

### **Lesson 3: Juan de Onate and the Camino Real**

**Duration:** Two or Three Sessions 45 min.—1 hr.

**Objective:** The object of this lesson is to flash forward some years after the establishment of the Camino Real, and learn about Juan de Onate and los pobladores. We will look at maps and learn about the lives of the settlers. Students will try to put themselves in the places of the settlers and look at and analyze colonial “artifacts” from the time period. They will also write a journal entry as a settler on the Camino Real, a conquistador or an Aztec/Mexica native, using any of the content material as support.

#### **Materials:**

- Maps of Camino Real
- Background information on Camino Real from *New Mexico: Celebrating 400 Years of History*, Cobblestone Publishing
- Video: *El Camino Real* (Colores program produced by KNME) 2003
- CD: *Portrait in Sound of an Ancient Road: Stories and Songs of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, Peregrine Arts Sound Archive, Santa Fe NM
- Artifact Boxes
- Artifact Analysis sheets
- Notebook paper

**Lesson:** This lesson will begin with two songs from CD, just to give the students a taste of the type of music that Spanish settlers would have played or heard. This will introduce them to the Camino Real. Before we dig into the content, we will quickly review the definition of primary and secondary sources. We will also review the students’ KWL charts to see if there are any more questions to add, and to see if we can answer any of the previous questions.

After the intro, we will look at maps of the route, noting the path from Mexico into New Mexico. All students will have copies of information, which we will read and discuss aloud, identifying main ideas and using highlighters to emphasize. This information can be accessed more easily later, when it is time for assessment. We will name the leader of this expedition, Don Juan de Onate, and examine representations of him and the journey.

We will then listen to tracks 13-17, Vol. I of the CD, as it pertains to tools, vehicles and supplies brought by the settlers. We will list as many supplies as possible while the CD plays, and discuss their importance to the settlers.

We will then watch the first fifteen minutes of the video, which talks about the Camino Real mostly in terms of the terrain. Quick follow up discussion with brief note taking. The pace of the video is slow and technical at times, which is why I decided to use only part.

The real fun begins when we look at the Artifact Boxes. These boxes contain replicas of items the settlers probably had or used along the trail. Students will work in pairs and be

given an "artifact" to examine. I usually try to choose more obscure items that the students will be unfamiliar with. Each student will have an Artifact Analysis sheet that he is individually responsible for completing while working with a partner. After 15-20 minutes, we will meet as a group, and each pair will present their artifact, discussing what they think it is or what it is use for. I will then clarify, as needed, the names and uses of the artifacts. We will also talk about who would have used the different artifacts---men, women, children, soldiers, etc.

The final part of the lesson, a journal entry, will be an assessment for content. Students will complete a one-page journal entry as a Spanish settler, a conquistador or an Aztec/Mexica native. The entry will discuss a day or specific event in the person's life, using content information learned over the last three lessons. Students may refer to all handouts and notes collected during the lessons. If time allows, volunteers may share their entries aloud with the class. Usually there is no shortage of volunteers!

**ELL Support:** This lesson works for ELL because it has the audio/visual component, followed by discussion. It also has partner work, which will promote peer tutoring and use of vocabulary. The journal entry could be recited orally and scribed by the teacher, or become simply an oral assessment of the student's comprehension and language capability.

Map 2

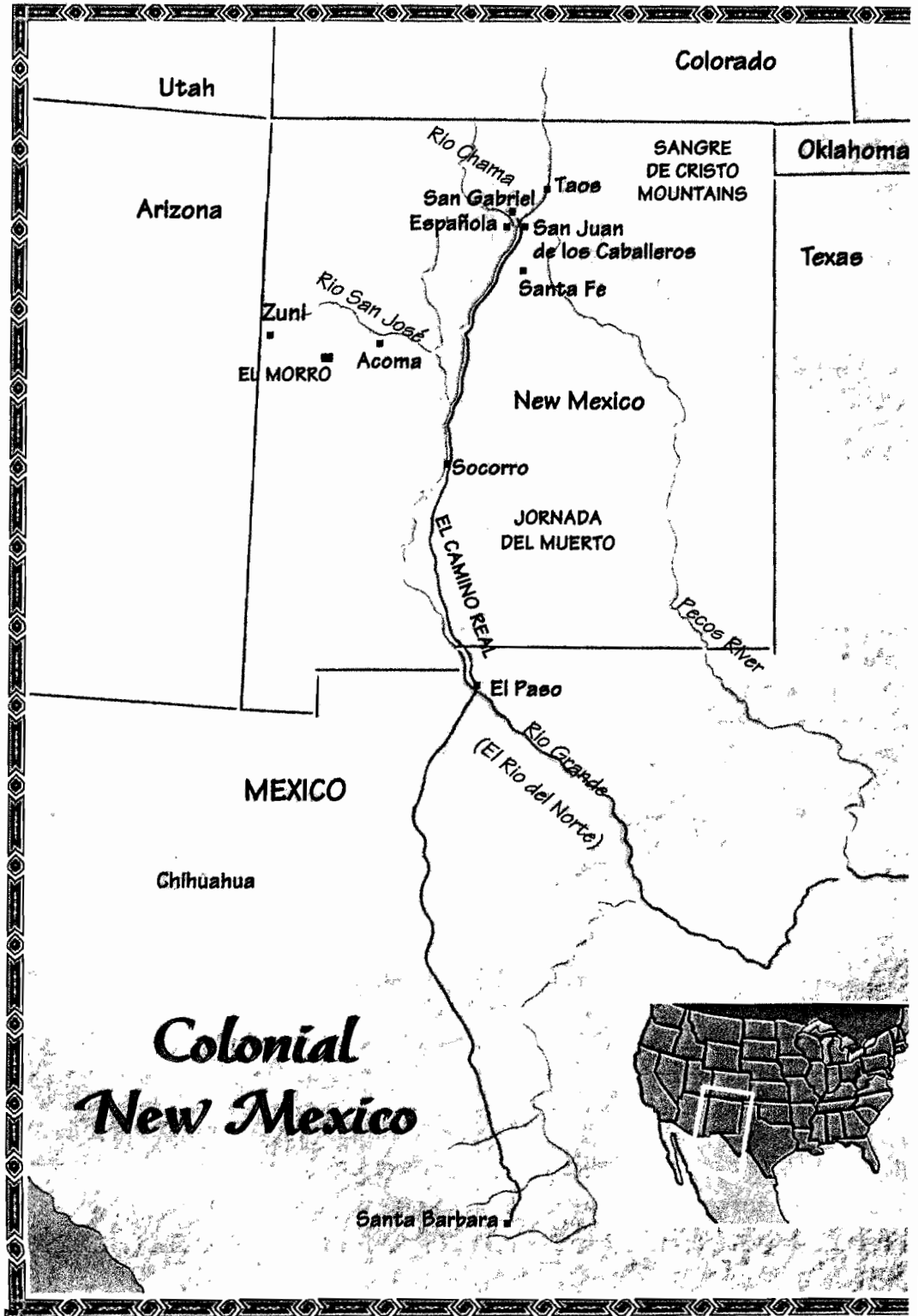


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**El Camino Real  
United States and Mexico  
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro  
National Historic Trail**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Land Management

*Lesson 3*



# El Camino Real



by Robert J. Torres

For more than two centuries, El Camino de Tierra Adentro (the road to the interior) was the main line of communication and trade between the Spanish government in Mexico City and the distant frontier outpost of Santa Fe in New Mexico. This road extended for more than sixteen hundred miles. Whatever the people of New Mexico needed that they could not produce themselves had to be transported over the road.

Because this road belonged to the king of Spain, it also was

called El Camino Real, or the royal road. It followed ancient Native American trade routes. In 1540, the Spanish government sent Francisco Vásquez de Coronado to search for the fabled Seven Cities of Gold, which were believed to exist somewhere in the vast and unexplored lands we now call North America. Coronado and his men explored much of the present-day Southwest for two years before returning to Mexico. In 1581, Fray Agustín Rodríguez, a

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Larger Image

Don Juan de Oñate.  
Image used by permission of artist, José Cisneros

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**Artifact Analysis** (*What is this thing?*)

1. Describe the artifact. What is it made of? Look at shape, color, size and texture.
2. Draw a sketch of the artifact.
3. What do you think the artifact was used for? Why?
4. Where might this artifact have been used?
5. Who might have used this artifact?
6. What items do we have today that are similar to this artifact?



## **Conclusion**

In reality, this is nowhere near the conclusion of this unit! My overall plan is to continue with the Camino Real, Juan de Onate and the settlers, and then branch into the indigenous peoples of New Mexico and their lives. Ultimately, we will delve into the clash of cultures in New Mexico and continue to learn how this contact affected the participants and shaped the cultural, political and economic history of our state. We will study the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and eventually compare/contrast Onate and Po'pay. I also have plans to try and film a "documentary" of colonial NM history, which will be written and acted by the students. I have never attempted this before, so I am not sure what to expect, but I think it has great potential.

In this unit I have designed the lessons around the 4<sup>th</sup> grade standards and the information from this class. My own depth of content knowledge has greatly increased, which makes me feel comfortable with the material. Although all the detail is not necessarily applicable to 4<sup>th</sup> grade level, I have incorporated information on ancient cultures (Aztec/Mexica) and spent time exploring the effects of conquest and colonization with greater depth. This theme of cultural exchange and change is crucial to an understanding of historical events. There are also specific themes, such as slavery, which can be presented outside of the typical lessons (as related to English colonization), yet provide students with a global link. I also plan to do some myth busting! Most grade school textbooks still perpetuate the myth of the Spanish as gods, and I will definitely dispel that belief.

I like to use the acronym ESP (economic, social, political) as we move through our social studies curriculum. This gives students a framework where they can see how historical components are interwoven. I refer students back to these three concepts all through the school year, and we divide main themes of our history lessons into each category. It is exciting to observe how well students come to understand these ideas, and toward the end of the year, as they become well versed in this way of thinking, I use this as an assessment tool. My increased historical knowledge and understanding will only help to boost the same in my students. I plan on challenging my students to question all of our historical sources and think at all times about an author's purpose. These critical thinking skills will benefit them across the curriculum.



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