

## COLONIZATION DBQ (DOCUMENT-BASED-QUESTIONS)

**Historical Context:** Europeans had spent almost a thousand years for the most part locked into one area of the world. By the end of the fifteenth century they set out to explore in mass quantities areas further and further to the west. In the process of this exploration of the “New World” they encountered new people. These indigenous people had flourished in developing their own unique cultures separate from the European World. However, this “New World” would forever be changed by the invasion of Europeans into the every-day lives of the people in the Western Hemisphere.

**Directions:** The following question is based on the accompanying documents (1-8). As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author’s point of view. Be sure to:

1. Carefully read the document-based question.
2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to take brief notes. Answer the questions which follow each document.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a paragraph that directly answers the question with support from at least one of the documents.

**Question:** What was the impact of exploration and colonization on the native people?

### Document #1: Hernan Cortes Letter to Charles V

They have a custom, horrible, and abominable, and deserving punishment...Whenever they ask anything of their gods, in order for their request to be fulfilled, they take many boys, girls, men, and women, and in the presence of the statues of their gods they cut open their chests. While they are still alive they take out their hearts and entrails. Then they burn the organs, offering the smoke as a sacrifice to their gods...No year passes in which they do not kill and sacrifice 50 souls at each temple in their kingdom... I did everything I could to steer them away from their false gods and to draw them to our Lord God. Montezuma agreed that I probably knew best...He said that as long as I taught the Aztecs our religion they would follow my directions. Therefore, I removed the statues of the false gods, cleaned the temples, and taught the people our religion. The rest of the Aztecs did not accept the new religion that I was giving them. They did make sure, though, that they did not sacrifice any more humans while I was in the city...

1. Why does Cortes oppose the religious beliefs of the native people?
2. Why do you think the Aztecs would not change their religious beliefs?

### Document #2: Miguel Leon-Portilla *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*

[After the Spaniards fled Tenochtitlan after La Noche Triste, a great plague broke out here in Ten- ochtitlan.] It began to spread during [the month of October] and lasted for seventy days, striking everywhere in the city and killing a vast number of our people. Sores erupted on our faces, our breasts, our bellies; we were covered with agonizing sores from head to foot. The illness was so dreadful that no one could walk or move. The sick were so utterly helpless, they could only lie on their beds like corpses, unable to move their limbs or even their heads. They could not lie face down or roll from one side to the other. If they did move their bodies, they creamed with pain. A great many died from this plague and many others died of hunger. They could not get to search for food and everyone else was too sick to care for them, so they starved to death in their own beds. ... Their looks were ravaged, for wherever a sore broke out, it gouged an ugly pockmark in the skin. And a few of the survivors were left completely blind. The first cases were reported out- side of the city. By the time the danger was recognized, the plague was so well established that nothing could halt it and spread to all of the region around Lake Texcoco.

3. How did smallpox affect Tenochtitlan?
4. How did smallpox impact the culture of the natives?

### Document #3: Bernal Diaz *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*

Let us state how most of the Indian natives have successfully learned all the Spanish trades...There are gold and silversmiths...and carvers also do the most beautiful work with iron tools...Many sons of chieftains know how to read and write, and to compose books...Now they breed cattle of all sorts, and break in oxen, and plough the land, and sow wheat, and thresh harvest, and sell it, and make bread, and they have planted their lands with all the trees and fruits, such as apples and pears which they hold in higher regard than their native plants, which we have brought from Spain.

5. How did European conquest effect the native people?

### Document #4: "Indians in Latin America"

During the early 1500's, Spain established the encomienda system in Latin America. Under this system, the Spanish king granted colonists the right to collect payments from Indians living in certain areas of land. The Spanish landowners forced the Indians to farm the land or work in mines. Eventually, the colonists claimed to own the land. Thousands of Indians died from overwork and harsh treatment. Spanish threats to Indian ways of life were not limited to forcing them to work for the colonists' benefit. The Spaniards also weakened traditional tribal bonds by resettling individual members of tribes far apart so that they would have little contact with one another. In some cases, Indians were moved to specially designed villages where they would be forced to give up their customs so they could be taught Christianity and European customs and manners. During their rule in Latin America, the Spaniards also created a class structure based on race. In general, the Spaniards and their children were the highest class. Mestizos (people of Indian and Spanish descent) and mulattoes (people of African and Spanish ancestry) formed the next class. The lowest class was made up of African slaves and Indians.

6. Why did the Spanish break up families and native tribes?
7. What was the result of breaking up native tribes?

### Document #5: The Oral History of Chief Hatuey

As a witness of the atrocities of the Spanish conquistadors against the Taino Indians, Chief Hatuey rounded up his people and fled to another island. He was finally captured and sentenced to burn at the stake for having organized an uprising against the Spanish. A Spanish monk who was present on the day of the execution attempted to convert him to Christianity. The friar explained to the chief about conversion, baptism, and the Catholic concept of heaven and hell. He offered to baptize Chief Hatuey. The chief requested some time to think about the offer. After a few moments he gave his legendary response. Hatuey first asked the monk, "After being baptized, where does one go after death?" The monk responded, "To Heaven." The chief then asked, "And where do the Spanish go after death?" The monk replied, "If they are baptized, they will also go to heaven like all Christians." Then the chief bravely responded "If the Spaniards go to heaven, then I certainly do not want to go there. Do not baptize me, I would prefer to go to hell!"

8. What would lead Chief Hatuey to feel this way towards the Spanish?

### Document #6: Christopher Columbus Letter to Santangel

As for new blancas, for them they would give everything which they had, although it might be two or three castellanos' weight of gold or an arroba or two of spun cotton. They took even the pieces of the broken hoops of the wine barrels and, like savages, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it. I gave them a thousand handsome good things, which I had brought, in order that they might conceive affection for us and, more than that, might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service of your highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and strive to aid us and to give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us.

9. How does Columbus characterize the native people?