



LOC TPS AP World History
Comparing European Maps from the 16th century
9-12 Grades
Period 4: 1450-1750

This activity is sponsored in part by the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Eastern Region Program, coordinated by Waynesburg University.

45 – 60 minutes

Description of activity: Examine maps for accuracy and technical expertise, analyze point of view. Compare two world maps and two maps of the New World.

Activity Goals

Focus Question: Do maps have a point of view? What can they tell us about the interests and the knowledge of those who produced them?

Context: This activity fits in a study of the Age of Discovery/ first colonial period.

Objectives: Identify global interests and geographic knowledge of European nations in the 16th century.

Assessment: Students will examine the sources, answer analysis questions, and write comparative essays for both pairs of maps.

Virginia SOLs

STANDARD WHII.1a, b, c, d, e, f

The student will improve skills in historical research and geographical analysis by

- a) identifying, analyzing, and interpreting primary and secondary sources to make generalizations about events and life in world history since 1500 A.D. (C.E.);
- b) using maps, globes, artifacts, and pictures to analyze the physical and cultural landscapes of the world and to interpret the past since 1500 A.D. (C.E.);
- c) identifying geographic features important to the study of world history since 1500 A.D. (C.E.);
- d) identifying and comparing political boundaries with the locations of civilizations, empires, and kingdoms from 1500 A.D. (C.E.) to the present;
- e) analyzing trends in human migration and cultural interaction from 1500 A.D. (C.E.) to the present;
- f) analyzing the impact of economic forces, including taxation, government spending, trade, resources, and monetary systems, on events from 1500 A.D. (C.E.)

STANDARD WHII.4a

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the impact of the European Age of Discovery and expansion into the Americas, Africa, and Asia by

- a) explaining the roles and economic motivations of explorers and conquistadors.

STANDARD WHII.4c



The student will demonstrate knowledge of the impact of the European Age of Discovery and expansion into the Americas, Africa, and Asia by
c) explaining migration, settlement patterns, cultural diffusion, and social classes in the colonized areas.

AP World History

4.1.II; 4.1.III; 4.3.II; 4.3.III

Activity Details

Primary Sources: see below

Procedure: Students should pull up each map on the Library of Congress website and examine each map and its accompanying information carefully. Students should answer the questions for analysis as they go. Teachers may want to discuss each set of documents before having students complete the formative assessments.

What you will need before implementing: Ideally all students will have their own devices and internet access. If that is not possible, you will need color copies of every document and description information on the back as well as paper copies of the activity.



Group A - World Maps



Vniversale descrittione di tvtta la terra conoscivta fin qvi.

Forlani, Paolo.

Bertelli, Ferando.

Gastaldi, Giacomo, approximately 1500-approximately 1565.

Rosenwald, Lessing J. (Lessing Julius), 1891-1979.

[Published in Venezia] : F. Berteli, 1565.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/85690919/>

In what ways is this map accurate? In what ways is it inaccurate?

This article may provide a key hint.

Who created this map?

What seems to have been the main purpose of this map? Explain your reasoning.



Vera totius expeditionis nauticae : descriptio D. Franc. Draci ...
Hondius, Jodocus, 1563-1612.
Power, Robert H.
[Published in Amsterdam?] : I. Hondius, [ca. 1595]
<https://www.loc.gov/item/92680608/>

What was the purpose of this map?

What can it tell us about the European (English) understanding of geography in the late 1500s?

What limitations did geographers face at this time? What accounts for those issues?

What new areas were claimed for England (Anglia)?

What recently discovered new geographic feature did this map name after Queen Elizabeth?

Why might they have attempted this? Why do you think it was not successful?

Formative Assessment:

In a short essay, compare these two world maps.

Focus on purpose, author, context.

How were the interests of Italy and England different in this period? Explain the reasons for those differences.



Group B - Maps of the New World



Americae sive quattor partis nova et exactissima description

Diego Gutiérrez

engraved by Hieronymus Cock

Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection (Library of Congress)

[Published in Antwerp : s.n.], 1562.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/map49000970>

Read more about the history of this important map

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gutierrz.html>

Who created this map?

What details are included in South America? What would that indicate?

What details are included at sea? What would that indicate?

What inaccuracies are evident?

Is this a navigational map? How can you tell?

Explain the presence of the coats of arms on this map.

Identify conflict that is indicated by this map. Which nations are likely represented there?

Put the creation of this map into historical context.

What seems to have been the purpose of this map?



L'Amérique centr[ale]

Published ca. 1850

Traced from a ms. world map created for Henri II in 1542 as reproduced in Jomard's *Les monuments de la géographie* (plate XIX.1), 1842-1862

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2004626118/>

Can you account for the vantage point of this map?

When was the original produced?

What was going on at that time in terms of European exploration and claims in the New World?

What is shown here?

What is not shown?

What were the French most interested in at this time?

What seems to have been the purpose of this map?

In what ways is this map accurate?

Formative Assessment:

Compare these two maps.

Focus on purpose, author, context.

How were the interests of Spain and France different in this period? Explain the reasons for those differences.