Sugar and Resistance

Trace the consequences of colonization on Hispaniola

WH.4.4 "Explain the consequences of and resistance to the conquests and colonization as a result of the worldwide voyages of exploration, including the transatlantic slave trade, Columbian Exchange..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two causes of colonial change, circle two consequences for people, and number two acts of resistance to trace what changed and who pushed back.

What Sugar Changed on Hispaniola

1. On Hispaniola, an island in the Caribbean, Spanish settlers planted sugarcane after Columbus's 1492 voyage brought Europeans to the Americas. Their ships also brought cattle, which ate crops and changed land use. Crops moved in the other direction, too: maize from the Americas spread to Europe and Africa. These transfers were part of the Columbian Exchange, the movement of plants, animals, and diseases across the Atlantic. For the Taíno, the island's Indigenous people, the consequences were not simply new foods. Smallpox and other diseases spread among people with no previous exposure, while warfare and forced labor added to a severe population decline.

2. Spanish colonists demanded Taíno labor through the encomienda system, which gave colonists the right to demand Indigenous labor and tribute. Some Taíno fled, fought, or kept their traditions alive despite Spanish pressure. Beginning in 1519, a Taíno leader named Enriquillo led a long rebellion in Hispaniola's mountains. His fighters used the terrain to resist Spanish attacks; in 1533, he reached a peace agreement with Spanish authorities. Resistance did not undo the conquest, but it challenged colonial control. As disease and exploitation devastated Indigenous communities, colonists increasingly turned to the forced labor of enslaved Africans on sugar plantations.

3. European demand for sugar helped make the Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans profitable for merchants and plantation owners. Captured Africans were carried across the ocean under brutal conditions and forced to work without freedom. Some resisted by escaping or refusing orders; others protected languages and beliefs within their communities. Sugar and maize crossed the Atlantic as goods, but people did not cross on equal terms. Spanish settlers claimed land and profits, while Taíno communities lost people and access to land. Enslaved Africans survived and built new communities, yet they faced violence and laws that treated them as property.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did movements in opposite directions during the Columbian Exchange have different effects? Use one item brought to Hispaniola and one crop that left the Americas.

2. How did the decline of Indigenous communities and European demand for sugar help expand the transatlantic slave trade?

3. How did Enriquillo resist Spanish rule, and what was one result of his resistance?

4. Why would it be misleading to say everyone who crossed the Atlantic did so for the same reason? Compare Spanish settlers and enslaved Africans.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence museum label for a bag of sugar shipped from Hispaniola in the 1500s. Trace the sugar back to European demand, explain one consequence each for Taíno people and enslaved Africans, and show how someone resisted colonial rule using at least three facts from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Sugar and Resistance

HIGH SCHOOL · WH.4.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two causes of colonial change, circle two consequences for people, and number two acts of resistance to trace what changed and who pushed back. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did movements in opposite directions during the Columbian Exchange have different effects? Use one item brought to Hispaniola and one crop that left the Americas.	**Cattle brought to Hispaniola ate crops and changed land use, while maize from the Americas spread to Europe and Africa.**
2	How did the decline of Indigenous communities and European demand for sugar help expand the transatlantic slave trade?	**As disease and exploitation devastated Indigenous communities, colonists increasingly forced enslaved Africans to work on sugar plantations. European demand for sugar made that trade profitable.**
3	How did Enriquillo resist Spanish rule, and what was one result of his resistance?	**He led fighters who used Hispaniola's mountains to resist Spanish attacks. He reached a peace agreement with Spanish authorities in 1533.**
4	Why would it be misleading to say everyone who crossed the Atlantic did so for the same reason? Compare Spanish settlers and enslaved Africans.	**Spanish settlers claimed land and profits. Enslaved Africans were carried across the Atlantic by force and made to work without freedom.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

This bag of sugar hides the cost of European demand for sweet goods. Spanish settlers grew sugarcane on Hispaniola and claimed land, while disease and forced labor devastated Taíno communities. To supply plantation labor, traders carried enslaved Africans across the Atlantic under brutal conditions. Enriquillo's fighters resisted Spanish rule from the mountains and reached a peace agreement in 1533. That agreement did not end the conquest or the enslavement that supported sugar production.

Accept other passage-supported examples of resistance, including escape and the preservation of traditions. Labels should connect demand for sugar to colonial land and labor practices rather than list facts without explaining their relationship.