

## PERIOD 1: 1491–1607

The content for APUSH is divided into 9 periods. The outline below contains the required course content for Period 1. The Thematic Learning Objectives (historical themes) are included as well. You should be confident in answering these questions with substantial historical evidence by the end of the unit. All questions on your assessments will measure understanding of both content and themes. Highlighted items emphasize some of the important people/places/things that you are likely to be asked directly about on the AP exam. All content in this outline is potential material on any assessment; however the illustrative examples will not explicitly appear on the AP exam (although you may see them on class assessments).

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

**Key Concept 1.1** Before the arrival of Europeans, native populations in **North America** developed a wide variety of social, political, and economic structures based in part on interactions with the environment and each other.

- I. As settlers migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed quite different and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments. **(PEO-1) (ENV-1) (ENV-2)**
  - A. The spread of **maize** cultivation from **present-day Mexico** northward into the **American Southwest** and beyond supported economic development and social diversification among societies in these areas; a mix of foraging and hunting did the same for societies in the **Northwest** and areas of **California**.  
*Illustrative Examples:*
    - Pueblo, Chinook
  - B. Societies responded to the lack of natural resources in the **Great Basin** and the **western Great Plains** by developing largely mobile lifestyles.
  - C. In the **Northeast** and along the **Atlantic Seaboard** some societies developed a mixed agricultural and hunter-gatherer economy that favored the development of permanent villages.  
*Illustrative Examples:*
    - Iroquois, Algonquian

### THEMES/Learning Objectives

#### **(PEO-1) Peopling:**

*Explain how and why people moved within the Americas before contact.*

#### **(ENV-1) Environment and Geography:**

*Explain how the introduction of new plants, animals, and technologies altered the natural environment of North America and affected interactions among various groups.*

#### **(ENV-2) Environment and Geography:**

*Explain how the natural environment contributed to the development of distinct regional group identities, institutions, and conflicts in the pre-contact.*

**Key Concept 1.2:** European overseas expansion resulted in the **Columbian Exchange**, a series of interactions and adaptations among societies across the **Atlantic**.

- I. The arrival of Europeans in the **Western Hemisphere** in the 15th and 16th centuries triggered extensive demographic and social changes on both sides of the **Atlantic**.  
(PEO-4) (PEO-5) (ENV-1) (WXT-1) (WXT-4) (WOR-1)
- A. **Spanish and Portuguese exploration** and conquest of the Americas led to widespread deadly epidemics, the emergence of racially mixed populations, and a **caste system** defined by an intermixture among Spanish settlers, Africans, and Native Americans.  
*Illustrative Examples:*
- smallpox, Mestizo, Zambo
- B. **Spanish and Portuguese traders** reached West Africa and partnered with some African groups to exploit local resources and recruit slave labor for the Americas.
- C. The introduction of new crops and livestock by the Spanish had far-reaching effects on native **settlement patterns**, as well as on economic, social, and political development in the Western Hemisphere.  
*Illustrative Examples:*
- horses, cows
- D. In the economies of the Spanish colonies, Indian labor, used in the **encomienda system** to support plantation-based agriculture and extract precious metals and other resources, was gradually replaced by **African slavery**.  
*Illustrative Examples:*
- sugar, silver

### THEMES/Learning Objectives

#### (PEO-4) Peopling

*Analyze the effects that migration, disease, and warfare had on the American Indian population after contact with Europeans.*

#### (PEO-5) Peopling

*Explain how free and forced migration to and within different parts of North America caused regional development, cultural diversity and blending.*

#### (ENV-1) Environment and Geography:

*Explain how the introduction of new plants, animals, and technologies altered the natural environment of North America and affected interactions among various groups.*

#### (WXT-1) Work, Exchange, Technology (aka... economics):

*Explain how patterns of exchanging commodities, peoples, diseases, and ideas around the Atlantic World developed after European contact.*

#### (WXT-4) Work, Exchange, Technology (aka... economics):

*Explain the development of labor systems such as slavery, indentured servitude, free labor, and sharecropping in the colonial period.*

#### (WOR-1) American in the World:

*Explain how imperial competition and the exchange of commodities across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean influenced the origins and patterns of development of North American societies in the colonial period.*

- II. **European expansion** into the Western Hemisphere caused intense social/religious, political, and economic competition in Europe and the promotion of empire building. **(ENV-1) (ENV-4) (WXT-1) (WOR-1) (POL-1)**
- A. **European exploration and conquest** were fueled by a desire for new sources of wealth, increased power and status, and converts to Christianity.
- B. New crops from the Americas stimulated European population growth, while new sources of mineral wealth facilitated the European shift from **feudalism** to **capitalism**.  
*Illustrative Examples:*  
• corn, potatoes
- C. Improvements in **technology** and more organized methods for conducting international trade helped drive changes to economies in Europe and the Americas.  
*Illustrative Examples:*  
• sextant, joint-stock companies

### THEMES/Learning Objectives

**(ENV-1) Environment and Geography:**

*Explain how the introduction of new plants, animals, and technologies altered the natural environment of North America and affected interactions among various groups.*

**(ENV-4) Environment and Geography:**

*Analyze how the search for economic resources affected social and political developments in the colonial period.*

**(WXT-1) Work, Exchange, Technology (aka... economics):**

*Explain how patterns of exchanging commodities, peoples, diseases, and ideas around the Atlantic World developed after European contact.*

**(WOR-1) American in the World:**

*Explain how imperial competition and the exchange of commodities across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean influenced the origins and patterns of development of North American societies in the colonial period.*

**(POL-1) Politics and Power:**

*Analyze the factors behind competition, cooperation, and conflict among different societies and social groups in North America during the colonial period.*

**Key Concept 1.3:** Contacts among American Indians, Africans, and Europeans challenged the worldviews of each group.

- I. European overseas expansion and sustained contacts with Africans and American Indians dramatically altered European views of social, political, and economic relationships among and between white and nonwhite peoples. **(CUL-1)**
  - A. With little experience dealing with people who were different from themselves, **Spanish and Portuguese explorers** poorly understood the native peoples they encountered in the Americas, leading to debates over how American Indians should be treated and how “civilized” these groups were compared to European standards.  
**Illustrative Examples:**
    - Juan de Sepúlveda, Bartolomé de Las Casas
  - B. Many Europeans developed a belief in **white superiority** to justify their subjugation of Africans and American Indians, using several different rationales.
- II. Native peoples and Africans in the Americas strove to maintain their political and cultural autonomy in the face of European challenges to their independence and core beliefs. **(ID-4) (POL-1) (CUL-1) (ENV-2)**
  - A. European attempts to change American Indian beliefs and worldviews on basic social issues such as religion, gender roles and the family, and the relationship of people with the natural environment led to American Indian resistance and conflict.  
**Illustrative Examples:**
    - Spanish mission system, Pueblo, Juan de Oñate
  - B. In spite of **slavery**, Africans’ cultural and linguistic adaptations to the Western Hemisphere resulted in varying degrees of cultural preservation and autonomy.  
**Illustrative Examples:**
    - maroon communities in Brazil and the Caribbean, mixing of Christianity and traditional African religions

#### THEMES/Learning Objectives

##### **(ID-4) American national identity and group identities in U.S. history**

*Explain how conceptions of group identity and autonomy emerged out of cultural interactions between colonizing groups, Africans, and American Indians in the colonial era*

##### **(POL-1) Politics and Power:**

*Analyze the factors behind competition, cooperation, and conflict among different societies and social groups in North America during the colonial period.*

##### **(CUL-1) Culture (aka Ideas, Beliefs, and Customs)**

*Compare the cultural values and attitudes of different European, African American, and native peoples in the colonial period and explain how contact affected intergroup relationships and conflicts*

##### **(ENV-2) Environment and Geography:**

*Explain how the natural environment contributed to the development of distinct regional group identities, institutions, and conflicts in the pre-contact.*