

CATEGORY: CUBA AND THE CARIBBEAN

CONCEPTS: INTERDEPENDENCY, Flora and Fauna, Colonialism, Agriculture

ACTIVITY: MURAL ON "POST-COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE"

OBJECTIVES: To illustrate the biological and ecological exchanges that began taking place as soon as Columbus made the Americas known to Europe. The long period of independent development in the Americas had, of course, led to the development of plants and animals which were unique. Upon the arrival of the Spaniards, however, commerce quickly led to an exchange of products which gave rise to new, interdependent material cultures. This process continues up to the present so that today all but a few isolated human groups include in their life styles major imports from other world areas. This project will aid in an understanding of how Latin America began to affect world culture.

MATERIALS: Mural or large cardboard background or world map
Magazine pictures
Colored yarn or paint and brushes
Colored paper
Rulers, scissors, staples, pins or glue

PROCEDURE: Draw or paint a mural-sized map showing the Americas and Europe with the Atlantic Ocean in the center. Paste or draw pictures of plant and animal products native to the Americas and Europe, using a different colored paper for each area. Make two cards for each product. Place one card on the map where the product was found in 1492. Using matching colored lines or yarn indicate the routes of transfer and place the second card at the approximate site of its new home. The project can be expanded to cover Africa and Asia and/or to indicate more recent transfers.

HELPFUL HINTS: Examples of products to be used:

Latin America to Europe

pumpkins
beans (lima, kidney, string, etc.)
potatoes
maize
tobacco
chocolate
guinea pigs
turkeys
rubber
peanuts
avocados
pineapples
tomatoes
chiggers

Europe to Latin America

wheat
melons
onions
grapes (wine)
sugarcane
apples
lettuce
bananas
dandelions, daisies
horses
pigs
cattle
sheep
goats
measles

RESOURCES:

Crosby, The Colombian Exchange, 1973



Chief World Areas of Origin
of Cultivated Plants

LEVEL: MIDDLE GRADES

Source: Gibbs, Virginia G. *Latin America: Curriculum Materials for the Middle Grades*. Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. 1985. 1989.