

Global Trade in Agriculture

Crop Exchange

The “Old” and “New” Worlds collided when Columbus discovered the Americas and global trade began. This activity gives students a chance to barter those foods as the explorers did in those times.

Activity

Materials:

Crop cards from each continent (continent on one side, crop on the other)

Additional crop cards could be added: palm oil, bananas, pineapples, acai berries, etc.

North America	Sunflowers
North America	Corn (Mexico)
North America	Avocados
Central America	Peppers
Central America	Beans
Central America	Chocolate
South America	Potatoes
South America	Tomatoes
South America	Peanuts
Europe	Wheat
Europe	Beets
Europe	Onions
Europe	Cabbage
Europe	Apples
Europe	Peas
Europe	Carrots
Africa	Radishes
Africa	Watermelon
Africa	Coffee
Asia	Rice
Asia	Sugarcane
Asia	Mangoes

Procedure:

1. Distribute crop cards as students enter the room.
2. Group by continent. Discuss how the climate in that part of the world would allow for the various crops to grow. Research climate of the various continents and the regions where the crops originated.

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3. Write on the crop card the dishes or other foods that the crop is used to make (i.e. corn is used in cereal, sweeteners, tortilla chips, and animal feed). Collaborate with someone if needed.
4. Identify who represents each crop
5. Develop a list of crops that each continent would want.
6. Try to trade or barter for the crops desired.

Reflection:

1. Which continents are at a disadvantage? Why?
2. How might people have obtained the crops they wanted at the time of the explorers?
3. How have things changed?

This lesson was adapted from *COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE ACTIVITY Redefining Progress, 2005*