

The History of America – Act I [1491 to 1607]

Europeans and American Indians maneuvered and fought for dominance, control, and security in North America, and distinctive colonial and native societies emerged.



An Introduction to AP/CHS United States History

Is the AP/CHS United States History course harder than Regents United States History course?

The short answer to the question posed above is: **YES**. However, "hard" and "difficult" are relative terms. It is likely that students will initially find this course to be more challenging and demanding than past courses. If you lack motivation and do not have effective study strategies, then yes; this course will be extremely difficult. The main distinction to remember is that while the courses are designed to be representative of what students can expect in a university style course; thus, the course is taught in such a manner that places full responsibility on students for their learning. The expectations are likely to be higher than those of Regents History classes.

| | Regents Level | AP/CHS |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Class Structure | Teacher is primarily responsible for delivering and designing a skills based approach to the study of U.S. History. Resembles traditional high school classes, and may be more project based. | Teacher role is as facilitator of learning. Students are responsible for ensuring their own success in the class. Resembles what is seen in university classrooms. Students are provided a college-level textbook and supplemental readings. Grades rely on written work, quizzes, tests, and major projects. Synthesis, analysis and application of information is emphasized. |
| Homework | Homework assigned regularly and collected for a grade. Students can use homework in order to earn a grade or maintain a grade. For example, if you do all your work, you will most likely pass the class. You must pass a NYS Regents exam to earn course credit and graduate from Ballston Spa High School. | Homework is assigned, but not regularly graded. The purpose of homework is to reinforce course content and to fill gaps in knowledge. Student is expected to complete homework individually. The work in AP U.S. History, while copious at times, is designed to impart the knowledge and skills necessary for success in any college level history course. Just doing all your work does not guarantee you an "A", just like in college. You not only have to do the work, but you have to understand it and retain it as well. You must take ownership of the material and STUDY!! |

Expectations for Students Enrolled in AP/CHS United States History

Students enrolled in Ballston's Advanced Placement U.S. History course should think ahead about the goals and challenges of the course. This is a college-level course that will require an extensive amount of reading, writing, and critical analysis of primary and secondary sources. My philosophy in assigning summer work is to get you acquainted with some of the resources we will be utilizing during the 2017-2018 academic year. The assignments contained in this packet are typical of what will be working with during the upcoming school year.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE SEPTEMBER

1. Take the course for the right reasons. A jump from Regents to AP is more about the work you are expected to do outside of class. Hopefully you will rise to occasion.
2. The pace is fast, but the course work is predictable and manageable. Get used to using the class website to help with due dates, deadlines and support links.
3. It is about the journey, not the destination. There will be times when the course drags or the work seems overwhelming. How you react to the ebb and flow of the course will serve you well when you face similar challenges in college.
4. The summer assignment mirrors the type of homework for the course. Time yourself when completing each task. Push yourself to chip away at the assignments so they are not hanging over your head the last week of August. Put forth an honest effort when you put pen to paper. If you nickel and dime your way through the homework you will struggle to master the material.
5. I create opportunities for success – take them. The unit tests and essays are challenging. Keep in mind I will be offering a omit program (similar to extra credit) for every major assessment. More info will be coming your way in September.

KEY DATES for SUMMER 2018

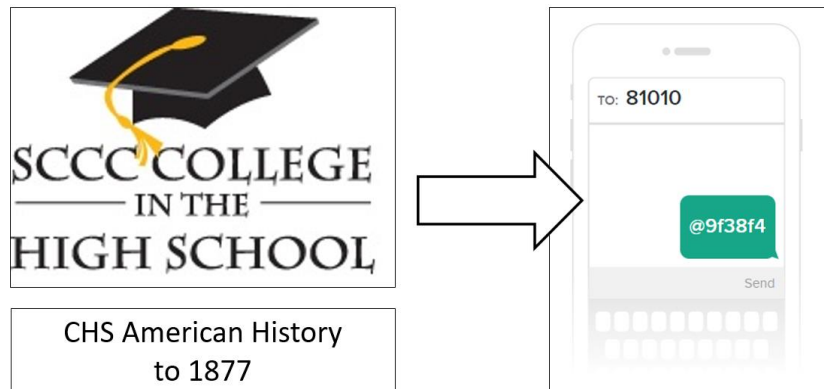
June 6th- June9 Pick up summer reading handouts afterschool in room 242. Please visit our class website www.apushcanvas.pbworks.com [APUSH] or www.americancanvas.pbworks.com [CHS] to view the gallery of resources available to assist you with the summer assignment

June 6^h to July 1st Request access to our class **REMIND** account. Work on summer assignment. Check class website for updates. [Sign-up instructions on page #4 of this handout]

First Week of September: Summer assignment collected. Be prepared for an assessment based on your summer assignment.



Please sign up for our class text service by **July 1, 2018**



Survival Tips for Students Enrolled in AP/CHS United States History

History requires students to read critically, to ask questions and to make connections, things that may not come *naturally to you. Part of my job is to teach you those skills. There are some things you can do from the beginning to make learning these skills as painless, and dare I say fun, as possible.*

READ, READ, READ - Throughout the course you will be assigned a good deal of reading. The readings may be from your textbook, document readers, websites or other sources. Keeping up with the reading is essential to understanding what is going on in class. During lectures I will not have time to go over everything in a lot of detail and some things I may mention only in passing, if at all. If you have done the text reading before class you will have a better understanding of the lectures. Whenever there are supplemental readings, having them done on time will let you spend time in class dealing with matters of interpretation and comparison rather than rehashing the article(s) or documents.

READ CRITICALLY - I strongly urge you to take reading notes when you read. Guided readings will be checked on a completion basis (you did it or you didn't). The key is to discern the major theme(s) of the chapter and the historical evidence which supports them. Guided readings will give you the gist of the chapter or reading and save you time when you study for exams. Re-read your responses, create flash cards for key vocabulary/dates, or use sticky notes to mark key points.

ASK QUESTIONS - I am not a psychic—therefore I can't read your mind to find out what questions you have about the material. I also realize that I talk rather rapidly, therefore I have no objection to being asked to repeat something or clarify a statement. If you don't want to ask in class, stop by during my office (room 226), shoot me an email, or post a question to the class wiki. I'd rather you ask the question than say nothing and remain confused. I try to make myself available to students as often as possible to encourage students to see me with their questions and concerns. This includes asking questions about grading. If you don't understand a comment or how a paper was graded, please ask. The only way you will improve your grade is if you understand what went wrong previously. And sometimes, (gasp!), I even make mistakes when I am grading (which I will cheerfully correct).

FORM STUDY GROUPS - Students who get to know their classmates have an advantage over those who don't. Study groups allow you and your peers to help each other learn the material. Working out potential essays together, reviewing main ideas or analyzing documents as a group gives group members a chance to benefit from the other member's perspectives and insights. **While talking over essay points and documents is encouraged, each student is expected to turn in THEIR OWN WORK!!!! Don't give in to the Dark Side—DO YOUR OWN WORK.**

COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS - The APUSH resource book includes all the big picture themes, IDs and guided reading questions for each chapter and unit. They are provided as a guide to the important information. Completing them will help you prepare for exams, as well as help you figure out in what areas you are weak.

TAKE CLASS NOTES - Okay, this one seems like a no brainer, right? But you would be surprised at the number of people who just sit and listen. Some people can get away with this, most people can't. We will be covering approximately 200 years of history—class notes will help you organize the information, clarify points of importance, and help you recall connections made in class. You should take notes on class discussions, as well as lectures. Record names, dates, events, historians etc. Put notes, definitions, interpretations, and your own questions and reactions in the second column. When it comes times to study, you can easily test yourself by covering one column.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE STORY - History is a story, plain and simple (well, maybe not *too* simple). Just as each of you has your own personal family story the U.S. has its own story as well. History was not made by the “great men” alone. They get the majority of the limelight because of their achievement (and to some extent the power that they wielded). But what truly makes history is the effect of these men’s (along with a few women’s) actions on the rest of us. We should never lose sight of the fact that the dates and events happened to real people who did not have the benefit of knowing it would all turn out okay in the end. They had to deal with the situation as they knew it. As a result, history can be very much like a convoluted soap opera, filled with intrigue, heartbreak, back-stabbing and times of great sorrow and joy.

As with any story everyone has their own personal version, told from their point of view. Because of the tendency to see things from one’s own perspective, accounts of an event may vary greatly from person to person. Indeed, even the meaning of events is often debated by historians who view the past through economic, social or political colored glasses. This is called historiography. As we learn the story of the U.S., be sure to take notice of the differences in the way different historians and eyewitnesses “spin” the tale. All of the different perspectives serve to make America’s story richer in the telling. It is my hope that during your time in this class you will develop your own understanding of the story, and that in turn will help you to better understand the American present.

UTILIZE YOUR RESOURCES - Our class webpage has interactive copies of Talking Points, the syllabus, omit options and other ancillary materials. Visit early and often: www.apushcanvas.pbworks.com [APUSH] or www.americancanvas.pbworks.com [CHS]

Summer Homework Assignments - Time Period #1 1491-1607

On a North American continent controlled by American Indians, contact among the peoples of Europe, the Americas, and West Africa created a new world.

Task # 1 Notes: Time Period #1 1491-1607 [Separate Handout]

Your first task is to get acquainted with our class website. You will be given a hard copy of all class notes organized into Time Periods and presented in modules. Your job is to complete the Time Period #1 notes using the links and resources presented on our class webpages.

Task # 2 Cover Page Biographies

All of our class notes come with a cover page that presents a visual preview of the 12 individual or groups who will be used to help tell the larger story of the new republics struggle to define and extend democratic ideals in the face of rapid economic, territorial, and demographic changes. Your job is Provide a brief biographical summary for each individual or groups featured on the cover page.

Task #3 Audio Podcast: '1491' Explores the Americas before Columbus (8:35)

The increasing popularity of digital audio allows students to consume content on demand anytime, anywhere. I have organized a collection of audio podcast for each of the 9 historical time periods we will cover in AP/CHS United States History. Most podcasts are 8-12 minutes long and contain interviews with preeminent historians. Your job is to provide a 50-75 word summary of the podcast and identify 5 facts quotes or anecdotes from the content.

Task #4 Dialectical Journal: The Columbian Exchange by Alfred Crosby

Dialectical journals are a college level note-taking method that forces you as a reader to engage in an ongoing conversation with the text. Dialectical journals are organized in a two column format where each side contains a specific function. Most journals are between 15 and 20 paragraphs and provided an excellent opportunity to think deeply about the content while weaving together content drawn from notes, podcasts and videos you are exposed to in class.

Task #5 Document Analysis

Throughout the year you will work on historical thinking skills by assessing your ability to analyze historical documents and to write essays based on the provided sources. At the advanced level you will be required to offer an extended analysis of documents and craft a coherent essay from the evidence provided. For this task you will be required to analyze seven documents using the format outlined

Dialectical Journals are a note-taking method that forces you as a reader to engage in an ongoing conversation with the text. Dialectical journals are in a two column format where each side contains a specific function.

| <p style="text-align: center;">Left Side [Quote] <i>Think of this side as though The author is speaking/writing to you.</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Right Side [Reactions] <i>Think of this side as your turn to speak/write to the author.</i></p> |
|---|--|
| <p>What key ideas would he/she say to you?</p> <p>Choose a direct quote from the passage that presents an important idea or significant information.</p> <p>For each entry provide page number and paragraph number of the chosen quote.</p> <p>For each left side entry/quote you must provide a response/reactions in the right column.</p> | <p>Choose ONE the following for EACH of your selected quotes. Each reaction should be thoughtful and written in complete sentences.</p> <p>(R) Reactions: Do you agree/disagree with the author’s argument? Has something in the text surprised you? Added to your understanding? Contradicted a previous belief? Be sure to include statements of WHY you think or reacted in the manner you did to the text. Consider what experiences or background information influenced you.</p> <p>(C) Compare/contrast: HOW do this author’s ideas compare or contrast to what you’ve read, have learned in history class, or experienced? How did the passage add to your understanding?</p> <p>(S) Significance: Does an event, person, idea discussed have a larger impact beyond the time period discussed? Explain its significance to another time period, person, event, or similar situation to another country.</p> <p>(Q) Questions: These should be higher order questions that would prompt discussion and cannot be answered by a simple “yes” or “no”. Offer a potential, reasonable answer for the question that you pose.</p> |

Dialectical Journal: The Columbian Exchange

by Alfred Crosby

[1] Millions of years ago, continental drift carried the Old World and New Worlds apart, splitting North and South America from Eurasia and Africa. That separation lasted so long that it fostered divergent evolution; for instance, the development of rattlesnakes on one side of the Atlantic and vipers on the other. After 1492, human voyagers in part reversed this tendency. Their artificial re-establishment of connections through the commingling of Old and New World plants, animals, and bacteria, commonly known as the Columbian Exchange, is one of the more spectacular and significant ecological events of the past millennium.

[2] When Europeans first touched the shores of the Americas, Old World crops such as wheat, barley, rice, and turnips had not traveled west across the Atlantic, and New World crops such as maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, and manioc had not traveled east to Europe. In the Americas, there were no horses, cattle, sheep, or goats, all animals of Old World origin. Except for the llama, alpaca, dog, a few fowl, and guinea pig, the New World had no equivalents to the domesticated animals associated with the Old World, nor did it have the pathogens associated with the Old World's dense populations of humans and such associated creatures as chickens, cattle, black rats, and *Aedes egypti* mosquitoes. Among these germs were those that carried smallpox, measles, chickenpox, influenza, malaria, and yellow fever.

[3] The Columbian exchange of crops affected both the Old World and the New. Amerindian crops that have crossed oceans – for example, maize to China and the white potato to Ireland - have been stimulants to population growth in the Old World. The latter's crops and livestock have had much the same effect in the Americas – for example, wheat in Kansas and the Pampa, and beef cattle in Texas and Brazil. The full story of the exchange is many volumes long, so for the sake of brevity and clarity let us focus on a specific region, the eastern third of the United States of America.

[4] As might be expected, the Europeans who settled on the east coast of the United States cultivated crops like wheat and apples, which they had brought with them. European weeds, which the colonists did not cultivate, and, in fact, preferred to uproot, also fared well in the New World. John Josselyn, an Englishman and amateur naturalist who visited New England twice in the seventeenth century, left us a list, "Of Such Plants as Have Sprung Up since the English Planted and Kept Cattle in New England," which included couch grass, dandelion, shepherd's purse, groundsel, sow thistle, and chickweeds. One of these, a plantain (*Plantago major*), was named "Englishman's Foot" by the Amerindians of New England and Virginia who believed that it would grow only where the English "have trodden, and was never known before the English came into this country." Thus, as they intentionally sowed Old World crop seeds, the European settlers were unintentionally contaminating American fields with weed seed.

[5] More importantly, they were stripping and burning forests, exposing the native minor flora to direct sunlight, and the hooves and teeth of Old World livestock. The native flora could not tolerate the stress. The imported weeds could, because they had lived with large numbers of grazing animals for thousands of years. Cattle and horses were brought ashore in the early 1600s and found hospitable climate and terrain in North America. Horses arrived in Virginia as early as 1620 and in Massachusetts in 1629. Many

wandered free with little more evidence of their connection to humanity than collars with a hook at the bottom to catch on fences as they tried to leap over them to get at crops. Fences were not for keeping livestock in, but for keeping livestock out.

[6] Native American resistance to the Europeans was ineffective. Indigenous peoples suffered from white brutality, alcoholism, the killing and driving off of game, and the expropriation of farmland, but all these together are insufficient to explain the degree of their defeat. The crucial factor was not people, plants, or animals, but germs. The history of the United States begins with Virginia and Massachusetts, and their histories begin with epidemics of unidentified diseases. At the time of the abortive Virginia colony at Roanoke in the 1580s the nearby Amerindians “began to die quickly. The disease was so strange that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it...”¹ When the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620, they did so in a village and on a coast nearly cleared of Amerindians by a recent epidemic.

[7] Thousands had “died in a great plague not long since; and pity it was and is to see so many goodly fields, and so well seated, without man to dress and manure the same.”² Smallpox was the worst and the most spectacular of the infectious diseases mowing down the Native Americans. The first recorded pandemic of that disease in British North America detonated among the Algonquin of Massachusetts in the early 1630s: William Bradford of Plymouth Plantation wrote that the victims “fell down so generally of this disease as they were in the end not able to help one another, no not to make a fire nor fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead.”

[8] The missionaries and the traders who ventured into the American interior told the same appalling story about smallpox and the indigenes. In 1738 alone the epidemic destroyed half the Cherokee; in 1759 nearly half the Catawbas; in the first years of the next century two-thirds of the Omahas and perhaps half the entire population between the Missouri River and New Mexico; in 1837-38 nearly every last one of the Mandans and perhaps half the people of the high plains.

[9] European explorers encountered distinctively American illnesses such as Chagas Disease, but these did not have much effect on Old World populations. Venereal syphilis has also been called American, but that accusation is far from proven. Even if we add all the Old World deaths blamed on American diseases together, including those ascribed to syphilis, the total is insignificant compared to Native American losses to smallpox alone.

[10]The export of America’s native animals has not revolutionized Old World agriculture or ecosystems as the introduction of European animals to the New World did. America’s grey squirrels and muskrats and a few others have established themselves east of the Atlantic and west of the Pacific, but that has not made much of a difference. Some of America’s domesticated animals are raised in the Old World, but turkeys have not displaced chickens and geese, and guinea pigs have proved useful in laboratories, but have not usurped rabbits in the butcher shops.

[11] The New World's great contribution to the Old is in crop plants. Maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, various squashes, chiles, and manioc have become essentials in the diets of hundreds of millions of Europeans, Africans, and Asians. Their influence on Old World peoples, like that of wheat and rice on New World peoples, goes far to explain the global population explosion of the past three centuries. The Columbian Exchange has been an indispensable factor in that demographic explosion.

[12] All this had nothing to do with superiority or inferiority of biosystems in any absolute sense. It has to do with environmental contrasts. Amerindians were accustomed to living in one particular kind of environment, Europeans and Africans in another. When the Old World peoples came to America, they brought with them all their plants, animals, and germs, creating a kind of environment to which they were already adapted, and so they increased in number. Amerindians had not adapted to European germs, and so initially their numbers plunged. That decline has reversed in our time as Amerindian populations have adapted to the Old World's environmental influence, but the demographic triumph of the invaders, which was the most spectacular feature of the Old World's invasion of the New, still stands.

¹ Quinn, David B., Ed. *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590: Documents to Illustrate the English Voyages to North America*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1955, 378.

² Winslow, Edward, Morton, Nathaniel, Bradford, William, and Prince, Thomas. *New England's Memorial*. Cambridge: Allan and Farnham, 1855, 362.

Task #5 Document Analysis The document-based question in the Advanced Placement/CHS United States History examinations assesses your ability to analyze historical documents and to write a coherent essay based on the provided sources.

Analysis of primary sources differs from description in that when one describes a source, one provides only a summary of its content; when one analyzes a source, one thinks critically about not only the content of a source but also who the author and presumed audience of the source were, why a source was produced, and what factors influenced the production of that source. All of these factors contribute to the usefulness of the source for a historian in answering particular historical questions.

In order to prepare you for the rigors of college level history and become better historical thinkers and writers you will be practicing document analysis as homework assignment and in-class timed assessments.

How do I earn extended analysis points on my essay?

For each document you analyze, being able to identify each of the following components will prepare you for earning the **extended document analysis** points on the redesigned DBQ. Remember to earn 1 point you need to **EXPLAIN** the significance of author's POV, context, audience, and/or purpose for *at least* **FOUR** documents.

1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

- a. When and where was the source produced?
- b. What contemporaneous (same time period) event might have affected the author's viewpoint and/or message?
- c. How does the context affect the reliability of a source?

2. Intended AUDIENCE:

- a. Who was the source created for?
- b. How might the audience have affected the content of the source?
- c. How might the audience have affected the reliability of the source?

3. POINT OF VIEW:

- a. What was the author's point of view?
- b. Does the author's point of view undermine the explicit purpose of the source?
- c. How can you tell, if you can tell, what other beliefs the author might hold?

4. PURPOSE:

- a. Why did the author create the source?
- b. Why was the document created at this time?
- c. Why has it survived to the present?
- d. How does its purpose affect its reliability or usefulness?

APUSH Document Analysis #1

European Exploration and Colonization

Historical Context: Several billion years ago, that whirling speck of dust known as the earth, fifth in size among the planets, came into being. About six thousand years ago only a minute ago in geological time—recorded history of the Western world began. Certain peoples of the Middle East, developing a primitive culture, gradually emerged from the haze of the past. Five hundred years ago—only a few seconds in the past, figuratively speaking—European explorers stumbled on the American continents. This dramatic accident forever altered the future of bot. The accepted, though not only, theory is that the first arrivals walked across a frozen land bridge for Asia. Their progeny quickly adapted to the surroundings and blossomed into the many different native tribes, including our own mighty Caloosa. Christopher Columbus' arrival in 1492 changed everything. The transition of goods, food, ideas, and diseases is called the Columbian Exchange. The natives had no resistance to the European diseases and died by the thousands. The Spanish quickly claimed large parts of the New World. The original colonists may have fled poverty or religious persecution in the Old World, but they continued to view themselves as Europeans, and as subjects of the English king. They regarded America as but the western rim of a transatlantic European world.

Yet life in the New World made the colonists different from their European cousins, and eventually, during the American Revolution, the Americans came to embrace a vision of their country as an independent nation. How did this epochal transformation come about? How did the colonists overcome the conflicts that divided them, unite against Britain, and declare themselves at great cost to be an "American" people? They had much in common to begin with. Most were English speaking.

Most came determined to create an agricultural society modeled on English customs. Conditions in the New World deepened their common bonds. Most learned to live lives unfettered by the tyrannies of royal authority, official religion, and social hierarchies that they had left behind. They grew to cherish ideals that became synonymous with American life—reverence for individual liberty, self-government, religious tolerance, and economic opportunity. They also commonly displayed a willingness to subjugate outsiders—first Indians, who were nearly annihilated through war and disease, and then Africans, who were brought in chains to serve as slave labor, especially on the tobacco, rice, and indigo plantations of the southern colonies. But if the settlement experience gave people a common stock of values, both good and bad, it also divided them.

The Age of Exploration was a time period that brought two previously isolated worlds together. European explorers caused great and lasting changes for both the Old and the New Worlds. Most would agree that European exploration of the Americas had both beneficial and harmful effects.

Prompt: Analyze the changes in the political structure and social fabric in Western Hemisphere in the 15th and 16th centuries triggered by the arrival of Spanish explorers.

Document 1

Source: Wikicommons, Tenochtitlan Mexica city-state, founded on June 20, 1325



Document 2

Source: Columbus reports on his first voyage, 1493

The inhabitants . . . are all, as I said before, unprovided with any sort of iron, and they are destitute of arms, which are entirely unknown to them, and for which they are not adapted; not on account of any bodily deformity, for they are well made, but because they are timid and full of terror. . . . But when they see that they are safe, and all fear is banished, they are very guileless and honest, and very liberal of all they have. No one refuses the asker anything that he possesses; on the contrary they themselves invite us to ask for it. They manifest the greatest affection towards all of us, exchanging valuable things for trifles, content with the very least thing or nothing at all. . . . I gave them many beautiful and pleasing things, which I had brought with me, for no return whatever, in order to win their affection, and that they might become Christians and inclined to love our King and Queen and Princes and all the people of Spain; and that they might be eager to search for and gather and give to us what they abound in and we greatly need.

Document 3

Source: Alfred W. Crosby Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, Greenwood Publishing (adapted)

It all began in Española [Hispaniola] with sugar, which was already a profitable plantation crop in the Canaries and Portugal's Atlantic islands in the fifteenth century. Columbus himself had shipped sugar from Madeira to Genoa in 1478, and the mother of his first wife owned a sugar estate on that island. He brought sugar cane with him to Española in 1493, and the cane grew well in American soil. But the growth of the sugar industry was painfully slow until Charles V intervened, ordering that sugar masters and mill technicians be recruited from the Canaries, and authorizing loans to build sugar mills on Española. There were thirty-four mills on the island by the late 1530s and sugar was one of the two staples of the island's economy (the other being cattle ranching) until the latter part of the sixteenth century....

Document 4

Source: Montezuma was the leader of the Aztec Empire when Cortez appeared, 1519



Document 5

Source: Guide to the Essentials of World History, Prentice Hall

... Growing sugar cane became a large business. At first, Native Americans were forced to work on sugar plantations, large estates run by an owner or overseer. They were treated cruelly, and many died. The Spanish then brought slaves from Africa to do the work. A new social structure developed. People born in Spain made up the highest social class. Those of European descent born in the colonies were next. People of mixed European and Indian or African descent were in the middle. Native Americans and people of African descent were in the lowest classes....

Document 6

Source: Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda Belittles the Indians (1547)

The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference between savage and cruel races and the most merciful, between the most intemperate and the moderate and temperate and, I might even say, between apes and men....

Compare, then, these gifts of prudence, talent, magnanimity, temperance, humanity, and religion with those possessed by these half-men, in whom you will barely find the vestiges of humanity, who not only do not possess any learning at all, but are not even literate or in possession of any monument to their history except for some obscure and vague reminiscences of several things put down in various paintings; nor do they have written laws, but barbarian institutions and customs.

Document 7

Source: Bartolomé de Las Casas Defends the Indians (1552)

They [Native Americans] are not ignorant, inhuman, or bestial. Rather, long before they had heard the word Spaniard they had properly organized states, wisely ordered by excellent laws, religion, and custom. They cultivated friendship and, bound together in common fellowship, lived in populous cities in which they wisely administered the affairs of both peace and war justly and equitably, truly governed by laws that at very many points surpass ours, and could have won the admiration of the sages of Athens....

The Indians will embrace the teaching of the gospel, as I well know, for they are not stupid or barbarous but have a native sincerity and are simple, moderate, and meek, and, finally, such that I do not know whether there is any people readier to receive the gospel. Once they have embraced it, it is marvelous with what piety, eagerness, faith, and charity they obey Christ's precepts and venerate the sacraments. For they are docile and clever, and in their diligence and gifts of nature, they excel most peoples of the known world.