

Timeline: “Spain, Columbus, and Taínos”

The timeline is found on page 99 and the lesson description is found on page 139, both in RTC. In this activity students read through the timeline, looking at the information provided. RTC provides questions to have students think about in response to the timeline. For example, “What appears to be the objective of Columbus’ first voyage? On January 13, Columbus encounters what he decides is resistance. Why does he presume that these people are Caribs and not Taínos? How does Columbus justify taking slaves? What prevented the Tainos from mounting an effective resistance to Columbus’ invasions? RTC also provides writing activities and projects in response to the timeline. For example, “Write Caonabó’s interior monologue as he is led in chains onto a ship bound for Spain.” Or, “Have students do more research and continue the timeline. Have them choose events on the timeline to research more thoroughly. Are there particular “choice points” suggested in the timeline where people’s discussions could have resulted in different historical outcomes?” (p. 139).

“Open Your Hearts”: A Dominican Friar Speaks Out

This activity is based upon a reading excerpt adapted by Bill Bigelow from writings by Bartolomé de las Casas found in RTC (p. 103). In this reading, students hear another alternative view to the ramifications of exploration on the Americas. Guided reading questions and activities are provided in RTC (p. 139).

On page 61 is a primary source excerpt from Bartolomé de las Casas’ “Of the Island of Hispanola,” in “Very Brief Account of the Devastation of the Indies” taken from *A History of US: Sourcebook and Index, Book 11*. Sections of this excerpt are graphic, so it is up to the teacher to decide the appropriateness.

Ceremony: A poem

This activity uses the poem “Ceremony” by Leslie Marmon Silko found in RTC (p. 114). After students read the poem, use questions provided by RTC on page 139 to analyze the meaning and author’s purpose for writing the poem. RTC also suggests that you expand the activity to have students bring in stories from their lives that teach, amuse or remember significant things or events and then share them with the class.

Columbus Day: A poem

This activity is also based upon a poem “Columbus Day” by Jimmie Durham found in RTC (p. 123). The activity that accompanies this poem (found on p. 139) asks students to think about the visual images and emotional responses that the poem elicits from the reader. The activity also suggests having students write their own poem using the same format as Durham.