

Concepts of the World

Standard 1

Students will understand how the exploration and colonization of North America transformed human history.

Objective 1

Describe and explain the growth and development of the early American colonies.

a. Using maps - including pre-1492 maps - and other geographic tools, locate and analyze the routes used by the explorers.

Lesson Launch: Why did the explorers choose their different routes, and how did this change their view of the world?

- Place students in small groups and provide each group with several maps from different time periods. Examples are provided below. Have the students attempt to put them in order of when they were drawn. The students should analyze the maps and ask questions.
- Example Questions: *When were these maps drawn? Who drew them? What does the map reveal about the concept of the world at the time period? What was motivating the explorers to leave the country they knew?*
- Make a power-point presentation with the answers to these questions. Provide dates and other information provided about the maps. Review the opening question: why did the explorers choose their different routes, and how did this change their view of the world?
- Allow the students to discuss this question with the new information they have received. Have certain students share their ideas and debrief.

Extension:

http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/china/polo_short.pdf

Here are some excerpts from Marco Polo's book. This might give the students a better idea of what inspired Christopher to Columbus to risk the journey across an unknown ocean.