

CULTURAL EXCHANGE



Essential Question

How does trade facilitate cultural exchange?



Presenting Sponsors





CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Essential Question

How does trade facilitate cultural exchange? Explore this question with students using the artwork reproductions, art historical descriptions, and student discussion prompts provided. Then transition from talking about art to writing about it using the following student reflection prompts:

1. What is trade?
2. Why do people engage in trade?
3. What kinds of products, commodities, and resources are exchanged through trade?
4. How are information, ideas, beliefs, and histories exchanged through the process of trade?
5. How does trade stimulate contact between people?

Classroom Activity

Research a local industry that has impacted state, national, or international trade.

First, what are California's top industries—agriculture, aerospace, technology, the arts, and film? Choose one industry to study over a period of time. Collect articles, photographs, videos, and oral histories related to the history of your industry and current events that impact it.

Next, think about connections or themes across your research clippings. Where has this industry been, where is it now, and where is it going?

Then, compose a summary of the state of your industry and your projections for its future.

After writing your essay, post your work online. Find and introduce yourself to a working professional in your industry of choice, with whom you can share your work.

Vocabulary List

Trade, commodity, idea, contact, exchange, industry, colonization, economy

California State Content Standards for History/Social Science

Grade 8	Standard 8.12	Students analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in the United States in response to the Industrial Revolution.
Grade 10	Standard 10.4	Students analyze patterns of global change in the era of New Imperialism in at least two of the following regions of countries: Africa, Southeast Asia, China, India, Latin America, and the Philippines.

California Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies

History/Social Studies: Text Types and Purposes

Grades 6–8	Standard 6–8.5	Describe how a text presents information (for example, sequentially, comparatively, casually).
Grades 11–12	Standard 11–12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (for example, visually, quantitatively, linguistically) in order to address a question or solve a problem.



Albert Eckhout (Netherlands, 1610–1665)
Fruits, Pineapple, and Melon, etc., 1640–50
Oil on canvas
Photo: John Lee
National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen



CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Fruits, Pineapple, and Melon, etc.

Albert Eckhout

When Europeans arrived in the Americas, they encountered a land rich in flora and fauna. Drawing was an important tool for documentation, and printmaking was instrumental to the dissemination of new information and knowledge. Artist-scientists used drawing to describe and classify botanical taxonomy, and manuscripts of these studies were published across Europe to encourage immigration to the “New World,” the commodification of natural resources, and the establishment of colonial economies.

Governor Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen promoted the colony of Dutch Brazil (in present-day northern Brazil) as an economic and cultural capital through commissions of landscape and still life painting. In 1636 he invited Albert Eckhout to paint these fruits, pineapple, and melon as part of a series depicting native citrus, vegetables, grains, and plants with near photographic accuracy. Eckhout also painted portraits of Tupi and Tapuia peoples with the same eye for description and classification that has come to characterize a genre of colonial art called *casta* paintings, which depict constructs on the hierarchy of race.

Even more valuable than the natural resources were the pharmaceutical innovations developed by indigenous scientists, who shared their expertise in the cultivation and preparation of plants and herbs with European scientists. The exhibition *Visual Voyages* at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens highlights the important synergy that resulted from contact between indigenous and European scientists, shifting our understanding of nature and science.

Discussion Prompts for Students

- What do you see?
- What recognizable pieces of nature do you notice?
- What makes these fruits, pineapple, and melon look so true to life?
- What might have inspired the artist to paint these foods with such precision and accuracy?

See this artwork in the exhibition *Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin* at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens

Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin surveys the connections among art, science, and the environment in Latin America, from the voyages of Columbus to the publications of Charles Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century. The exhibition introduces audiences to new understandings of Latin American nature from a range of cultural perspectives: as a wondrous earthly paradise; as a new source of profitable commodities such as chocolate, tobacco, and cochineal; as a landscape of good and evil, as viewed through the filter of religion; as the site for an Enlightenment project of collecting and classifying; and, in the nineteenth century, as the reflection of a national spirit. *Visual Voyages* features approximately 100 objects drawn from the Huntington’s library, art, and botanical holdings, as well as from dozens of international collections, in a range of media including paintings, rare books, illustrated manuscripts, prints, and drawings. Importantly, the exhibition and its catalog bring together indigenous and European depictions of Latin American nature and offer a strongly documented case for Latin America’s own active participation in the production of excellent and influential scientific and artistic works during the early modern period.



Christian Cravo (Brazil, b. 1974)
Salvador, Bahia, 2003
Photograph
© Christian Cravo



CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Teacher Resource Guide
History/Social Studies Theme

Salvador, Bahia

Christian Cravo

Banzo. It is a complicated term rooted in the Bantu languages spoken by many of the enslaved peoples who were brought to Brazil from west-central Africa. As used by Afro-Brazilians, the word evokes emotions of melancholy and homesickness. It expresses crucial aspects of the black experience in Brazil: the feeling of being caught between two places or states of mind, the longing for a lost homeland, and the sense of not belonging where one is.

Trade routes developed by Europeans for the exportation of New World resources made way for the transatlantic slave trade. Of the nearly thirteen million Africans captured and brought to the Americas, almost forty percent landed in present-day Brazil. The city of Salvador plays an important role in this history—it is where the Portuguese established the first slave port in the Americas, the first capital of the country of Brazil, and the epicenter of black culture in the Americas.

Photographer and Bahia native Christian Cravo captures reverberations of Afro-Brazilian identity and experience in this contemporary photograph. Two black youth stand on the edge of the earth; a young man stands in the foreground with a thoughtful—seemingly forlorn—look while the young man in the middle ground teeters on a small spit of earth. The feeling evokes a sense of yearning and the setting highlights Salvador's relationship with both the ocean and Africa. While the majority of the populace of this coastal city has African ancestry, the lasting sense of *banzo* evoked by the photograph captures the legacy of enslavement and the sense of otherness that has shaped the history of many peoples of African descent in Latin America.

Discussion Prompts for Students

- What do you see?
- Who are these people and what might they be doing?
- Where are they and how would you describe their relationship with the setting?
- Describe where the photographer is in relationship to the people and the perspective that he chose to take the photograph. What message might the photographer be trying to communicate?

See this artwork in the exhibition *Axé Bahia: The Power of Art in an Afro-Brazilian Metropolis* at the Fowler Museum at UCLA

Axé Bahia: The Power of Art in an Afro-Brazilian Metropolis explores the unique cultural role of the city of Salvador, the coastal capital of the Brazilian state of Bahia and one of the oldest cities in the Americas. In the 1930s, Salvador emerged as an internationally renowned center of Afro-Brazilian culture, and it remains to this day an important hub of African-inspired artistic practices in Latin America. The Fowler presents the most comprehensive exhibition in the United States to date of the African-inspired arts of Bahia, featuring the work of well-known modernists such as Pierre Verger and Carybé, as well as contemporary artists such as Ayrson Heráclito and Caetano Dias. Including more than 100 works from the mid-twentieth century to the present, the exhibition explores the complexities of race and cultural affiliation in Brazil and the ways in which influential artists have experienced and responded creatively to the realities of Afro-Brazilian identity in Bahia.



Emigdio Vasquez (United States, 1939–2014)
El Proletariado de Aztlán (The Proletariat of Aztlán; detail), 1979
Acrylic on plaster
Chapman University Art Collections
Photo: Jessica Bocinski
© Emigdio Vasquez Art



CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Teacher Resource Guide
History/Social Studies Theme

El Proletariado de Aztlán (detail)

Emigdio Vasquez

Early Spanish surveyors described California as an island paradise. During Mexican California, cattle ranching prospered and the campaign for United States statehood framed California as a land of gold, soil, and opportunity. During the 1800s, the gold rush and growth of agriculture stimulated trade, migration, and prosperity. By 1889, a newly named Orange County was being marketed as a ripe orange grove oasis.

An Orange County native, muralist Emigdio Vasquez depicted the character of the Mexican-American community, marked by changing borders, migration from the southwest and Mexico, and the Chicano civil rights movement. He became interested in his Mexican-American heritage as a student in the 1970s at Santa Ana College and California State University, Fullerton. Recording his research through books, newspapers, and photographs, Vasquez used his clippings as source material for the creation of composite compositions, which he transformed into public murals. Inspired by the tradition of Mexican muralists, his works document events and figures of Chicano history.

In this excerpt from the mural *El Proletariado de Aztlán*, Vasquez draws inspiration from a woman picking strawberries, clipped from the pages of *450 Years of Chicano History* (Chicano Communications Center). The mural juxtaposes the legend of Aztlán, the Aztec origin story, with the plight of the working class. Painted on a building that is now part of the Chapman University campus, the artist's family has helped the university locate the more than thirty murals he painted around Orange County, uncovering his prolific practice and contribution to local history.

Discussion Prompts for Students

- What do you see?
- Where and who might these people be?
- What do their faces and gazes say about them?
- What story or history might they be trying to tell?

See this artwork on the campus of Chapman University, featured in the exhibition *Emigdio Vasquez and El Proletariado de Aztlán: The Geography of Chicano Murals in Orange County*

In 2014 Chapman University partnered with the Orange Barrio Historical Society and local artist Higgy Vasquez to restore a thirty-four-year-old mural, *El Proletariado de Aztlán*, located on the exterior of a former apartment complex adjacent to the university. The mural was originally painted in 1979 by Higgy's father, Emigdio Vasquez, who was a prolific artist having painted twenty-two public murals in Orange County between 1976 and 2006. Celebrating the Chicano cultural movement, his murals depict local people and places alongside imagery from Mexican and Mexican-American history. For *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*, Chapman's curatorial team launches the first comprehensive investigation of these local murals and the communities they identify. Satellite exhibitions on campus at the Guggenheim Gallery and the University Student Union highlight the work of contemporary Chicana/o muralists and display historical artifacts and photos relating to Chicano murals in Orange County. A downloadable app enables users to view an interactive map of historic mural sites for a self-guided tour that provides information on each work, including those that have been destroyed.