

## Assignment Discovery Lesson Plan Conquistadors: Francisco Pizarro

### Subject

World History

### Grade level

9-12

### Duration

Two or three class periods

### Objectives

Students will

- determine the reasons for Francisco Pizarro's success in vanquishing the Incas; and
- write a paper explaining their conclusions.

### Materials

- Computer with Internet access
- Paper and pencils
- Print materials on Francisco Pizarro

### Procedure

1. Hold a class discussion on some of the strategies Francisco Pizarro used to conquer the Inca. Ask students to share their first impressions of the Inca culture and of Pizarro's dealings with the Inca people.
2. Encourage students to assist in making a class list of factors that contributed to Pizarro's success—and to the downfall of the Inca Empire. Help students conclude these facts:
  - European diseases such as smallpox contributed significantly to diminishing the population of the Inca Empire.
  - Pizarro's cavalry had distinct advantages over Inca fighting techniques.
  - The Inca Empire experienced internal division.
3. Tell students they are going to research which of the three factors listed above played the greatest role in the conquest of the Inca Empire, or whether all three were of equal importance. Students will write a short paper explaining their answers. Students may work in small groups, pairs, or individually.
4. Students should use library materials and the Internet for their research. The following Web sites may be helpful:
  1. <http://www.fl.vt.edu/culture-civ/spanish/texts/spainlatinamerica/pizarro.html>
  2. [http://www.bruce.ruiz.net/PanamaHistory/francisco\\_pizarro.htm](http://www.bruce.ruiz.net/PanamaHistory/francisco_pizarro.htm)
  3. [http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/eurvoya/inca.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/inca.html)

5. After students have completed their research and written their papers, have them share their ideas with the class. What conclusions did most students reach about the reasons for Francisco Pizarro's successful conquest of the Inca in Peru?
6. If students have studied Hernán Cortés, ask them to compare Pizarro's treatment of the Inca with Cortés's treatment of the Aztec. Which conquistador showed more compassion to the native peoples he encountered in the New World?

### **Evaluation**

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

**3 points:** Students actively participated in class discussions; researched the factors that contributed to Pizarro's successful conquest of the Inca Empire carefully and thoroughly and wrote a well-organized, informative paper explaining their position; drew accurate conclusions from their research.

**2 points:** Students participated somewhat in class discussions; researched the factors that contributed to Pizarro's successful conquest of the Inca Empire somewhat carefully and thoughtfully and wrote a somewhat organized and informative paper explaining their position; drew adequate conclusions from their research.

**1 point:** Students did not participate in class discussions; had difficulty effectively researching the factors that contributed to Pizarro's successful conquest of the Inca Empire and wrote a poorly organized paper explaining their position; were unable to draw accurate conclusions from their research.

### **Vocabulary**

#### **Atahualpa**

**Definition:** The Inca emperor at the time of the Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire, in 1534

**Context:** Although the Inca raised 15,000,000 pesos of gold for the release of their ruler, Atahualpa, Pizarro and his men executed him anyway.

#### **conquistador**

**Definition:** The Spanish word for conqueror. The term generally refers to the first Europeans to enter a region of Latin America for the purpose of conquering the native peoples and settling in the area.

**Context:** Francisco Pizarro is considered one of the more ruthless conquistadors.

#### **Inca**

**Definition:** A South American Indian people who established one of the largest and wealthiest empires in the Americas. At its height, the empire extended more than 2,500 miles along the western coast of South America.

**Context:** Lack of unity in the Inca Empire made it possible for Pizarro to overtake the Inca army and conquer the empire.

#### **Francisco Pizarro**

**Definition:** The Spanish conquistador who vanquished the Inca Empire in 1534

**Context:** Francisco Pizarro was determined and ruthless, willing to do just about anything to defeat the Incas and conquer their empire.

### **Academic Standards**

*The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of the NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>.*

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Power, Authority, and Governance

### **Credit**

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