

Learning Guide



A Brief History of the American Southwest for Kids Episode 5: Colonization

We hope you enjoyed learning all about the Spanish colonial era of the American Southwest after the Pueblo Revolt. Extend your learning with this print-ready Learning Guide!



What's in this Learning Guide?

Get Set to Listen:

Check your knowledge before and after listening to the episode by determining if statements are TRUE or FALSE.

Vocabulary

Discussion Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.3

Writing Prompts and Extension Projects

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.7; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.8

Historical Map of the American Southwest

Acequias: Reading Passage, Comprehension Questions, & Lesson Resources

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.3; NCSS: Themes 1, 2, 3, & 6

Trade & Barter Game: Pueblo & Spanish Communities

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.2; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.5.MD.A.1; NCSS: Themes 1, 2, 3, & 6

Honoring Ancestors: Reflection Prompt

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2; NCSS: Themes 1, 2, & 4

Los Luceros: Project Ideas

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.9; NCSS: Themes 1-4

Additional Resources



The Children's Hour
kids public radio

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<https://www.childrenshour.org/southwest-american-history/>



Get Set to Listen

1. Before listening!

Read each statement and write TRUE or FALSE based on what you already know.



2. After listening!

Based on what the experts said in the episode, write TRUE or FALSE.



Before Listening	TRUE or FALSE?	After Listening
	1. Los Luceros is in southern New Mexico near the Mexico border.	
	2. When the Spanish came back, 12 years after they were pushed out in the Pueblo Revolt, they brought new, stronger weapons that the Native people didn't have.	
	3. When the Spanish returned, they were just as violent towards Puebloan people as they had been initially.	
	4. Trade and trade routes didn't exist in North America until Europeans colonized it.	
	5. The Spanish government allocated land to wealthy and/or well-connected Spaniards so long as other Spaniards hadn't already laid claim to that area.	
	6. The hacienda on Los Luceros, called La Soledad, is built above remnants of Puebloan farming structures.	
	7. The use of acequias and water rights helped foster cooperation between Native people and Spanish people.	
	8. European women came with the men to the Americas to help on their missions.	
	9. Churro sheep are native to North America and have always been used by Indigenous people.	



Get Set to Listen

Answer key

1. FALSE. It's actually a property of nearly 150 acres that's just north of Santa Fe.
2. TRUE
3. FALSE. This time, the Spanish were still antagonistic toward Native people but somewhat less so since their communities began to coexist.
4. FALSE. Native people had well-established trade routes for hundreds of years before Europeans first came to this continent.
5. TRUE. Although there were already Indigenous people on many parts of this land, the Spanish government felt it had the right to determine its ownership.
6. TRUE
7. TRUE. Acequias require people to work together to effectively coordinate how much water to use at different times throughout the year. So when Spanish, Indigenous, and white people began living in the same areas, they started having to work together on this.
8. FALSE. Women rarely came across the sea because their role at this time was to raise children and maintain households.
9. FALSE. In fact, Juan de Oñate brought a few over from Spain in the 1500s. Once here, their population exploded, and Native people began herding them and incorporating them into art.



Vocabulary

Listening for Words

1. Make a four-column chart and label the columns “I don’t know,” “I’ve seen or heard, but don’t know the meaning,” “I think I know the meaning,” and “I know the meaning.”
2. Write the vocabulary word in the column that describes how well you know the meaning of the word.
3. Listen to [the episode](#). Note how the speaker uses the words.

Matching Words with Definitions

1. Print and cut apart the word and definition cards.
2. Spread out the word cards so you can see them all. One by one, attach a definition card to each word card.

Writing with New Words

After working with the words and definitions, write a one-page essay or story that uses at least three of the words.

hacienda

A large estate used by Spanish colonizers to live on and oversee food and trade items being made.

acequia

A small waterway; a human-made gravity-powered irrigation ditch found throughout northern New Mexico; these earthen canals carry mountain snowmelt and rain to fields, orchards, and gardens.



Vocabulary

ruins

The remains of something destroyed.

regime

A form of government or administration; the time period when a specific government rules.

Pueblo land grant

Land that was officially given or recognized for use by a Pueblo community, often by the Spanish or later governments, to protect their homes and farming areas.

genízaros

A term used to identify Native Americans who were taken away from their tribes to work and assimilate into Spanish society, and their descendants who have “mixed blood”, meaning they have Indigenous ancestors as well as Spanish/European ancestors.



Discussion Questions

1. What role did agriculture and irrigation systems play in connecting Native and Spanish communities at Los Luceros?
2. How did gender and labor influence life at Los Luceros, especially for Indigenous and South American women?
3. Why was the introduction of Churro sheep so significant for the economy and culture of New Mexico?
4. What does the term “*genízaros*” mean, and how does it reflect the cultural diversity that emerged in New Mexico?
5. How do you think trade and multilingualism might have helped communities survive and adapt in the post-revolt Southwest?
6. In what ways can studying a single historic site, like Los Luceros, help us understand larger historical trends in the Southwest?

Group Discussion Strategies

Think Pair Share:

1. Individually, student writes down their answer to a question.
2. Students pair up and tell each other their answers.
3. Teacher calls for volunteers to share with the whole class their answer (and/or their partner's answer). Teacher notes key words/phrases on board.

Round Robin:

1. Teacher poses one question (written on top of a large page) to students, who are assembled into small groups of 3 or 4.
2. Students take turns brainstorming the answers. The recorder of the group writes down all answers.
3. The leader reads the group's ideas to the entire class. Teacher moderates.



Writing Prompts

Narrative Prompt

1. Imagine you are a member of a Pueblo family living near Los Luceros during the 1700s. Write a story about your daily life, including interactions with Spanish settlers, other Indigenous tribes, and the challenges of farm and household work.

Extension: Include a turning point in your story, such as the introduction of Churro sheep, the arrival of new Spanish leaders, or changes to the hacienda's architecture, and show how it affects your family and community.

Informative/Explanatory Prompt

2. Explain how Los Luceros shows a mix of Pueblo, Spanish, and later cultures. Talk about farming, trade, buildings, and how people lived together.

Extension: Draw a map or timeline showing how Los Luceros and the people there changed over time.

Opinion/Persuasive Prompt

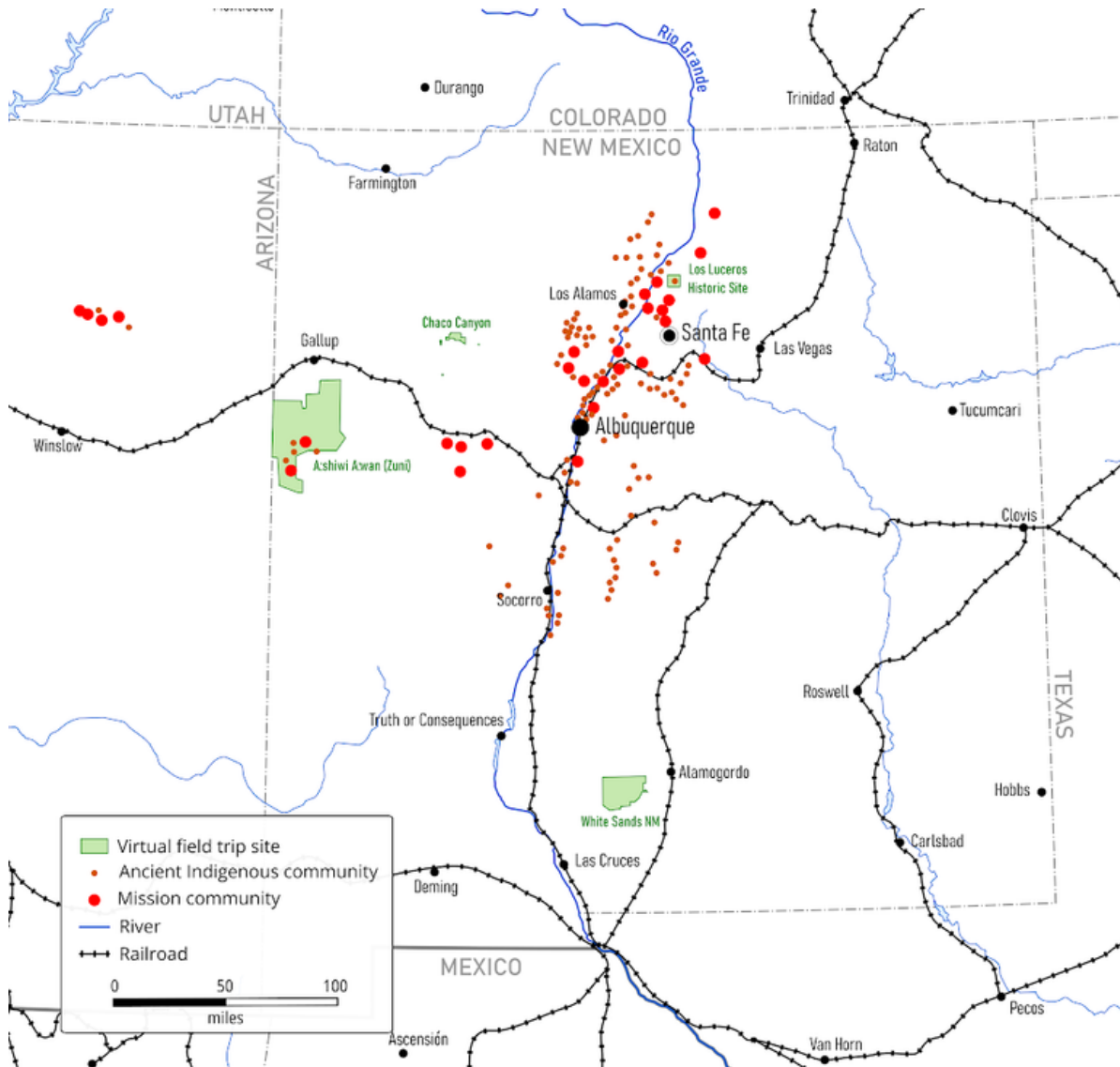
3. Do you think the mixing of cultures at Los Luceros was mostly good or mostly bad for the Pueblo people? Explain why using examples like farming, buildings, or traditions.

Extension: Compare Los Luceros to another place in New Mexico. Does that place make your opinion stronger or weaker?



Historical Map of the American Southwest

On this map, the places that we “visited” with our experts are shown in green. Each place was important in the history of the American Southwest. Have you ever been to any of these locations?



Along with the modern cities, you can also see where the many ancient communities existed, long before the Spanish colonizers arrived (shown as orange dots). How many can you count?

After the Spanish arrived, they built missions (shown as red dots). How many of these mission communities were located near the Rio Grande?

To learn the names and locations of the 19 modern Pueblo nations, you can study [this map](#). Can you label the Pueblo nations on this map?



Acequias

From Colony to Community: The Story of New Mexico's Acequias

The Spanish brought the **acequia** system—shared irrigation ditches—to New Mexico in the late 1500s as part of their colonial rule. These ditches were based on older Arabic ideas, but when the Spanish arrived, they changed the landscape to support their new towns and farms. Pueblo communities already had their own smart ways of moving water, but Spanish colonizers expanded and controlled these systems, often using Pueblo labor.

The word acequia comes from Arabic, and Spanish colonists carried this kind of irrigation to New Mexico. They added to Pueblo methods and built larger ditch systems that helped their settlements grow.

By 1700, hundreds of acequias were in use, with a community leader called a *mayordomo* in charge of sharing the water fairly—a system that still exists.

Today, acequias are an important part of life in New Mexico. They are protected by state law and show how communities work together to manage water, even though their beginnings are tied to a long and complicated history of Spanish colonialism and Pueblo traditions.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who brought the acequia system to New Mexico?
 - A. The Moors
 - B. The Spanish colonizers
 - C. The Pueblo people
 - D. American settlers
2. Why did the Spanish use and expand the irrigation systems in New Mexico?
 - A. To decorate their towns
 - B. To support their farms and settlements
 - C. To make waterways for boats
 - D. To create swimming areas
3. True or False: Pueblo communities already had irrigation systems before the Spanish arrived.
4. True or False: By 1700, only a few acequias existed in New Mexico.



Acequias

5. What is a *mayordomo*, and what job does this person have?

6. What does the history of acequias show about the mix of Pueblo traditions and Spanish colonial rule?

Watch

[Acequias video](#)

“More than a traditional system; it embodies a way of life deeply rooted in my culture and family.” - Ralph Vigil, Acequia Parciante

Engage

[El Agua Es Vida lesson plans](#) about Acequias in New Mexico from the Maxwell Museum (grades 3-8).

[Acequia Education: Youth Activity Print-Outs](#)

Acequias have been a part of New Mexico’s culture and landscape since the Spanish introduced them in the 1500s. Explore acequias today with these activities.

Read More

[Albuquerque’s Amazing Acequias](#)

Learn about the history and modern management of acequias in New Mexico.

[Climate Change Puts New Mexico’s Ancient Acequias to the Test](#)

Learn about how communal irrigation systems in New Mexico have sustained communities, culture, and birdlife for centuries--and about how they are threatened.



Trade & Barter Game

Pueblo & Spanish Communities

Objective

Students will explore trade, resource management, and cultural interaction between Pueblo and Spanish communities after the Pueblo Revolt.

Listen

to [The Children's Hour "A Brief History of the American Southwest, episode 5: Colonization"](#) (segment 9:15-11:16), describing the goods and skills trade and exchange between the Spanish and Pueblos.

Preparation

- Print trade item tokens, student trade record sheets, community labels, and challenge cards.
- Set up a “market area” where groups can trade. Label with “Spanish Hacienda” or “Pueblo Village” signs.
- Divide students into small groups: half represent Pueblo communities, half Spanish communities.
- Give each group their starting trade items (5-7 items, can be multiples of items).
- Place challenge tokens in a bag.

Introduction

“Today, we are going to step back in time to the Southwest after the Pueblo Revolt. Pueblo and Spanish communities traded goods to survive and thrive. You will be negotiating trades, managing resources, and working together—just like they did hundreds of years ago.”

Explain the starting resources for each group.

Explain the rules:

You can trade with anyone in the market area.

You can trade multiple items for one or negotiate deals over several rounds.

Record each trade if desired.

Gameplay (15–20 minutes)

Round 1: Normal trading—allow students to negotiate freely.

Round 2: Introduce challenges and draw one from the bag:

Drought: Reduce each group’s food items by half.

Material shortage: Only half the clay or textiles are available.

Language barrier: Groups must trade using gestures or drawings for one round.

Reflection

- *Which trades helped your community the most?*
- *How did challenges affect your trading strategy?*
- *How did your group work together to overcome obstacles?*
- *What does this activity teach about cultural exchange and adaptation?*



Trade & Barter Game

Pueblo & Spanish Communities

Your Role

You are part of a **Pueblo** or **Spanish** community (*circle which one your group is*).
Your goal is to survive, trade goods, and cooperate with other groups.

Rules

1. Trade with other groups freely.
2. You may trade multiple items for one, or negotiate deals over several rounds.
3. Keep track of your trades.
4. Follow teacher instructions during challenge rounds.

Starting Items

Trade Record Sheet	
Trade items we gave	Trade items we received

Reflection Questions

1. What trades helped your community the most?
2. How did you overcome challenges?
3. What did you learn about collaboration and cultural exchange?



Trade & Barter Game

Printable Materials: Trade Item Tokens

Pueblo Items



Spanish Items





Trade & Barter Game

Printable Materials: Challenge Tokens



Drought

Food is limited—
discard half of
your food cards



**Material
Shortage**

Only half of your
clay, textiles, or
tools are available



Drought

Food is limited—
discard half of
your food cards



**Material
Shortage**

Only half of your
clay, textiles, or
tools are available



**Language
Barrier**

You cannot speak
this round—use
gestures or
drawings only



**Language
Barrier**

You cannot speak
this round—use
gestures or
drawings only



**Material
Shortage**

Only half of your
clay, textiles, or
tools are available



Drought

Food is limited—
discard half of
your food cards



**Language
Barrier**

You cannot speak
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Trade & Barter Game

Printable Materials: Community Label

Spanish
Hacien da



Trade & Barter Game

Printable Materials: Community Label

Pueblo
Village



What traditions do you have to honor your ancestors?



Los Luceros

Los Luceros Hacienda was built in 1703 by Sebastian Martin-Serrano on land first inhabited by the Tewa people. This Spanish hacienda was constructed on the foundation of an Indigenous field house and sits on a large 51,000-acre land grant.

Build a Model Hacienda

- Use cardboard, clay, popsicle sticks, or other craft materials to construct a miniature version of Los Luceros. Include the main house, orchards, irrigation canals (acequias), and animal pens.

Compare & Contrast

the Greek Revival style of Luceros Hacienda and Pueblo architecture.

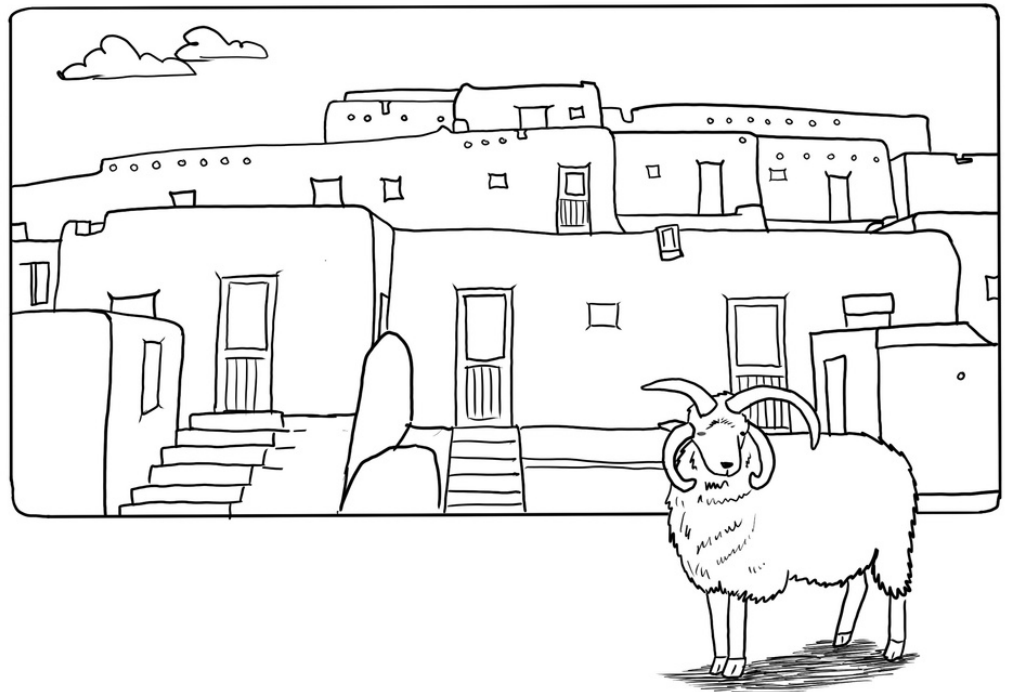
- Why do you think Sebastian Martin-Serrano chose to build his hacienda in the Greek Revival style?



Historical Cooking Activity

- Explore foods grown at Los Luceros like corn, wheat, or vegetables from the orchard. Make a simple recipe that Pueblo or Spanish settlers might have eaten.

Extension: Compare ingredients and techniques, discussing how cultures influenced each other's diets.





Additional Resources

[Indigenous New Mexico—Sharing the Wonders of Our World! \(WOW\)](#)

A curriculum packet with lessons about the three land-based tribal groups in New Mexico (Apache, Navajo, and Pueblo), which include 24 distinctive tribal communities. Know how Indigenous People of New Mexico have worked to build, maintain, and sustain their way of life and their distinctive tribal communities.

[Pueblo Pottery Coloring Book](#)

Check out this coloring book to understand more about Puebloan people and their cultures.

[El Agua Es Vida lesson plans](#) about Acequias in New Mexico from the Maxwell Museum (grades 3-8).

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Videos

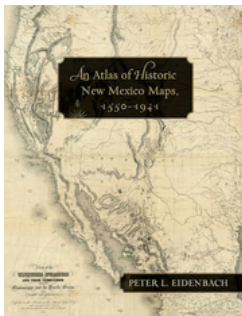
[Los Luceros Historic Site](#)

Watch a video introducing the rich history of Los Luceros Historic Site.

[Acequias video](#)

"More than a traditional system; it embodies a way of life deeply rooted in my culture and family." - Ralph Vigil, Acequia Parciante

Books



An Atlas of Historic New Mexico Maps, 1550-1941

by Peter L. Eidenbach

A collection of historic maps that reveal New Mexico's rich, often overlooked cartographic history and offer a window into how past inhabitants viewed its landscape.