalks of maize, which are as sweet as the sugar-cane; honey is also extracted from the plant called maguey, which is superior to sweet or new wine; from the same plant they extract sugar and wine, which they also sell.

Different kinds of cotton thread of all colors in skeins are exposed for sale in one quarter of the market; which has the appearance of the silk-market at Granada, although the former is supplied more abundantly. Painters' colors, as numerous as can be found in Spain, and as fine

Continued on next page

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shades; deerskins dressed and undressed, dyed different colors; earthen-ware of a large size and excellent quality; large and small jars, jugs, pots, bricks, and an endless variety of vessels, all made of fine clay, and all or most of them glazed and painted.

Maize or Indian corn, in the grain and in the form of bread, preferred in the grain for its flavor to that of the other islands and terra-firma; pates of birds and fish; great quantities of fish, fresh, salt, cooked and uncooked; the eggs of hens, geese, and of all the other birds I have mentioned, in great abundance, and cakes made of eggs; finally, everything that can be found throughout the whole country is sold in the markets.

Every kind of merchandise is sold in a particular street or quarter assigned to it exclusively, and thus the best order is preserved. They sell everything by number or measure; at least so far we have not observed them to sell anything by weight. There is a building in the great square that is used as an audience house, where ten or twelve persons, who are magistrates, sit and decide all controversies that arise in the market, and order delinquents to be punished. In the same square there are other persons who go constantly about among the people observing what is sold, and the measures used in selling; and they have been seen to break measures that were not true.

Source Information: Hernán Cortés was a Spanish nobleman who sought his fortune in the Americas and who conquered the Aztecs in Mexico in a campaign that lasted from 1519 to 1521. In November 1519, his forces were allowed into the huge capital city of the Aztecs, Tenochtitlán. He and the other Spaniards with him were amazed at the city's causeways, streets, festivals, temples, pyramids, and palaces. They were also impressed with its vast marketplace. This document's passage about that marketplace is slightly shortened and adapted from a part of Cortés's second letter to Spain's ruler, Emperor Charles V. (Cortés wrote five letters to Charles V, in part to justify the actions he took.) The entire second letter appears in *The Library of Original Sources*, edited by Oliver J. Thatcher (Milwaukee, WI: University Research Extension Co., 1907), pp. 318–27.

Assessment Questions

1. "Text structure" refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. In a sentence, define the text structure you think Cortés is using here. Explain why you think this passage fits your definition of its text structure.
2. What overall impression about Tenochtitlán's marketplace does Cortés seek to convey, and how does the text structure he uses help him convey that impression?

Assessment 6 *Basic Level*

Spanish Perceptions of the Americas

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (6–8)** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8. It asks students to note a text’s point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author’s background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Document 1 depicts the native peoples as innocent victims of Spanish brutality and greed. At several points, Las Casas speaks of the Indians as “innocent sheep,” “submissive,” “obedient,” “loyal,” etc. He also sees them as “capable of morality” and open to Christian teachings, which he longs to see them accept. Cortés here focuses on the cruelty of the Aztec sacrifices, which he sees as “horrible, and abominable.” Best answers might note that both Las Casas and Cortés hope that, with teaching, the natives could be converted to Christianity. Cortés says that if their “faith, and fervor, and diligence” were redirected that way, “they would surely work miracles.” Acceptable answers to the second assessment question will see that Cortés focuses very selectively on one horrifying practice—human sacrifice. This selectivity reinforces the highly negative view he expresses. Las Casas is not selective in the same way, speaking positively about the Indians in very broad and general terms. However, this too might be seen as a kind of selectivity, in that it allows him to ignore specific examples of less admirable native customs or behavior.

Spanish Perceptions of the Americas

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Document 1: A Primary Source

Now these multitudes of Indians are by the creation of God innocently simple, altogether lacking in all manner of craft, subtlety and malice, and most obedient and loyal subjects to their native sovereigns. And they behave themselves very patiently, submissively and quietly towards the Spaniards, to whom they are subservient and subject. They live without the least thirst after revenge, laying aside all litigiousness, commotion and hatred.

The natives are tractable, and capable of morality or goodness, and very apt to receive the principles of the Catholic religion. Nor are they opposed to civility and good manners. I myself have heard the Spaniards themselves declare that there was nothing preventing them from attaining eternal grace but the knowledge and understanding of the Deity.

The Spaniards first assaulted these innocent sheep like most cruel tigers, wolves and lions hunger-starved, studying nothing, for the space of forty years after their first landing. . . . Now the ultimate goal that incited the Spaniards to seek the extirpation and desolation of this people, was gold only, so that growing opulent in a short time, they might arrive at once at such degrees and dignities as were no ways consistent with their persons.

Their ambition and avarice, than which the heart of man never entertained greater, and the vast wealth of those regions, and the humility and patience of the inhabitants, did much promote the business. (I speak of things of which I was an eyewitness.) Those whom they so despicably condemned, they treated not as beasts, which I cordially wished they would have, but as the most abject dung and filth of the Earth. And so concerned were they for the Indian’s life and soul, that millions of those Indians died without understanding the true faith or sacraments. The Spaniards never received any injury from the Indians. The Indians rather looked up to them as persons descended from Heaven, until that they were compelled to take up arms, provoked thereunto by repeated injuries, violent torments, and unjust butcheries.

Source Information: Bartolomé de Las Casas was a Dominican friar who became Bishop of Chiapas, in Mexico, in 1545. He was a social reformer who spoke out forcefully against the atrocities committed against the Indians in the lands Spain conquered in the Americas. He wrote a history of the Spanish conquests called *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, which was originally published in Seville in 1552. This passage is a shortened and adapted portion of the Introduction to *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies* by Bartolomé de Las Casas (London, 1689), re-published by Project Gutenberg, 2007.

Document 2: A Primary Source

They have another custom, horrible, and abominable, and deserving punishment, and which we have never before seen in any other place, and it is this, that, as often as they have anything to ask of their idols, in order that their petition may be more acceptable, they take many boys or girls, and even grown men and women, and in the presence of those idols they open their breasts, while they are alive, and take out the hearts and entrails, and burn the said entrails and hearts before the idols, offering that smoke in sacrifice to them. Some of us who have seen this say that it is the most terrible and frightful thing to behold that has ever been seen. So frequently, and so often do these Indians do this, according to our information, and partly by what we have seen in the short time we are in this country, that no year passes in which they do not kill and sacrifice fifty souls in each mosque; and this is practiced, and held as customary, from the Isle of Cozumel to the country in which we are now settled. Your Majesties may rest assured that, according to the size of the land, which to us seems very considerable, and the many mosques which they have, there is no year, as far as we have until now discovered and seen, when they do not kill and sacrifice in this manner some three or four thousand souls. Now let Your Royal Highnesses consider if they ought not to prevent so great an evil and crime, and certainly God, Our Lord, will be well pleased, if, through the command of Your Royal Highnesses, these peoples should be initiated and instructed in our Very Holy Catholic Faith, and the devotion, faith, and hope, which they have in their idols, be transferred to the Divine Omnipotence of God; because it is certain, that, if they served God with the same faith, and fervor, and diligence, they would surely work miracles.

It should be believed, that it is not without cause that God, Our Lord, has permitted that these parts should be discovered in the name of Your Royal Highnesses, so that this fruit and merit before God should be enjoyed by Your Majesties, of having instructed these barbarian people, and brought them through your commands to the True Faith.

Source Information: Hernán Cortés was the Spanish nobleman who led the expedition that conquered the Aztec empire in Mexico in a campaign that lasted from 1519 to 1521. He and the other Spaniards with him were impressed with many aspects of Aztec society. They were also horrified at some of them, as this document shows. This passage on the Aztec practice of ritual sacrifice is from the first of Cortés's five letters to Emperor Charles V of Spain. It can be found in Volume 1 of *The Five Letters of Relation from Fernando Cortes to the Emperor Charles V*, translated, and edited by Francis Augustus MacNutt (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), pp. 163–164.

Assessment Questions

1. These documents offer two very different points of view about the native peoples of the Americas. Cite specific details in each document to summarize its point of view about the native people it describes.
2. "Selectivity" refers to the way an author includes or leaves out some information in order to stress a point of view. How do you think "selectivity" helps each of these two authors express his point of view?

Assessment 6 *Advanced Level*

Spanish Perceptions of the Americas

★ Craft and Structure

- 6. (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 6. (11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to note a text's point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author's background, purpose and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that at several points, Las Casas (in Document 1) speaks of the Indians in very positive terms. He depicts the native peoples as almost purely innocent victims of Spanish brutality and greed. Cortés, in Document 2, conveys a far more negative image of the natives by describing graphically and in a very selective way one especially horrifying practice—human sacrifice. This selectivity enables him to express his mainly negative views forcefully. Las Casas is not selective in the same way, speaking positively about the Indians in very broad and general terms. However, this too might be seen as a kind of selectivity, in that it allows him to ignore specific examples of less admirable native customs or behavior. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. Some may feel that Las Casas would have no way of making

sense of the Aztec sacrifices, given his highly positive, even romantic, view of the Indians as “patient,” “quiet,” “innocent sheep.” Others might suggest he would regard the Aztec practices as an exception to his general views. Best answers should note that both Las Casas and Cortés see the Indians as needing to accept the Christian faith. Las Casas might actually agree somewhat with Cortés’s idea that the “faith, and fervor, and diligence” of the native peoples could be used positively to turn them toward Christianity and away from pagan customs such as human sacrifice.

Spanish Perceptions of the Americas

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: (9–10) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts. **(11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Document 1: A Primary Source

Now these multitudes of Indians are by the creation of God innocently simple, altogether lacking in all manner of craft, subtlety and malice, and most obedient and loyal subjects to their native sovereigns. And they behave themselves very patiently, submissively and quietly towards the Spaniards, to whom they are subservient and subject. They live without the least thirst after revenge, laying aside all litigiousness, commotion and hatred.

The natives are tractable, and capable of morality or goodness, and very apt to receive the principles of the Catholic religion. Nor are they opposed to civility and good manners. I myself have heard the Spaniards themselves declare that there was nothing preventing them from attaining eternal grace but the knowledge and understanding of the Deity.

The Spaniards first assaulted these innocent sheep like most cruel tigers, wolves and lions hunger-starved, studying nothing, for the space of forty years after their first landing. . . . Now the ultimate goal that incited the Spaniards to seek the extirpation and desolation of this people, was gold only, so that growing opulent in a short time, they might arrive at once at such degrees and dignities as were no ways consistent with their persons.

Their ambition and avarice, than which the heart of man never entertained greater, and the vast wealth of those regions, and the humility and patience of the inhabitants, did much promote the business. (I speak of things of which I was an eyewitness.) Those whom they so despicably condemned, they treated not as beasts, which I cordially wished they would have, but as the most abject dung and filth of the Earth. And so concerned were they for the Indian's life and soul, that millions of those Indians died without understanding the true faith or sacraments. The Spaniards never received any injury from the Indians. The Indians rather looked up to them as persons descended from Heaven, until that they were compelled to take up arms, provoked thereunto by repeated injuries, violent torments, and unjust butcheries.

Source Information: Bartolomé de Las Casas was a Dominican friar who became Bishop of Chiapas, in Mexico, in 1545. He was a social reformer who spoke out forcefully against the atrocities committed against the Indians in the lands Spain conquered in the Americas. He wrote a history of the Spanish conquests called *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, which was originally published in Seville in 1552. This passage is a shortened and adapted portion of the Introduction to *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, by Bartolomé de Las Casas (London, 1689), re-published by Project Gutenberg, 2007.

Document 2: A Primary Source

They have another custom, horrible, and abominable, and deserving punishment, and which we have never before seen in any other place, and it is this, that, as often as they have anything to ask of their idols, in order that their petition may be more acceptable, they take many boys or girls, and even grown men and women, and in the presence of those idols they open their breasts, while they are alive, and take out the hearts and entrails, and burn the said entrails and hearts before the idols, offering that smoke in sacrifice to them. Some of us who have seen this say that it is the most terrible and frightful thing to behold that has ever been seen. So frequently, and so often do these Indians do this, according to our information, and partly by what we have seen in the short time we are in this country, that no year passes in which they do not kill and sacrifice fifty souls in each mosque; and this is practiced, and held as customary, from the Isle of Cozumel to the country in which we are now settled. Your Majesties may rest assured that, according to the size of the land, which to us seems very considerable, and the many mosques which they have, there is no year, as far as we have until now discovered and seen, when they do not kill and sacrifice in this manner some three or four thousand souls. Now let Your Royal Highnesses consider if they ought not to prevent so great an evil and crime, and certainly God, Our Lord, will be well pleased, if, through the command of Your Royal Highnesses, these peoples should be initiated and instructed in our Very Holy Catholic Faith, and the devotion, faith, and hope, which they have in their idols, be transferred to the Divine Omnipotence of God; because it is certain, that, if they served God with the same faith, and fervor, and diligence, they would surely work miracles.

It should be believed, that it is not without cause that God, Our Lord, has permitted that these parts should be discovered in the name of Your Royal Highnesses, so that this fruit and merit before God should be enjoyed by Your Majesties, of having instructed these barbarian people, and brought them through your commands to the True Faith.

Source Information: Hernán Cortés was the Spanish nobleman who led the expedition that conquered the Aztec empire in Mexico in a campaign that lasted from 1519 to 1521. He and the other Spaniards with him were impressed with many aspects of Aztec society. They were also horrified at some of them, as this document shows. This passage on the Aztec practice of ritual sacrifice is from the first of Cortés's five letters to Emperor Charles V of Spain. It can be found in Volume 1 of *The Five Letters of Relation from Fernando Cortes to the Emperor Charles V*, translated and edited by Francis Augustus MacNutt (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), pp. 163–164.

Assessment 7 *Basic Level*

The Columbian Exchange

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (6–8)** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in several primary sources presented in a variety of visual and textual formats.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that the table identifies many plants, animals and diseases that were involved in the Columbian Exchange. In other words, the table provides an overall outline of the entire process. Document 2 is an example of one animal that adapted to the Americas in unexpected as well as expected ways. It calls attention to the fact that the Columbian Exchange was not an easily controlled process. Document 3 makes this even clearer. It shows the devastating impact on native peoples of germs unknowingly spread by European settlers. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note that while Document 1 shows valuable plants and animals going to both regions, it shows many devastating diseases going to the Americas and few going the other way. Document 3 is evidence of the terrible impact on native peoples of these diseases. Document 2 does not as clearly support the view that the Columbian Exchange harmed native peoples the most. The horse may have disrupted life for some native peoples, but many other Indian societies learned to make use of the horse very effectively.

The Columbian Exchange

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 7: Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Document 1: A Comparative Secondary Source

The Columbian Exchange	
From the Western Hemisphere	From the Eastern Hemisphere
Corn	Wheat
Potatoes	Rice
Sweet Potatoes	Oats
Beans	Barley
Pumpkins	Sugar Cane
Tobacco	Coffee
Squash	Honeybees
Tomatoes	Horses
Peanuts	Cows
Peppers	Pigs
Cacao	Chickens
Vanilla	Smallpox
Pineapples	Typhus
Turkeys	Malaria
Chagas' disease	Measles
Quinine (a drug for malaria)	Cholera

Source Information: European exploration brought the Americas into direct contact with people, plants, animals, and germs of all sorts from Eurasia and Africa. The term Columbian Exchange is used to describe the transfer of living species from each of these two huge regions to the other. The transfers benefited and harmed people in each region in very different ways. This table is adapted from several sources on the Columbian Exchange, including *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* by Alfred W. Crosby (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1972).

Document 2: A Visual Primary Source



Source Information: Mustang horses such as these roam parts of North America. They are descended from horses brought to the Americas by the Spanish. When some of those horses escaped, they adapted to parts of the west and continued to survive as a free-roaming species. This photograph, available through the U. S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), shows wild Kiger Mustang horses, which are a strain of the Mustang horse found in the Burns District in southeastern Oregon.

Document 3: A Written Primary Source

There was no town that had done something against us, but that we left unpunished or not revenged (because we sought to win them by gentleness), yet within a few days after our departure from every such town, the people began to die very fast, and many in short space; in some towns about twenty, in some forty, in some sixty, & in one six score, which in truth was very many given their numbers. This happened in no place that we could learn except where we had been, where they used some practice against us, and after such time. The disease also was so strange, that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it. Nothing like it, by report of the oldest men in the country, ever happened before, time out of mind. A thing specially observed by us, as also by the natural inhabitants themselves. Insomuch that when some of the inhabitants who were our friends had observed such effects in four or five towns to follow their wicked practices, they were persuaded that it was the work of our God through our means, and that we by him might kill and slay anyone we wanted to without weapons and without coming near them.

Source Information: In 1585, Thomas Hariot was a part of Sir Walter Raleigh's second effort to establish a colony for England on Roanoke Island in what is now North Carolina. The colony failed to survive. Hariot remained in it for a year. His account of his experiences with this colony was first published in Latin in 1588. Diseases such as those he describes here often broke out among native peoples after contact with Europeans, resulting in massive death rates and reductions in their overall numbers. This document is a shortened and adapted excerpt from Hariot's account, *A Briefe and True Reporte of the New Found Land of Virginia* (New York: J. Sabin and Sons, 1871), p. 28.

Assessment Questions

1. Explain how each of these three documents illustrates one aspect or another of the Columbian Exchange.

2. Most historians agree that the Columbian Exchange was more beneficial for Europe than it was for the native peoples of the Americas. Do these documents together support that view? Why or why not?

Assessment 7 *Advanced Level*

The Columbian Exchange

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that even though Document 1 shows valuable plants and animals going to both regions, it shows many devastating diseases going to the Americas and few going the other way. Document 3 is evidence of the terrible impact on native peoples of these diseases, a result of their lack of immunity against microbes to which they had never before been exposed. Document 2 does not as clearly support the view that the Columbian Exchange harmed native peoples the most. The horse may have disrupted life for some native peoples, but many other Indian societies learned to make use of the horse very effectively. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. Both Document 2 and Document 3 in different ways are evidence that Europeans did not understand and/or could not easily control many Columbian Exchange processes. It seems clear in Document 3 that Harriot's group did not intend to infect the Indians and had no idea what was happening to them. On the other hand, some may take this document as evidence that the Europeans could see that something was going wrong and therefore did feel some responsibility for this aspect of their impact.

The Columbian Exchange

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 7: (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Document 1: A Comparative Secondary Source

The Columbian Exchange	
From the Western Hemisphere	From the Eastern Hemisphere
Corn	Wheat
Potatoes	Rice
Sweet Potatoes	Oats
Beans	Barley
Pumpkins	Sugar Cane
Tobacco	Coffee
Squash	Honeybees
Tomatoes	Horses
Peanuts	Cows
Peppers	Pigs
Cacao	Chickens
Vanilla	Smallpox
Pineapples	Typhus
Turkeys	Malaria
Chagas' disease	Measles
Quinine (a drug for malaria)	Cholera

Source Information: European exploration brought the Americas into direct contact with people, plants, animals, and germs of all sorts from Eurasia and Africa. The term Columbian Exchange is used to describe the transfer of living species from each of these two huge regions to the other. The transfers benefited and harmed people in each region in very different ways. This table is adapted from several sources on the Columbian Exchange, including *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* by Alfred W. Crosby (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1972).

Document 2: A Visual Primary Source



Source Information: Mustang horses such as these roam parts of North America. They are descended from horses brought to the Americas by the Spanish. When some of those horses escaped, they adapted to parts of the west and continued to survive as a free-roaming species. This photograph, available through the U. S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), shows wild Kiger Mustang horses, which are a strain of the Mustang horse found in the Burns District in southeastern Oregon.

Document 3: A Written Primary Source

There was no town that had done something against us, but that we left unpunished or not revenged (because we sought to win them by gentleness), yet within a few days after our departure from every such town, the people began to die very fast, and many in short space; in some towns about twenty, in some forty, in some sixty, & in one six score, which in truth was very many given their numbers. This happened in no place that we could learn except where we had been, where they used some practice against us, and after such time. The disease also was so strange, that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it. Nothing like it, by report of the oldest men in the country, ever happened before, time out of mind. A thing specially observed by us, as also by the natural inhabitants themselves. Insomuch that when some of the inhabitants who were our friends had observed such effects in four or five towns to follow their wicked practices, they were persuaded that it was the work of our God through our means, and that we by him might kill and slay anyone we wanted to without weapons and without coming near them.

Source Information: In 1585, Thomas Hariot was a part of Sir Walter Raleigh's second effort to establish a colony for England on Roanoke Island in what is now North Carolina. The colony failed to survive. Hariot remained in it for a year. His account of his experiences with this colony was first published in Latin in 1588. Diseases such those he describes here often broke out among native peoples after contact with Europeans, resulting in massive death rates and reductions in their overall numbers. This document is a shortened and adapted excerpt from Hariot's account, *A Briefe and True Reporte of the New Found Land of Virginia* (New York: J. Sabin and Sons, 1871), p. 28.

Assessment Questions

1. Most historians agree that the Columbian Exchange was more beneficial for Europe than for the native peoples of the Americas. Explain why these documents together do or do not support that view.
2. The experience of the Indians as Thomas Hariot describes it in Document 3 was typical of what happened to native people throughout the Americas upon first contact with Europeans. Do you think Europeans should be held responsible in any way for this aspect of their impact on native populations? Why or why not?

Assessment 8 *Basic Level*

English Colonialism

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

8. (6–8) Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text reasons about its factual claims and to distinguish between these and expressions of opinion. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered or to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim—as well as an ability to distinguish these from the text's biases or expressions of opinion. This activity assesses the student's ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should see that Hakluyt favors sending the unemployed poor to the colonies as a way to put large numbers of them to work. Instead of being a drag on society in England, they will then become productive contributors to England's wealth by developing resources in its colonies. Hakluyt reasons that these people will not only produce new goods for sale in England, but that other idle people in England will be put to work making things for the colonies and for the Indians, who will also become customers for English goods. Answers to the second assessment question should note that Hakluyt's reasoning is based on his assumption that colonies in North America will easily absorb huge numbers of poor people, and that these colonies will have the resources to do all the kinds of work he details. However, Hakluyt offers little evidence to support his hopes about this.

English Colonialism

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 8: Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

A Primary Source Document

For all the laws we have devised and sharply executed to punish idle and lazy people, we cannot save our commonwealth from multitudes of loiterers and idle vagabonds who lack sufficient opportunity for honest employment.

Due to our long time of peace and lack of sickness (two singular blessings of Almighty God), we are now more populous than ever. So there are so many who know every art and science that they can hardly live with one another, but rather are ready to eat up one another. Yes, there are many thousands of idle persons within this realm. Because they have no way to be set to work, they are either mutinous and seek to alter the state, or they are very burdensome to the commonwealth and often fall to pilfering and thieving and other lewdness. As a result, all the prisons of the land are daily pestered and stuffed full of them, where they pitifully pine away or else at length are miserably hanged. Whereas if voyages [to North America] were undertaken, these petty thieves might be forced to work for some years in the western parts, especially in Newfoundland, in sawing and felling of timber for masts of ships and deal boards; in burning firs and pine trees to make pitch, tar, rosin, and soap ashes; in beating and working hemp for cordage; and, in the more southern parts, in setting them to work in mines of gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron; in dragging for pearls and coral; in planting sugar cane, in maintaining and increasing silk worms for silk, and in dressing the same; in gathering cotton, which is plentiful; in tilling the soil for grain; in dressing of vines, which are abundant, for wine; olives, where the soil is capable, for oil; trees for oranges, lemons, almonds, figs, and other fruits, all which are found to grow there already; in building forts, towns, churches; in powdering and barreling fish, fowls, and flesh, which will be notable provision for sea and land; in drying, sorting, and packing of feathers, which may be had there in marvelous great quantity

Besides this, those who are infirm and cannot go across the seas, and who are now a burden at home, will be made profitable members of society by employing them in England making a thousand trifling things into good merchandise for those colonies to whom we can sell the most.

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And seeing as the savages in Canada are greatly delighted with any cape or garment made of course woollen cloth, their country being cold and sharp in the winter, we shall find great demand for clothes. Hence, all occupations belonging to clothing and knitting shall be freshly set to work, as cappers, knitters, clothiers, wool men, carders, spinners, weavers, fullers, sheer men, dyers, drapers, hatters and such like, whereby many decayed towns may be restored.

In sum, this enterprise will provide matter for all sorts and states for men to work upon; namely, several kinds of artificer: husbandmen, seamen, merchants, soldiers, captains, physicians, lawyers, divines, cosmographers; yea, old folks, lame persons, women, and young children, shall be kept from idleness and be made able by their own honest and easy labor to care for themselves without imposing costs on others.

Source Information: Richard Hakluyt was an English writer whose works enthusiastically promoted the idea of establishing English colonies in North America. This document is a shortened and adapted version of a passage from Chapter 4 of Hakluyt's *A Discourse of Western Planting*, 1584, re-published by eBooks@Adelaide, 2014.

Assessment Questions

1. Hakluyt thinks England should establish overseas colonies as a way to put idle and unemployed people to work. Explain his reasoning.
2. Do you think Hakluyt's reasoning and evidence are sound, or do you think they are flawed? Cite details from the text to support your answer.

Assessment 8 *Advanced Level*

English Colonialism

★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 8. (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
- 8. (11–12) Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text backs up or seeks to explain its factual claims. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered in the text as compared with expressions of opinion. Or it could mean attention to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim. It may also require students to examine underlying assumptions and bias in order to see how they shape or distort the reasoning process presented by the text. This activity assesses students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Responses to the first assessment question should see that Hakluyt's main concern is with the poverty and threat to social order posed by thousands of unemployed people in England at the time. He sees colonies as places that can absorb and put large numbers of them to work. Instead of being a drag on society in England, they will then become productive contributors to England's wealth by developing resources from its colonies. Hakluyt reasons that these people will not only produce new goods for England, but that idle people left in England will be put to work making things for the colonies and for the Indians, who will also become customers for English goods. Hakluyt's evidence is thin. He mainly supports his claim by detailing the kinds of jobs he hopes the colonies will provide. Answers to the second assessment question should see that Hakluyt assumes the colonies will be fairly easy to develop as new sources of raw materials, finished goods, and jobs for England's unemployed surplus population. He assumes these future colonies will have the resources to support all the kinds of work he envisions. He also seems to assume that all the poor people he is worried about can easily relocate, adapt, and become productive in these new lands.

English Colonialism

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 8: (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims. **(11–12)** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

A Primary Source Document

For all the laws we have devised and sharply executed to punish idle and lazy people, we cannot save our commonwealth from multitudes of loiterers and idle vagabonds who lack sufficient opportunity for honest employment.

Due to our long time of peace and lack of sickness (two singular blessings of Almighty God), we are now more populous than ever. So there are so many who know every art and science that they can hardly live with one another, but rather are ready to eat up one another. Yes, there are many thousands of idle persons within this realm. Because they have no way to be set to work, they are either mutinous and seek to alter the state, or they are very burdensome to the commonwealth and often fall to pilfering and thieving and other lewdness. As a result, all the prisons of the land are daily pestered and stuffed full of them, where they pitifully pine away or else at length are miserably hanged. Whereas if voyages [to North America] were undertaken, these petty thieves might be forced to work for some years in the western parts, especially in Newfoundland, in sawing and felling of timber for masts of ships and deal boards; in burning firs and pine trees to make pitch, tar, rosin, and soap ashes; in beating and working hemp for cordage; and, in the more southern parts, in setting them to work in mines of gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron; in dragging for pearls and coral; in planting sugar cane, in maintaining and increasing silk worms for silk, and in dressing the same; in gathering cotton, which is plentiful; in tilling the soil for grain; in dressing of vines, which are abundant, for wine; olives, where the soil is capable, for oil; trees for oranges, lemons, almonds, figs, and other fruits, all which are found to grow there already; in building forts, towns, churches; in powdering and barreling fish, fowls, and flesh, which will be notable provision for sea and land; in drying, sorting, and packing of feathers, which may be had there in marvelous great quantity

Besides this, those who are infirm and cannot go across the seas, and who are now a burden at home, will be made profitable members of society by employing them in England making a thousand trifling things into good merchandise for those colonies to whom we can sell the most.

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Assessment 9 *Basic Level***The Codex Florentino**★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 9. (6–8)** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note the Indians' amazement and confusion about such things as the cannon and the way it works, the iron armor the Spaniards wore, their horses—which the native witnesses called “deer”—and the appearance of the Spaniards themselves. It should be clear that these native people were encountering unfamiliar things, which they tried to account for using terms they were more familiar with. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. Some may feel that since the account was recorded by natives in their own language, Nahuatl, it is a reasonably dependable report of what was said by those who did actually witness the events. On the other hand, the author of Document 2 calls the *Codex Florentino* a “troubling primary source.” It was written by native translators some time after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, but their work was supervised by a Spanish missionary. Some may feel this could have resulted in accounts more in line with what the Spanish wanted recorded, rather than what the original native sources actually saw and thought.

The Codex Florentino

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. One document is a primary source and the other is a secondary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Document 1: A Primary Source

Moctezuma was also terrified to learn how the cannon roared, how its noise resounded, how it caused one to faint and grow deaf. The messengers told him: “A thing like a ball of stone comes out of its entrails: it comes out shooting sparks and raining fire. The smoke that comes out with it has a pestilent odor, like that of rotten mud. This odor penetrates even to the brain, and causes the greatest discomfort. If the cannon is aimed against a mountain, the mountain splits and cracks open. If it is aimed against a tree, it shatters the tree into splinters. This is a most unnatural sight, as if the tree had exploded from within.”

The messengers also said: “Their trappings and arms are all made of iron. They dress in iron and wear iron helmets on their heads. Their swords are iron. Their deer carry them on their backs wherever they go. These deer, our lord, are as tall as the roof of a house.

“The strangers’ bodies are completely covered, so that only their faces can be seen. Their skin is white, as if it were made of lime. They have yellow hair, though some of them have black. Their beards are long and yellow, and their moustaches are also yellow. Their hair is curly, with very fine strands.

“As for their food, it is like human food. It is large and white, and not heavy. It is something like straw, but with the taste of cornstalk, of the pith of a cornstalk. It is a little sweet, as if it were flavored with honey; it tastes of honey, it is sweet-tasting food.

“Their dogs are enormous, with flat ears and long, dangling tongues. The color of their eyes is a burning yellow; their eyes flash fire and shoot off sparks. Their bellies are hollow, their flanks long and narrow. They are tireless and very powerful. They bound here and there, panting, with their tongues hanging out, and they are spotted like an ocelot.”

When Moctezuma heard this report, he was filled with terror. It was as if his heart had fainted, as if it had shriveled. It was as if he were conquered by despair.

Source Information: In 1519, Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés landed on the coast of Mexico. When the Aztec ruler Moctezuma learned of this, he sent messengers to find out more about these strangers. This document is part of the report the messengers supposedly gave him. The report is part of the Spanish *Codex Florentino*, which was compiled several decades later by native Indian translators. They used a recently created written form of their native language, Nahuatl. They worked under the supervision of Franciscan missionary Bernardino de Sahagun. A “codex” is an ancient manuscript text in book form.

This part of the *Codex Florentino* can be found in *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, edited by Miguel Leon-Portilla, translated by Lysander Kemp (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2006), pp. 30–31.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

There is evidence that indigenous [native] peoples authored many codices, but the Spaniards destroyed most of them in their attempt to eradicate ancient beliefs. Moreover, we have very little sense of how their production was shaped by interaction with the Spaniards, since the fourth Mexica [Aztec] King Itzcoatl apparently destroyed most earlier manuscripts during his reign from 1426–1440 to preserve his vision of how he constructed the Mexica empire. Still others simply disappeared without being published or preserved. Thus, various personal translations of the *Codex Florentino* became my primary source for the Mexica account of the conquest. The *Florentine Codex* is unquestionably a troubling primary source. Natives writing in Nahuatl under the supervision of the Spanish Fray Bernardino de Sahagún apparently produced the manuscript in the 1500s. The facts of its production raise serious questions about whether the manuscript represents the vision of the vanquished or of the colonizers.

Source Information: This document is part of the introductory essay to *The Conquest of Mexico: An Annotated Bibliography* by Dr. Nancy Fitch, Professor of History, California State University, Fullerton. In this introduction, Dr. Fitch refers to the Aztecs by the less-used but more accurate name for them, the “Mexica.”

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 1, how can you tell that the people who reported this encounter were unfamiliar with many aspects of European society and technology?
2. Does Document 2 cause you to have any doubts about how reliable or trustworthy the account in Document 1 is? Why or why not?

Assessment 9 *Advanced Level*

The Codex Florentino

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 9. (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 9. (11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note the Indians' amazement and confusion about such things as the cannon and the way it works, the iron armor the Spaniards wore, their horses—which the native witnesses called “deer”—and the appearance of the Spaniards themselves. It should be clear these native people were encountering unfamiliar things, which they tried to account for using terms they were more familiar with. Answers to the second assessment question should note first that the account was recorded by natives in their own language, Nahuatl. However, they were using a newly created written form of their language to record what other natives told them. This work was created several years or decades after the events described. Even more importantly, it was done after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs under the supervision of a Spanish missionary. This could have resulted in accounts shaped in ways that fit with what the Spanish rulers wanted, as opposed to what the original native sources actually saw and thought.

The Codex Florentino

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer two questions about specific details in them. One document is a primary source and the other is a secondary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: (9–10) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. **(11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

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“Their dogs are enormous, with flat ears and long, dangling tongues. The color of their eyes is a burning yellow; their eyes flash fire and shoot off sparks. Their bellies are hollow, their flanks long and narrow. They are tireless and very powerful. They bound here and there, panting, with their tongues hanging out, and they are spotted like an ocelot.”

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used a recently created written form of their native language, Nahuatl. They worked under the supervision of Franciscan missionary Bernardino de Sahagun. (A “codex” is an ancient manuscript text in book form) This part of the *Codex Florentino* can be found in *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, edited by Miguel Leon-Portilla, translated by Lysander Kemp (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2006), pp. 30–31.

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Source Information: This document is part of the introductory essay to *The Conquest of Mexico: An Annotated Bibliography* by Dr. Nancy Fitch, Professor of History, California State University, Fullerton. In this introduction, Dr. Fitch refers to the Aztecs by the less-used but more accurate name for them, the “Mexica.”

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 1, how can you tell the people who recorded this encounter were unfamiliar with many aspects of European society and technology?
2. In Document 2, Dr. Fitch says the *Florentine Codex* is “a troubling primary source.” Document 1 is from that source. Note Dr. Fitch’s words, as well as the source information for both documents. What sorts of problems do you think could make this a troubling source to use as evidence of what the native people felt and thought at the time Cortés arrived among them?

Writing Assessment 1

The Age of Exploration

The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 1 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

Using This Assessment

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Writing Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 1. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that makes meaningful claims and that develops those claims using relevant evidence and sound reasoning. The essay should make clear the strengths and limitations of the claims it makes while also considering possible challenges or counter claims.

Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 1

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the essay state a claim addressing all elements of the prompt?
- Does the essay use evidence from all or most of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence explained effectively using careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Does the essay defend the claim in relation to any relevant alternative claims?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its claims?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

The Age of Exploration

The Standard: Write a brief essay that presents a well-reasoned argument focused on historical content.

The Question

Using your background history knowledge and the primary source documents listed here, explain why you do or do not agree with the following statement:

“The Age of Exploration brought out both the absolute best and the absolute worst of European civilization.”

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *The Age of Exploration Assessments*.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce a specific claim that you can defend in response to the question.
- Support your claim with an argument based on evidence from the documents and sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Consider other possible claims that may differ from your own.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect all parts of your essay to the claim you are making.
- Write a conclusion that follows from the argument your essay has made.

Writing Assessment 2

The Age of Exploration

The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 2 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Writing Assignment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 2. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that uses sources effectively to provide strong support and evidence clarifying and explaining a central idea or set of ideas and concepts.

Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 2

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the introduction address the prompt with a clear, well-defined central idea and a preview of supporting ideas?
- Does the essay use evidence from many of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence used effectively to support the essay's key ideas and concepts?
- Does the essay engage in careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its key ideas?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

The Age of Exploration

The Standard: Write an informative/explanatory essay clearly describing and explaining historical events and trends.

The Question

The year is 1630. You are an adviser to the king of a small but wealthy European nation. Your nation has never engaged in overseas exploration or colonization. However, now your king is considering the idea of financing some merchants to do this. What he wants from you is an essay explaining the sorts of problems and opportunities he can expect if he goes ahead with this plan. Your task in this assignment is to write this essay. Keep in mind, the king does not want your opinion about his plans. He wants you to explain what he can expect from carrying them out. In your essay, use as evidence as many of the primary source documents for this lesson as you can.

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and on your selection of sources from all the primary source documents in *The Age of Exploration Assessments*.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce the topic with a clear, well-defined central idea and preview in a general way other key ideas your essay will develop.
- Support each of your key ideas with evidence from many of the documents and with sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect the major parts of your essay.
- Write a conclusion that follows from and summarizes the main points your essay has made.

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