



## LESSON 1.2.3 | WATCH | Crash Course US History #1 The Black Legend, Natives, and Spaniards

### PURPOSE

In this video, you learn about those inhabitants of North America prior to European contact. Who were those people, how many were there, how did they arrive in North America? What were their civilizations like? This video examines the complexity and diversity of native inhabitants while also looking closely at their relationship with Europeans once they arrived.

### LINK

- [Crash Course US History #1 The Black Legend, Natives, and Spaniards](#)

Watch the video on your own time, either at home, on your phone, or in the library.

### PREVIEW

In which John Green kicks off Crash Course US History! Why, you may ask, are we covering US History, and not more World History, or the history of some other country, or the very specific history of your home region? Well, the reasons are many. But, like it or not, the United States has probably meddled in your country to some degree in the last 236 years or so, and that means US History is relevant all over the world. In episode 1, John talks about the Native Americans who lived in what is now the US prior to European contact. This is a history class, not archaeology, so we're mainly going to cover written history. That means we start with the first sustained European settlement in North America, and that means the Spanish. The Spanish have a long history with the natives of the Americas, and not all of it was positive. The Spanish were definitely not peaceful colonizers, but what colonizers

are peaceful? Colonization pretty much always results in an antagonistic relationship with the locals. John teaches you about early Spanish explorers, settlements, and what happened when they didn't get along with the indigenous people. The story of their rocky relations has been called the Black Legend. Which is not a positive legend.

### PROCESS

As with all of the videos in the course, watch the video before class. Remember that John speaks quickly and you may benefit from having the captions turned on. If you missed something, have your teacher pause or rewind the video. As you watch the video, consider what you learned in previous activities about pre-European contact in North America. Were those peoples primitive? And what does primitive mean? Who writes history and tells the stories that tend to develop into mythology?



## LESSON 1.2.3 | WATCH | Key Ideas – Factual

Think about the following questions as you watch the video.

1. What two generalizations can be made about North America at the time of European “discovery”?
2. Approximately how many people lived within present US borders when Europeans arrived?
3. Who were the first Europeans to explore North America and what were they looking for?
4. How did the Spanish and southwestern natives clash?
5. What is encomienda?
6. What is the Black Legend and what is the trouble with its use?



## LESSON 1.2.3 | WATCH | Conceptual Thinking

Answer the following question to make connections across different concepts and think more critically about the information presented in the video.

1. Why is it problematic to use the term “primitive” when describing a group of people or a civilization, particularly one that existed for millennia prior to “discovery”?