

Substitute Guide: The Columbian Exchange

Course: World History Studies **Grades:** 9–12 **Time:** ~50 min standard · ~90 min block Social Studies

Learning goal (plain language)

Students investigate the **Columbian Exchange** — the two-way movement of crops, animals, people, and disease between the **Americas**, **Europe**, and **Africa** after **1492**: its **causes** and its **effects** on population, agriculture, economies, and societies across continents. They read two short summaries, study a diagram of the exchange, do **source analysis** (creator, date, type, purpose, point of view) on a short public-domain 1492 journal excerpt, build a **cause → exchange → effects chain**, compare two sources, sort fact from interpretation and opinion, and finish by writing a short evidence-based argument about which effect mattered most. **You do not need a history background to run this.** Everything students need is printed in their packet, and the separate answer key gives you every answer. Part of the topic covers serious human costs (disease and forced migration); the packet handles them factually and respectfully, and asks students to do the same.

Standards alignment

Framework: 19 TAC Chapter 113 (World History Studies).

- **Primary — global interactions / the Columbian Exchange:** analyzing the causes and global effects of the Columbian Exchange, including the transfer of crops, animals, people, and disease and its impact on population, agriculture, economies, and societies across the Americas, Europe, and Africa.
- **Skills — social studies skills (source analysis / point of view):** analyzing primary and secondary sources by identifying the creator, date, type, purpose, and point of view, and using evidence to support a historical argument.

Provisional — pending educator verification against the current official TAC source.

(Standards are paraphrased here, not quoted, and this is **not** a claim of TEKS alignment. No section number is asserted; please confirm the exact section codes and wording against your official source. Prompts are kept non-partisan and in historical context.)

Setup Before class (5 min)

- Count and hand out one **student packet** per student.
- Confirm each student has a **pencil**. No calculators, computers, or textbooks are needed.
- Decide up front whether this is a **standard (~50 min)** or **block (~90 min)** class and tell students which items to do (see Timing).
- Write the date on the board and remind students to fill in the name line.
- Keep the **answer key** with you — it is a separate file and is **not** in the student packet.

Materials What's needed

- Printed student packet (5–7 pages) per student.
- Pencil per student.
- This guide and the separate answer key (teacher only).

- No technology, no calculator, no textbooks, no safety hazards.

Timing Suggested pacing — standard vs. block

Segment	Standard ~50 min	Block ~90 min	What students do
Start — Observe a source	5 min	5 min	Q1–Q2 warm-up on the 1492 journal excerpt
Build — Read the sources	10 min	15 min	Sources A–B (+ Source C in block), word bank, diagram; Q3
Apply — Analyze the sources	20 min	25 min	Q4–Q9 (+ Q10 data source in block)
Explain — CER argument	10 min	25 min	Q11 claim/evidence/reasoning (block adds a 2nd source + counter-consideration)
Close — ACE	5 min	10 min	Articulate / Connect / Extend
Continue — early finishers	optional	~10 min	"Sort an effect by continent"

Standard version: students skip every item marked **[BLOCK]** (Source C, Q10, and the extended-writing add-on in Q11). **Block version:** students do those items and write a longer argument.

Script Read aloud to start

"Today's assignment is a paper history investigation called *The Columbian Exchange*. It is about how crops, animals, people, and diseases moved between the Americas, Europe, and Africa after 1492, and how that changed the world. You will work by yourself with just a pencil — no computers or textbooks. First read the short summaries and study the diagram. Then answer the questions in order; if one is tricky, skip it and come back. Write in complete sentences where it asks you to explain. Everything you need is printed in the packet — you do not need any outside facts. Part of this history is serious: it includes disease that killed many Native peoples and the forced movement of enslaved Africans. Treat those facts respectfully and stick to the evidence — analyze what the sources show, not which modern side you favor. [If block: Also read Source C and do the items marked BLOCK.] Put your name, class period, and date at the top now. You have about [50 / 90] minutes; raise your hand if you need help understanding a word."

Support When students ask for help

- **You may read any part aloud** to a student or the class.
- If they are stuck on the **cause** → **exchange** → **effects chain** (Q5–Q6), point them to **Source A** — causes and effects are each listed there in bold-led sentences.
- For "corroborate or contradict" (Q7), ask: "Does Source B *agree with and add detail to* Source A, or does it *disagree*?"
- For "fact / interpretation / opinion" (Q8), point to the **Word Bank**; an "opinion" ranks or judges, an "interpretation" says "probably" or "because."
- For the diagram (Q3, Q10), remind students that solid arrows carry crops, animals, and people, and the dashed arrow carries disease; the arrows point in the direction things moved.
- Encourage the printed **sentence stems** for the CER (Q11) and ACE sections.
- If the human-cost material prompts questions, keep answers factual and calm: the diseases spread because Indigenous peoples had no prior immunity, and enslaved Africans were moved by force. Do **not** give the argument answers; prompt with "What does Source A list as a cause?" or "Is that a cause of the exchange or an effect of it?"

- It is fine if a student cannot finish the optional early-finisher task or the block add-ons.

Access Accommodations & language support

- **Read-aloud** of any passage or question is allowed for all students.
- Point students to the **sentence stems** and the **Word Bank**. A quick glossary for reference: **Columbian Exchange** = the two-way movement of crops, animals, people, and disease between the Americas and the rest of the world after 1492; **Old World** = Europe, Africa, and Asia; **New World** = the Americas; **Indigenous** = the original, native peoples of a place; **colony** = land settled and controlled by a distant country; **epidemic** = a disease that spreads quickly to many people; **immunity** = the body's ability to resist a disease it has met before; **migration** = people moving to live elsewhere ("forced" = against their will); **plantation** = a large one-crop farm, often worked by forced labor; **cause** = a reason something happens; **effect** = a result; **point of view** = the perspective a source is written from.
- Extended time is fine; the standard core can stop after Q11 if time runs short.
- Students may answer in phrases if writing full sentences is a barrier, as long as the idea is clear.
- The packet is grayscale-safe — the diagram and tables print and read clearly in black and white.

Tools Allowed & not allowed

Allowed: pencil, the printed packet, quiet self-read-aloud. **Not needed / not allowed:** calculator (no math required), phones, computers, textbooks or outside sources (everything needed is in the packet).

Collect at the end: Collect every packet, whether finished or not, with names on them. Stack them for the teacher. Note on a sticky whether the class did the standard or block version, how far most students got, and any questions that caused confusion.

Answer key: The **answer key is a separate file** (answerkey.html) and is for the teacher only. Please do not hand it to students.

Teacher follow-up (for the returning teacher)

Watch for the common mix-up between **causes** of the exchange (ocean voyages, the search for trade/wealth/land, building colonies) and its **effects** (new crops and animals, population change, forced migration, and the spread of disease) — Q5, Q6, and Q11 target this, and students sometimes label a cause as an "effect" in the argument. Also watch for "crops only" or "one-way" thinking in Q9 (Source A names four kinds of transfer, moving in both directions) and for treating the illustrative Source B description or Source C list as a genuine, exhaustive primary source. The CER (Q11) responses show who can name a specific source detail or diagram arrow and tie it to a chosen effect; block responses additionally show who can handle a counter-consideration. Note who handled the human-cost material (disease, forced migration) accurately and respectfully. A quick next-day "cause or effect?" sort and a review of the two-way, four-part nature of the exchange would reinforce this well.

HS_WHIST_ColumbianExchange_01 — The Columbian Exchange Substitute Guide