

# TEACHING GUIDE

FOR EDUCATORS TEACHING THE **TRUTH** ABOUT CHRISTOPHER  
**COLUMBUS, WHITE SETTLER COLONIALISM** AND  
**HISTORY** OF THE AMERICAS  
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF **INDIGENOUS** AND **BLACK**  
**RESISTANCES**



TO ACCOMPANY: *CHRISTOPHER THE OGRE COLOGRE, IT'S OVER!*

Presented by: Dr. Oriel María Siu, Dr. Bárbara I. Abadía-Rexach,  
Dr. Kate E. Kedley, and Verónica X. Valadez, MA





# INTRODUCTION:

**Yek Anwalajtiwit!** Thank you for sharing the truth about Christopher Columbus from the perspective of long-enduring Indigenous and Black resistances in the Americas, also known as Abya Yala. I am humbled that you have chosen my book, *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* to do this with children, and in your classrooms and homes.

To begin, I believe it is important that you get to know a bit about me. I am a descendant of the Náhuat/Pipil peoples of El Salvador on the side of my mother, and of the Chinese diaspora in Central America on the side of my father (via Bluefields, Nicaragua). I was born in 1981 and raised in the Central American territory labeled “Honduras” by the colonizers. At the age of 16, I was forced to leave my homeland for Los Angeles, California, where I became active in the fight for Ethnic Studies spaces and curriculum development from the perspective of silenced Abya Yalan histories, experiences, voices, and resistances.

As a scholar and educator with over 14 years of experience in U.S. university classrooms, I engaged with the shock students have when confronted by the truths about Christopher Columbus and the ensuing systems of oppression that his arrival in Abya Yala propagated: white settler colonialism, racism, and patriarchy, to name but a few. “I’ve been lied to all this time!” and “I never knew this!” are usually students’ first reactions to the truth. Their ensuing questions are almost always informed by the fairy-taled notions of U.S. history they have been taught during the foundational years of their K-12 schooling.

Much to the detriment of students (and society), history textbooks, teachers, and school curricula in the U.S. – and throughout the Americas – negate, deny, and outright lie about the realities of a continent which has been occupied for over 500 years. These lies permeate the core of what children grow up to believe about themselves, others, and the land they live on. The myth of discovery is perhaps the first of many foundational lies children are taught early in the K-12 experience.

As a scholar, educator, and mother to a Black/Indigenous/Chinese child of the Americas, I take truth-telling as a responsibility. We must move away from the dangerous myths and lies we tell children if we are truly committed to building communities of understanding, healing, justice, and trust.

This guide is as much a continuation of years-long efforts led by communities of color to re-think the narratives we teach the children of the Americas as it is an open invitation to continue them. We can confront and rid schools of the lies taught about Columbus and white settler colonialism, while empowering children through truth-telling, storytelling, and the centering of the beautiful and joyful legacies of resistances that allow us to be here today.

**Padiush!**

*Dr. Siu*



**¡Hola!** My name is Bárbara Idalisse Abadía-Rexach. I was born and raised in a humble family in Fajardo, a small town on the east coast of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico was a colony of Spain from 1493 to 1898; it then became a colony of the United States in 1898. Although we have been U.S. citizens since 1917, we are treated as second or third-class citizens, and racialized as non-Whites. We, the people from the archipelago of Puerto Rico, do not know any other political status other than being a colony. Frequently, I ask myself, what would it be to be free?



As a Black Puerto Rican woman, I know first-hand what it is to survive anti-Black racism. Even though structural and systemic racism is not recognized as a problem in the archipelago, there are plenty of ways to describe racial inequity, discrimination, and prejudice. We deal with cultural, linguistic, environmental, and other forms of racism on a daily basis under the rhetoric that there is no anti-Black racism in Puerto Rico because we are the result of *mestizaje*. According to that colorblind discourse, we are “the great Puerto Rican family.”

More than a decade ago, I consciously decided to join the antiracist movement in Puerto Rico inside and outside of academia. I have been practicing antiracist and decolonial teaching since then, avoiding hierarchical and vertical, heteronormative, and white-androcentric practices of knowledge production. Using autoethnography, Black and queer theories, I aim to build other forms of knowledge to co-create and co-produce safe spaces with my students and within the communities I have the pleasure of working with through antiracist community labor. My main goal is to humanize teaching practices, and to recognize and celebrate afro-knowledges we inherited from our ancestors, many of them enslaved.

I truly admire the work of Dr. Siu. To get her invitation to contribute to this Teaching Guide alongside other colleagues was an opportunity to continue co-inspiring each other. Collaborating in this guide means a lot to me; it is an extension of my antiracist and decolonial activism in the classroom; a grain of sand to make visible other stories and knowledges, and to offer new possibilities of teaching the truth, our truths. This is my opportunity to be unapologetically free!

## **Ubuntu!**

***Dra. Bárbara Idalisse Abadía-Rexach***





## Dear teachers, students, parents, and readers!

I have been teaching for over two decades and have spent time in every grade from PK to the university, in places from Honduras, to New Jersey, to Arizona, to Iowa. One thing I have learned is that students and children love to challenge: they challenge teachers, parents, the status quo, the rules, the lessons, and

each other. And they especially love to challenge what they have been told by the people in charge.

Rebeldita and her friends challenge the celebratory myth that suggests Christopher Columbus “discovered” the Western Hemisphere. They instead tell the story from the perspective of the people that were living in communities in the Western Hemisphere for centuries (and thus were not “discovered”), and those who were exploited for colonizers in a system where people were enslaved and brutalized. This is the same system that resulted in our collective celebration of Columbus, 500 years later.

History as it is taught should *always* be challenged by children, and adults should help children learn to contest the commonsense ideas we have about our history. We need to talk frankly and openly about the difficult topics from our shared past. But we also need to learn and celebrate those who resist oppression, especially Black and Indigenous populations. These communities oppose the intentions to dehumanize them and steal their lands and resources for centuries up to the current day.

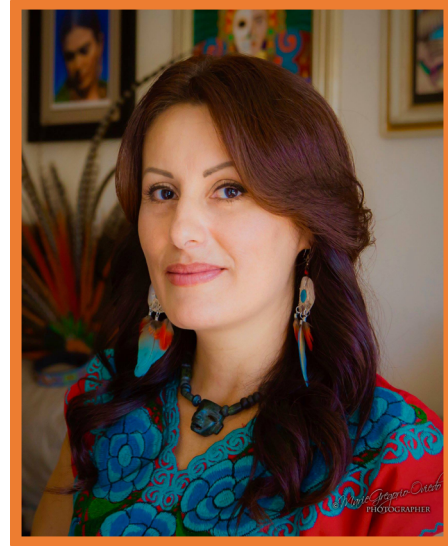
This study guide offers a plethora of ideas for all ages: discussion topics, activities to push thinking, and information to add to our understandings of race and nation. We hope those who read this book both will be challenged by it and will continue to find ways to challenge the injustices in the world today.

**In solidarity,**

**Dr. Kate E. Kedley**



**Niltze!** My name is Verónica X. Valadez and I am honored to be part of this important project of truth-telling! I am a proud daughter of Mexican farm-working immigrants, a scholar-activist, social justice and Ethnic Studies educator and advocate, as well as a traditional Aztec dancer and Xicana visual artist. I'm also a proud co-founder and President of Ehecatl Wind Philosophy, a consulting agency focusing on helping school districts establish Ethnic Studies programs.



Everything I do is rooted in my commitment of resistance against the erasure of our Indigenous identities, heritages, cultures, histories, and traditions. As such, working on this project provided another opportunity for me to resist against the biased and misconstrued Eurocentric versions of history by supporting Dr. Siu's truth-telling quest of promoting historical accounts through the perspective of Indigenous and Black communities.

As a Xicana Indigenous scholar-activist and a practitioner of traditional and ceremonial Mexica dances, I have come to understand and witness how and why Eurocentric versions of history can be dangerous, especially historical accounts of "discovery" and colonization, which were accompanied by the erasure of Indigenous people and their histories. Because I believe that education can and should be used to work towards liberation, I was more than willing to be part of this important project.

Through Dr. Siu's children's book *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* as well as the book's accompanying teaching guide, teachers and students of all ages can engage in relearning the story of Christopher Columbus from the perspective of Indigenous and Black resistances. The guide provides educators with invaluable information, activities, and resources to help students unpack and reflect on the topics covered throughout the book, and challenges students to think about how the past is with us in the present, as well as helping them to understand the dangers of history being told and written through an ethnocentric approach.

May this project be one of many to come as we collectively move towards uncovering hidden and obfuscated versions of history that create and perpetuate unjust systems of power. In this way, we can promote healing in our communities, not only for ourselves, but for our ancestors and for those yet to come.

**Tiahui,**  
*Verónica X. Valadez, MA*









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# OBJECTIVES OF THIS GUIDE:

-  To support educators in developing curricula that dismantles the dangerous lies and myths taught in schools about Christopher Columbus and white settler colonialism
-  To offer educators and parents a helpful and critical resource for guiding discussion around using the book *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!*
-  To challenge the idea that speaking truth to children is “difficult” and “uncomfortable,” and thus, “should be avoided” or the idea that children are “too young to understand”
-  To challenge the myth of “discovery” and a glorified history of white settler colonialism by centering Indigenous and Black perspectives in school curricula
-  To provide a list of things TO DO and NOT TO DO when teaching about Christopher Columbus
-  To offer an adaptable guide that may be modified by educators in K-12 and university settings, to fit the ages, interests, needs, and unique abilities of their students



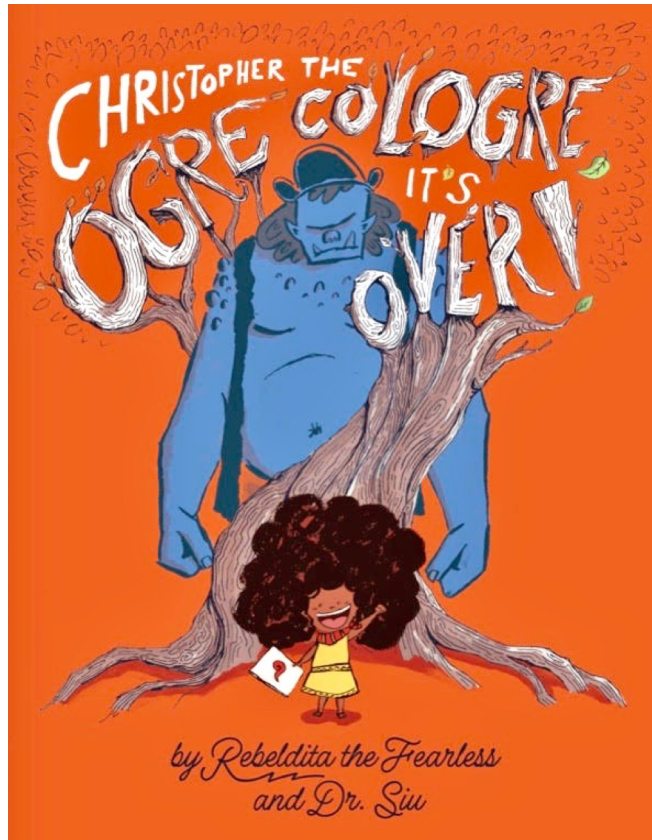
# ABOUT

## ***Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!***

*Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* is a story for children of all ages based on true facts. Enduring Indigenous and Black resistances to colonialism, as well as years of research by Indigenous and Black scholars and historians on Christopher Columbus and white settler colonialism form the backbone of the story.

Reviewed as "a literary wonder," "a paradigm shifter," and a "must" for all "classrooms and homes" by K-12 and university-level educators, this book itself is a dynamic and critical take on colonialism's exploitations through engaging rhymes, uplifting histories of resistance, and the accentuation of the power of words, writing, and storytelling from the perspective of an Indigenous and Black child.

*Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* presents educators, parents, and all children the opportunity to learn, discuss, and understand terms, narratives, and histories that shape the American continent and our lives today. Author: Dr. Siu <http://www.oriemariasiu.com/> | Illustrator: Víctor Zúñiga Muro | Translation: Matthew Byrne



**To obtain the book for your school, library, or home, and for all the latest news about**

***Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* please visit:**

[www.oriemariasiu.com/theogrecologre](http://www.oriemariasiu.com/theogrecologre)

# MYTHS and LIES STILL WRITTEN in BOOKS and TAUGHT at SCHOOLS:







- "Columbus discovered America"
- Columbus "discovered new land"
- Natives "died off from diseases"
- The death of Indigenous peoples was an "inevitable," "unintended" "consequence of progress"
- Indigenous populations of the north were "nomads," - a people "without civilization"
- Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas lacked history. And they are "Pre-Columbian civilizations"
- "Indigenous peoples were savages"
- Africans were "slaves" who were "brainwashed and stunned into submission and rarely resisted slavery"
- "Open frontier," "virgin soil" made settlement and expansion possible
  - "All the Indians died off"

# QUICK FACTS:

-  Approximately 110 million people resided in the Americas when Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492 (one-fifth of the world population at the time). By 1592, Europeans had decimated more than 90% of the population, and the Indigenous population dropped to 2 million.
-  At the time of the European occupation of America, Meso and South America alone had a population larger than the combined total of Europe and Russia's population.
-  Indigenous peoples had been living in the Americas anywhere between 70,000 years and 13,500 years prior to Europeans arriving in the Americas and occupying it.
-  Between 1,500 and 2,000 languages were spoken throughout the Americas at the time of European occupation of America (1492). These were fully distinct languages, *not* dialects.
-  Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas had developed advanced scientific, agricultural, medical, and astronomical techniques at the time of Columbus' arrival. The majority of the population was not nomadic.
-  Indigenous populations of the Americas created corn, invented the concept of zero, developed accurate calendric systems (more accurate than the Gregorian calendar!), led sophisticated astronomical research, developed science and medicine, as well as intricate educational systems.
-  The concept of "race" was NONEXISTENT in the Americas prior to 1492. Racial categories as we know them today are a direct product of white settler colonialism in the Americas. Whites themselves invented the term "white" alongside all other racial categories based on color of skin in order to create a new system of domination throughout the continent, white supremacy.













-  The city of Mexico Tenochtitlan was larger than London, Paris, and Venice at the time of European invasion.
-  In 1492, many cities in Abya Yala had unparalleled aqueduct systems, markets, and architectural designs. Mexico Tenochtitlan, for example, was one of the most advanced cities in the world. It was built atop water consisting of various human-made islands, 7200 ft. above sea-level.
-  Prior to Europeans imposing their names on people, land, and the continent, Indigenous peoples of the Americas had various names for themselves, for the land they were part of, and for the continent they lived on. Abya Yala was one of various terms Indigenous peoples used to refer to the American hemisphere. Others were: Anahuac and Turtle Island (North America).
-  Black and Indigenous Resistance to white settler colonialism in the Americas took a variety of forms ranging from day-to-day subtle forms of resistance, to economic bargaining, run-away marronage, and outright rebellions.

**CAN YOU SAY, "Abya Yala"?**



# **TOPICS** in *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!*

-  White settler colonialism
-  Resistance to colonialism
-  The power of collectivity and children
-  Black resistance to slavery throughout the Americas
-  Oral history as a valid source of knowledge and history
-  Writing as a practice of resistance
-  Lies at the service of white supremacy
-  The occupation of Mama Earth
-  Earth as a living entity
-  The suppression of Indigenous and African knowledges in the Americas
-  The enduring legacies of colonialism
-  The imported European concept of possession (of land, of people, of things)
-  The real history of the English, Spanish, and Portuguese monarchies in the Americas
-  Enslavement of Indigenous and Black populations; slavery
-  The power of words
-  Borders as non-natural
-  The beauty and joys of struggle
-  The importance of truth telling, even when the truth is uncomfortable
-  Truth-telling as empowerment

# KEY TERMS IN BOOK:



**abuelita:** “grandmother” in Spanish

**Abya Yala:** one of the various terms Indigenous people use to refer to the American continent. It means “land in its full maturity” and is a Kuna word from the peoples who inhabit what is now called Panama and Colombia

**borders:** non-natural walls and boundaries put up by humans on Earth to divide and claim land, and used to distinguish an “us” from a “them.” Borders divide people, families, and children from their parents, animals, and ancestral lands. In the Americas, borders have been designated on stolen, occupied lands. The largest controlled border wall in the Americas is the one put up by the United States, between what is now Mexico and the United States

**Ceiba Tree:** a tree regarded as one of the most sacred by Maya people. It symbolizes the universe and is thought to be a route of communication between the three levels of the earth: the sky, land, and the underworld

**“Discovery”:** a one-sided perspective for understanding settler colonialism in the Americas; “discovery” represents the point of view of the person supposedly

doing the discovering. This perspective does not take into consideration the fact that people, land, communities, and nature existed for thousands of years before the “discoverer” “discovered” them

**greed:** intense and selfish desire for something, especially wealth, power, resources, or food

**hoard:** to accumulate (money or valued objects) and hide or store away

**loot:** to take something by dishonesty or force; also used to refer to the items taken

**refuge:** a place or situation providing safety or shelter

**resistance:** a situation in which people or organizations refuse to comply or be changed by a situation

**slavery:** condition in which one human being is owned and exploited by another. In the Americas, whites instituted various forms of slavery, where those who were identified as non-whites were considered property and ascribed varying degrees of humanity, or lack-there-of

# THINGS *TO DO* AND *NOT TO DO* WHEN TEACHING COLUMBUS:



***DO teach about Columbus.*** Ignoring Columbus does not rid classrooms of the harmful lies and myths in school textbooks and our collective unconscious minds. The Columbus “discovery” myth is alive and well, as indicated by the U.S. federal holiday celebrating him every October. Unlearning the lies, and helping our students unlearn them, will move our students toward histories from a place of truth. This is a step towards social justice, healing, and truthful relationship-building (with others, ourselves, and the land we live on).



***DO de-center the perspective of the colonizers.***



***DO be mindful of language, always.*** Is the material used in your classroom or home normalizing (white-supremacist, patriarchal) apologetic language? For example: Is your material using the term "slaves" versus using the term "enslaved"? Using "enslaved" instead of “slaves” puts the focus on the enslaver, or the person who was holding another human in bondage by enslaving them. Enslaved people were PEOPLE first; they were PEOPLE who were enslaved. This careful examination of language use demands students think about the process and actors behind the enslavement of a person, as well as the system that allowed for it, and other people who supported it. The term "slaves," on the other hand, dehumanizes, limiting the identity of a person to purely that of a "slave." The conversation shifts when we change our language. Note: the use of the passive voice is also another way of normalizing apologetic language. Examples of terms and phrases not to use, and terms/phrases to use instead:

“~~discovery~~” versus “genocide/occupation/invasion”

“~~minority~~” population versus “minoritized” population

“~~tribes~~” vs. “First Nations”

America was “~~virgin soil~~,” “~~open land~~” “~~empty space~~” vs. “inhabited land,” “land where Indigenous peoples had lived for thousands of years”

“~~explorer~~” vs. “colonizer,” “occupier”

“~~New World~~” vs. Indigenous lands, Abya Yala, Turtle Island, Anahuac

“~~Indians died off~~” versus “Europeans killed Indigenous people” etc. etc. etc.  
(Passive versus active voice)



# MORE *TO DO* AND *NOT TO DO* WHEN TEACHING COLUMBUS:



***DO be mindful of apologetic language:*** "Well, Indigenous people mostly died from diseases" is a way to apologize for the violence of settler colonialism, land theft, occupation, enslavement, and the imposition of European racial categories as the main new system of domination in the Americas. Other forms of this language may be: "Well, progress was brought by Europeans, and that has been positive" | "Natives killed each other prior to Europeans arriving"



***DO invite Indigenous authors and Black authors/scholars to speak at your schools*** when discussing topics related to white settler colonialism, Columbus, Enslavement, Resistances, Racism, Anti-Racism, and *any other topic*. Make Indigenous and Black scholarship and voices visible in your curricula and classrooms.



***DO teach the truth about Thanksgiving.*** The Thanksgiving myth and the Columbus discovery myth are deeply interconnected; they both serve to silence the truth about settler colonialism in the Americas and steer us away from asking questions that disrupt the pretty fairy-taled foundational stories of the U.S. as a nation, and the Americas as a continent.



***DO use Indigenous and Black scholarship for your lesson planning.***



***DO NOT suggest that Columbus and Indigenous people were friends.*** They were not.



***DO NOT dress children in any interpretation of Indigenous people.*** For many Indigenous people, what others call costumes are simply clothes. Offering children Native "costumes" of any sort propagates offensive and dangerous stereotypes, as well as facilitates racist cultural appropriations. Rather than costumes, offer black armbands to students as an act of genocide remembrance, or lead discussions and create events that educate, inform, and heal.



**DO NOT** *teach racist songs* such as “1 Little, 2 Little, 3 Little...” Here is why: “Ten Little Indians: A Genocidal Nursery Rhyme” (*Indian Country Today*, by Alex Jacobs). Available: <https://indiancountrytoday.com/archive/ten-little-indians-genocidal-nursery-rhyme>. Instead, DO use this opportunity to create new songs, poetry, games, based on truth.



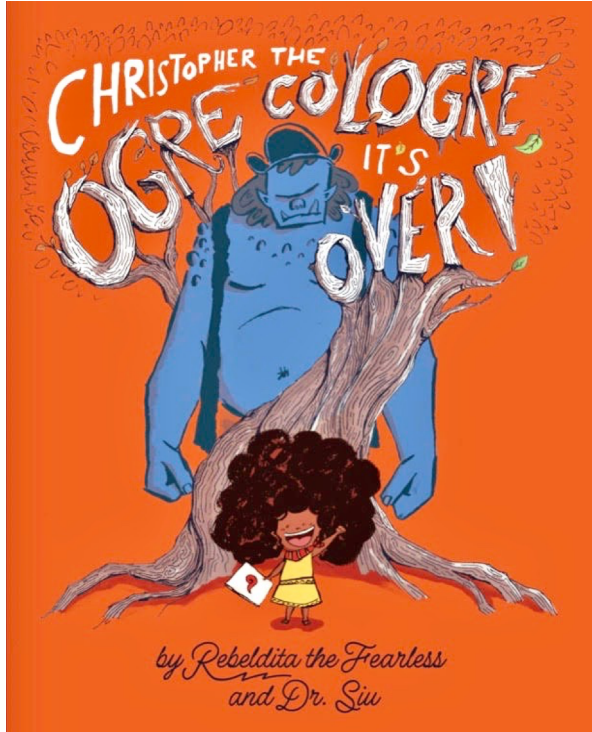
**DO NOT** *lie to children about genocide and the origins of racism in the Americas*. Lies permeate the core of what children grow up to be, and their relationship to themselves, others, and the land they live on.

**Do teach truth, only.**



# BEFORE READING:

1. Look at the book's cover.  
Rebeldita stands in front of a giant blue ogre. What do you think it tells you about the story you are about to read?
2. The name Christopher Cologre is in the title. Does this name remind you of any name you've heard before at school, or read in your books?
3. What have you heard about Christopher Columbus? Who did you hear it from? What is he famous for?
4. Many countries and governments in the Americas celebrate Christopher Columbus as a holiday, despite Indigenous peoples' objection to this. Some states, cities, and schools celebrate the day Columbus "discovered" the Americas – October 12, 1492 – by giving people the day off from work and school. Have you heard any people that have a critique of Columbus? Or that don't like the idea of celebrating him?
5. Why do you think Indigenous peoples in the Americas would be against celebrating Columbus and instead demand that we commemorate Indigenous peoples and their struggles?
6. We often say Christopher Columbus "discovered" the Americas. What does it mean to "discover" something? Is it possible to discover something that already exists, or that is occupied by someone else?
7. Why do you think the authors, Rebeldita and Dr. Siu, chose to title this book *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!?*



## BEFORE READING ● ● ●

**DISCUSSION PRIOR TO READING:** A key topic in *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* is the close relationship between power and story-telling through books. The power to write, read, and publish in the U.S. has directly been related to white supremacy. With some exceptions, people of color and Indigenous people did not have the means to publish in the U.S. until fairly recently - only 70 years ago. This is not because people of color and Indigenous people were not able to write or document their stories. Instead, for centuries whites in the United States controlled who could read, write, and publish. Some places even instituted literacy laws that made it illegal for enslaved people to read or write, and prevented those whose lands were stolen from telling their own stories. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Why would someone want to prevent another person from telling a story? Why would someone want to take away someone else's ability to tell a story by making it illegal for them to read or write?*

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Have you heard of the phrase, "History is written by the victors"? What is meant by "victor" in this case? How are we shaped (or affected) when we only hear stories by those who were the "victors" or those who have the power to share their stories?



## BEFORE READING ● ● ●

### ANALYSIS ACTIVITY PRIOR TO READING:

A good exercise in preparation for *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!* is to have students examine the language and the images in chapters of their own textbooks where Christopher Columbus is addressed.

1. Examine your textbook's illustrations. What story are the illustrations telling you about Columbus?
2. Examine the language used to teach about Christopher Columbus. What verbs are used to describe what Columbus did? What connotations do those verbs carry?
3. "Indigenous people died from many diseases," for example, is a very common way textbooks and authors erase the truth about the first 100 years of European colonization of the Americas. How so? The use of the passive voice allows for us not to have to think about who or what caused Indigenous people to "die from diseases." What examples of passive voice are in the chapter of your textbook in the section about Columbus?
4. What perspectives of Indigenous voices and experiences are in this section in your textbook?
5. After examining how Columbus is portrayed in your textbook, what conclusion do you draw about how he is portrayed? Is he portrayed as a hero? A genocidal conquistador? Or a mix?



Posthumous portrait of Columbus by Sebastiano del Piombo, 1519. There are no known authentic portraits of Columbus.

# THE GREED

PAGES 1-2 of BOOK

**Learning Objective:** To understand the motives behind Columbus' arrival in the Americas

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In the opening pages of the book, the King and Queen of Eurolandia sit on their thrones while the Ogres who work for them steal everything they can from Eurolandia. What type of kingdom is this? Why does Rebeldita introduce us to those aspects of Eurolandia? What do you think will happen next?
2. Why do you believe Rebeldita chooses to tell us about a place called "Eurolandia"?
3. Look closely at the first three paragraphs of the book. What hints do the words used to describe the Queen and King of Eurolandia tell you about what they are like?
4. "Rivers and land, and gold shore to shore, mountains and cows, yet they wanted much more!" Why do the King and Queen always want "much more"? What motivates their greed?
5. Where do you see greed today? Where do you hear the word greedy? What do people want if they are greedy?



**QUICK FACT:** The concept of ownership (owning land, owning the earth, owning people), is a concept brought to the Americas by Europeans in 1492. Indigenous people did not, and do not, believe one could/can possess land or people, as land was and continues to be viewed as part of the web of life that makes life for us possible. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *What does it mean to possess something? Why do you believe Indigenous people did not believe in ownership of land?*

**FURTHER DISCUSSION:** What is one object you own? Discuss your relationship with this object. How would your relationship with this object change if you didn't "own" it? What does ownership do to your relationship with the object?

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: CHIEF SEATTLE** Read the following excerpt from Chief Seattle's (Duwamish) 1855 letter to Franklin Pierce, then President of the United States. Full letter available here:

<https://www.csun.edu/~vcpsy00h/seattle.htm> :



Chief Seattle, Duwamish 1786-1866

*This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."*  
**Chief Seattle**

1. Why does Chief Seattle say that the earth does not belong to us?
2. What happens when we believe we can possess land? How does our relationship with the land we stand on change when we believe we possess it?
3. How are we "strands" in the web of life?

**OTHER TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES IN THESE PAGES OF BOOK:**

The material motives behind Europe's quest to colonize, occupy, and steal land in the Americas | Profit over people as a priority of European monarchies in the Americas

# EUROPE'S COLONIZING QUEST

PAGES 3-4 of BOOK

**Learning Objectives:** To demystify the heroification of Columbus and further learn about the objectives of Europe's colonizing quest

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss the characteristics that make Christopher the Ogre Cologre "perfect" for the King and Queen's land-grabbing mission in "faraway lands." Why do the King and Queen of Eurolandia choose Christopher Cologre for their stealing mission?
2. What makes the King and Queen believe they can just go and "take other people's things"? How would it feel if someone believed they could come and take your home just because they wanted it?
3. Why does Rebeldita tells us that the King and Queen "knew just the Ogre that would make history books"? Why are the King and Queen of Eurolandia interested in making it to "history books"?



**CREATIVE ACTIVITY:** Draw your own Ogre Cologre based on the descriptions in this paragraph: "He's the biggest, the baddest, by all Ogres adored! / He's ambitions and malicious - just totally vicious! / Ruthless and heartless and savagely capricious! / Christopher Cologre, we Kings do choose you! / There just isn't an Ogre that steals like you do!" Share with your class what your Ogre Cologre looks like - and don't forget his hat!

## QUICK FACTS:



Although Europe represents only about 8 percent of the planet's landmass, from 1492 to 1914, Europeans **colonized more than 80 percent of our planet.**



Although most of Latin America was colonized by the Spanish, the French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese also had major influences in the region.



Two legal documents backed Columbus and the colonizers in their quest to occupy, steal land, and enslave people in the Americas: “The Doctrine of Discovery” and “The Requirement.”



The Doctrine of Discovery made any land not inhabited by Christians available to be “discovered,” claimed, and exploited by Christian rulers.



The Doctrine of Discovery declares that “the Catholic faith and the Christian religion be exalted and be everywhere increased and spread, that the health of souls be cared for and that barbarous nations be overthrown and brought to the faith itself.”



The Doctrine of Discovery became the basis of all European claims in the Americas as well as the foundation for the United States’ western expansion.



In 1792, U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson declared that the Doctrine of Discovery would extend from Europe to the infant U.S. government.



The Doctrine of Discovery supported Spain’s strategy to ensure its exclusive right to the lands claimed by Columbus.



The Doctrine of Discovery assigned Spain exclusive right to acquire territorial possessions west of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, forbidding other Europeans from approaching the lands west of the line without special license from the rulers of Spain. This effectively gave Spain a monopoly on the lands in the so called “New World”.

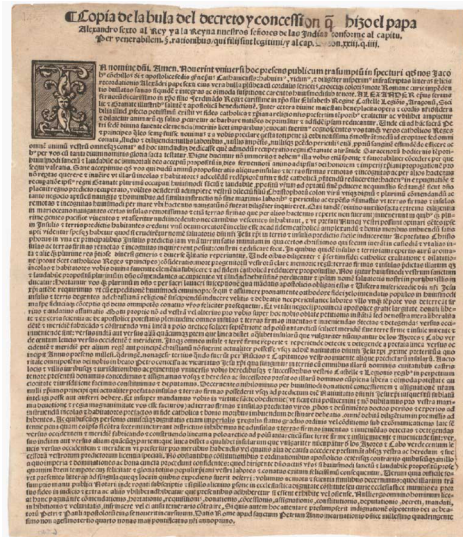


The idea of a “Terra Nullius” (which means “land that is legally deemed to be unoccupied or “uninhabited,” “land belonging to no one” in Latin) is created in The Doctrine of Discovery as a justification for colonization and occupation of the Americas.



**TO KNOW:** Two legal documents backed Columbus and the colonizers in their quest to occupy, steal land, and enslave people in the Americas: "The Doctrine of Discovery" and "The Requirement"

**The Doctrine of Discovery** is a philosophical and legal document and framework dating to the 15th century that gave Christian governments moral and legal rights to invade and seize Indigenous lands and dominate Indigenous Peoples. In it, Pope Alexander VI ruled that the lands being “discovered” by Europeans at the time were “empty” lands (“terra nullius” - which means, “land belonging to no one”) and that the millions of Indigenous inhabitants were “non-human.” The document has not been nullified and it was cited by the U.S. Supreme Court last in 2005.



Here is an extract from The Doctrine of Discovery:

*...— to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit.*



**El Requerimiento** "The Requirement" was written in 1510 by the Council of Castile to be read aloud as an ultimatum to Indigenous people in the Americas. It asserted the religious authority of the Roman Catholic pope over the entire earth, and the political authority of Spain over the Americas (except Brazil) from the 1493 papal bull that divided the western hemisphere between Spain and Portugal. It



demanded that the conquered peoples accept Spanish rule and Christian preaching or risk subjugation, enslavement, and death. Often, the Requerimiento was read in Latin to the Indigenous peoples with no interpreters present, or even delivered from shipboard to an empty beach, revealing its prime purpose as self-justification for the Spanish invaders. The full document may be found here: <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/contact/text7/requirement.pdf>

“ But, if you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can... ”

## ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: THE REQUERIMIENTO

Present "The Requerimiento" to your students and ask them to read it.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



1. What words and phrases in this document specifically rationalize conquest and genocide?
2. How is Spanish (a European language, not known in the Americas prior to 1492) used as a colonizing tool at the beginning of the occupation of the Americas?
3. Is the Spanish monarchy envisioning colonization at a local or global scale?
4. What is the concept of “world” and “land” that the Spaniards brought with them? How was the Pope able to “grant” American lands (and all the people in them) to the Kings of Spain?
5. How are “women and children” represented in this document? How is this a manifestation of European patriarchal thought?
6. What happens if Indigenous peoples receive the Christian doctrine of their own free will?
7. What happens if Indigenous peoples refuse Christianity? Are there opportunities to negotiate alternatives?

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: GENTRIFICATION** – The New Age of Colonialism. After reviewing the “Doctrine of Discovery” and “The Requirement” above, ask students if they’ve heard, seen, or experienced gentrification. Share the following definition from the Merriam Webster Dictionary:

Gentrification: a process in which a poor area (as of a city) experiences an influx of middle-class or wealthy people who renovate and rebuild homes and businesses and which often results in an increase in property values and the displacement of current, usually poorer residents

Have students watch the following videos and note how gentrification and colonialism overlap.

Interactive Map - Loss of Indian Land :

[http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_vault/2014/06/17/interactive\\_map\\_loss\\_of\\_indian\\_land.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_vault/2014/06/17/interactive_map_loss_of_indian_land.html)

Gentrification Explained: <https://youtu.be/VOzAvmzDFc>

Gentrification: The New Age of Colonialism: <https://youtu.be/KKjyEBEiw8Q>

Interactive Map of Urban Displacement: <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/maps/los-angeles-gentrification-and-displacement/>

After watching the videos and exploring the interactive maps, ask students to write down forms of gentrification they have witnessed or experienced. Then have them share their notes and thoughts with a partner about how gentrification is similar to colonialism.

### **OTHER TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES IN THESE PAGES OF BOOK:**

- Normalize undoing the myth of discovery. Change the vocabulary, terminology, and language when first introducing students to the history of the Americas and Columbus. Begin to speak about America for what it is: an occupied territory, where its original peoples and the land were subjected to racialized systems of oppression.
- Understand the role of the Catholic church in the colonization of the Americas.
- Visualizing the reach of Europe's colonizing quest. Explain that America was not the end of Europe's imperial expansion, but the beginning. Then came Africa and Asia.



# Columbus's Voyage

PAGES 5-6



**Learning Objective:** To further demystify the heroification of Columbus

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Christopher Columbus is often called “a great explorer” in history books. You won't find Rebeldita calling him *that* in this book, however. Why doesn't Rebeldita want us to use the term “explorer” to speak about the Ogre Cologre?
2. Columbus sailed under orders of the King and Queen of Spain, just like Cologre is ordered to sail under the orders of the King and Queen of Eurolandia. In both cases, the desire to extract more resources from the Earth is what drives the mission. Why is it important to remember the real motives pushing the King, Queen, and Cologre into Abya Yala? Is it fair to say he was an “explorer” if the real reasons he looked for new places was to find new places to extract resources?
3. Much has been written about Columbus' voyage to the Americas and his three ships. What have you learned about this voyage at school, or through books? How is what you've learned about him and his voyage different from what you are reading in *Christopher the Ogre Cologre, It's Over!?*



# Abya Yala PAGES 7-8

**Learning Objectives:** To normalize speaking about Indigenous populations of the Americas as people with thousand-year-old histories, cultures, knowledges and civilizations; to normalize Indigenous names of the Americas; to unlearn racist stereotypes about Indigenous populations and histories



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do Rebeldita and Dr. Siu choose to use the name “AbyaYala” instead of “America” in this image that introduces us to the continent the Ogres invaded?
2. Why is it important to know the names Indigenous peoples had for themselves and the land they lived on prior to the Europeans giving the land and people other names?
3. Describe the city in AbyaYala shown in this image. What is this city like?
4. Why were Cologre's eyes “going side to side”?
5. Rebeldita tells us that “millions of children ran free like the breeze” in Abya Yala. What does she mean by this?

## QUICK FACTS:



Indigenous peoples all throughout the Americas had various names for themselves and the land they lived on prior to the Europeans imposing their names on the land and people. **Abya Yala** is one of the various terms Indigenous people have had for the continent. The term is a Kuna word, from the Kuna people in present-day Panama, and it means “Land in its full maturity.” **Anahuac** and **Turtle Island** (North America) are two other terms utilized. There is evidence that Indigenous peoples throughout the continent traveled and traded freely across the hemisphere, understanding that they occupied a common continent.



Many cities in Abya Yala had unparalleled aqueduct systems, markets, and architectural designs at the time of European occupation. Mexico Tenochtitlan, for example, was one of the most advanced cities in the world in 1492. Tenochtitlan was then a city built atop water consisting of various human-made islands, 7200 ft. above sea level.



What is now “Mexico City” had approximately 25,000,000 inhabitants in 1492 (it was one of the largest cities in the world at the time, larger than London, Paris, or Venice!)



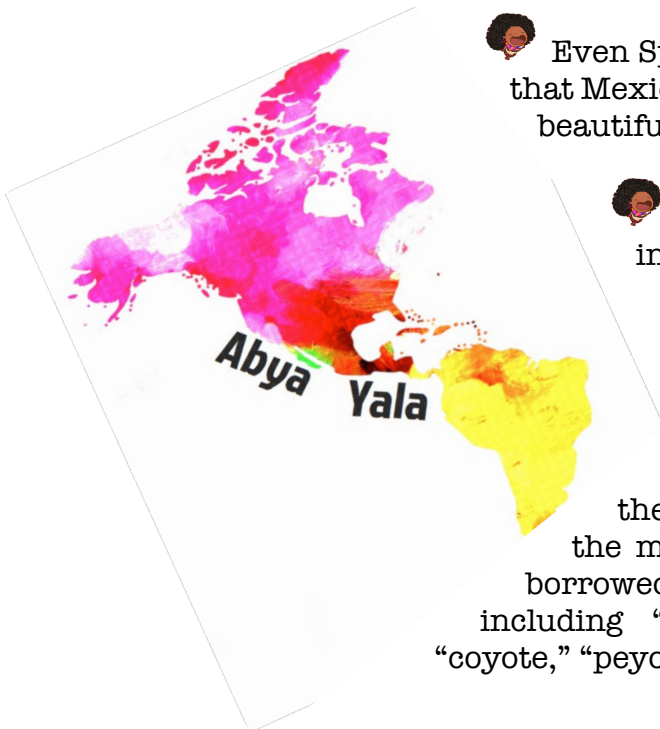
Even Spanish invaders admitted in their accounts that Mexico Tenochtitlan “was far and away the most beautiful city on earth.”




Abya Yalan cities had developed intricate social, political, religious, and commercial organizations and were highly intellectually and artistically developed civilizations.



The Mexica language, Nahuatl, was the dominant language in central Mexico by the mid-1350s. Numerous Nahuatl words were borrowed and absorbed into English and Spanish, including “chile” or chili, “avocado,” “chocolate,” “coyote,” “peyote,” “guacamole,” “ocelot” and “mescal.”



 Maya people had built large impressive cities in the middle of tropical jungles.



The urban core areas of the Maya world, Tikal and Copan, had attained densities as high as 5,000 people per square mile (As of 2022, the city of Los Angeles, California, has 7,009 people sq/m).



Maya people had highly advanced aqueduct systems, markets, and architectural designs.



Maya people developed precise calendric measurements, astronomical observations, and writing.



Personal cleanliness and hygiene was a priority for Indigenous societies. Maya people, for example, used an extravagant array of soaps, deodorants, and breath sweeteners, so much so, that Europeans were astonished. As opposed to Europe, there is no evidence of plagues in the Americas prior to the illnesses brought on by the Europeans.



Inca peoples created a highway and road system in what is now Peru with over 18,000 miles of roads.



Inca people were already performing successful skull surgeries at the time of the European invasion.



Inca people had developed a complex system of knotted and colored strings called 'quipu' for records (their own calculators).



The estimated population of North America in 1492 was 8,000,000 - 12,000,000 inhabitants speaking hundreds of distinct languages.

- North American Indigenous people established transregional self-sufficient economies.
- Most Northern Indigenous nations were NON-NOMADIC, rather successful hunters and farmers.
- Most Indigenous societies were matriarchal.
- Indigenous populations throughout the Americas had established vast trade networks from North to South.

## ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: MEXICO TENOCHTITLAN

Look at the following drawing of Mexico Tenochtitlan as it looked in the 15th century. At least 200,000 people lived in the city in 1492, making Tenochtitlan the largest city in the Americas prior to Columbus' arrival. **DISCUSSION**

**QUESTION:** *What does the image tell you about life in this city?*



15th century - Mexico. Reconstructed central Tenochtitlán square and Templo Mayor. Getty Images DEA Picture Library/De Agostini



**COMPREHENSION/CREATIVE ACTIVITY:** Do a library search of life in Mexico Tenochtitlan prior to European colonization of Mexico. You may focus on trade, markets, culture, foods, or any other aspect of life that you may be interested in learning about. Choose one main finding and make a drawing of it, or write a summary of what you learned, then present it to your classmates.

**COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY: THE LAND YOU LIVE ON** Visit the site, Native Land CA, <https://native-land.ca/>, alongside your students. Learn about the importance of this project. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *Why is it important we learn about the original names of the land we live on? Are there any Native names in the area you live near? How does knowing the names prior to European occupation of the land we're on change the way we view the place where we live?* **EXPLORE THE INTERACTIVE** map made by Native Land. Find out which Indigenous lands you live on. *What language was/is still spoken there by the first peoples of the area? Native Land also offers multiple activities for students that you may use.*

**OTHER TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES IN THESE PAGES OF BOOK:**

- These pages offer educators an opportunity to teach about pre-contact Indigenous societies as what they were: highly organized societies that had developed intricate social, political, religious, and commercial organizations. Undo the myth that Indigenous societies had "no history."
- Normalize speaking about Indigenous people as people with histories, world views, science, systems of knowledge, organizational systems, economies, and cultures. Normalize teaching about these.
- Normalize using non-colonial names to speak about the land we live on.



# The Violence of Colonialism

## PAGES 9-12:

**Learning Objectives:** To understand the deep, world-changing impact of colonization on Indigenous populations of the Americas; to understand how colonization was not just physical, but also epistemic, cultural, and spiritual

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



1. On page 9, Ogre Cologre is reading his first OgreCommand to children and parents of Abya Yala. Why does the Ogre Cologre prohibit children telling the truth from then on?
2. Why is the Ogre Cologre worried about books telling lies about him?
3. Why does the Ogre Cologre want children speaking his language instead of speaking theirs?
4. How does the language you speak shape who you are and your history?
5. How do the children and parents feel when the Ogre commands they can no longer speak their languages, and that they have to give him and the other Ogres everything they have built?

6. On page 11 of the book, the narrator says **“Oh, and how sad the scene was.”** How are the Ogres destroying Abya Yala? What are Cologre and the other Ogres doing?



7. How is what you see in these images different from the image of Abya Yala from before the Ogres came?
8. What is Rebeldita referring to when she tells us that the Ogres put “jaguars and mountains with all of the gold in dirty great ships to later be sold”?
9. Why do the Ogres burn “all of their books”? In reality, Maya people wrote hundreds of books and texts by the time Columbus arrived in the Americas. The colonizers burnt most of them – only 4 survived. Why did the colonizers want to burn the books of the Maya people? How do you think the presence of these books threatened Europeans so much that they saw it necessary to destroy them?
10. In what other ways did the Ogres occupy or take over Abya Yala based on these images?

## QUICK FACTS:



From 1492–1592, settler colonialism and its violence, reduced the original population of the Americas from **110 million to 2 million**. This amounts to nearly total decimation of Indigenous American populations during the first 100 years of European/white settler occupation.



In the West Indies, it is estimated that Indigenous populations were nearly made extinct by 1535. Eight million people lost their lives to the violence of European colonialism.



Genocide of Indigenous populations was intentional and not simply a tragic consequence of European arrival. It came in the form of mass-scale violence (executions, weapons, and dogs), and various diseases such as cholera, smallpox, and measles.



Only four Maya books survived the fires carried on by the Spaniards during the first years of the genocide.



The main differences between the Spanish and English colonization methods were:

**English:** Depopulation was a main goal; the English accepted different European religions; they did not mix with Indigenous populations; land theft and territorial expansion were the main objective.

**Spanish:** To Christianize was the main goal; eliminated those who would not accept Christianity; forced mixing with Indigenous and Black women as a form of control and “whitening” of “inferior races”; extraction of resources for Spain were a key goal of colonization.



**Settler colonialism** is a form of colonialism which seeks to **replace** the original population of the colonized territory with a **new society of settlers**. As with all forms of colonialism, it is based on a system of **domination**. Settler colonialism is enacted by a variety of means ranging from **violent depopulation** of previous inhabitants to more subtle, legal means such as **assimilation**.



Colonialism typically ends eventually, whereas **settler colonialism lasts indefinitely**, except in the rare event of complete evacuation, or settler decolonization (various African countries, for example).



European settler colonialism in the Americas came in various forms:

- Suppression of Indigenous/African languages and cultures
- Suppression of Indigenous ways of being
- Forced imposition of European cultures and languages: By the 18th and 19th centuries, Spanish, English, Portuguese, French, and Dutch, had become the official or national languages of the current nation-states in the Americas, and many Indigenous languages were on their way to extinction
- The primacy of female as creator is displaced and replaced by male-gendered creators
- Destruction of two-sided, complementary social Indigenous structures (not gendered, but complementary) - as represented in Lak'Ech (You are the other I)
- Power of women is undermined; Women are ascribed different sub-levels of humanity, or lack thereof; Imposition of patriarchal social structures
- Destruction of communal/egalitarian relations, collective decision making, collective authority, and economies
- Imposition of different gender roles. Gender was not understood primarily in biological terms by Indigenous peoples - most individuals fit into gender roles on the basis of inclinations and temperament. The Yuma, for example, had a tradition of gender designation based on dreams; a female who dreamt of weapons, for example, became a male for all practical purposes
- Destruction of Native philosophies/knowledges and the imposition of European Universities and knowledges
- Epistemic colonization: The imposition of Eurocentric views and ways of asking, of learning, and knowing ourselves and our world

## **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: HOW DOES LANGUAGE SHAPE OUR PERCEPTION?**

Have a discussion with your students about language. Explain how language has the power to normalize, distort, or validate. Here are a few examples of language found in textbooks when discussing 1492. Ask your students: How does the following language shape my perception of what happened in 1492?

**“America was open land, virgin soil, in 1492.”**

**Indigenous groups are “prehistoric civilizations.”**

**North American “tribes” were “small, wandering bands of nomads.”**

**“The death of Indigenous populations was a sad, inevitable, unintended consequence of progress.”**

**Indians were “Savage”/ “Heathens”**

**“The Discovery of America was ...”**

**“The wild, wild west” was ...**

**ACTIVITY:** Explain that the term and concept of “America” (as a continent, and later as a nation – the U.S.) was nonexistent prior to European colonization of this continent. Instead, dynamic and unique cultures and worlds existed prior, which included the richness of Indigenous worlds and worldviews. Have students go to the library, or use any of the digital resources available to them, to explore life in the Americas prior to colonization. **POSSIBLE RESEARCH IDEAS:** How did Maya and Mexica people make books? | What staples were cultivated by Indigenous populations prior to 1492? What animals and plants are native to Abya Yala? Which Indigenous languages are still among us? | What are some words in \_\_\_\_\_ that I can learn? | Interview a person who still speaks one of the original languages of Abya Yala.



# ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: COLUMBUS' JOURNAL

Use Christopher Columbus' journal as a primary source to determine what he thought of the Indigenous people when they arrived in Abya Yala. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** How did Columbus describe the encounter? Was his description of the people he encountered and wrote about positive or negative? How might the way he perceived Indigenous people have been harmful and/or dangerous and how did it lead to their future interactions? The full journal may be found here: <https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/columbus/Columbus-Journal.pdf> You may also use the following excerpts:



**As soon as I arrived in the Indies, on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts.” -From Columbus Journal**



**They... brought us parrots and balls of cotton and spears and many other things, which they exchanged for the glass beads and hawks' bells. They willingly traded everything they owned... They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features... They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane... They would make fine servants... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.” -From Columbus Journal**



**Hispaniola is a miracle. Mountains and hills, plains and pastures, are both fertile and beautiful ... the harbors are unbelievably good and there are many wide rivers of which the majority contain gold. . . There are many spices, and great mines of gold and other metals” -From Columbus Journal**

aptes de mar y rreano en sus ppor las aguas  
de las fuentis y mas compoica. Un libro  
y poner todo por el fomento por pntura por  
labios de equinocid y longitud de el orizonte  
re y fubre todo en un mudo y yo uirde  
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afi mudo. Eas qualis fira gen tradofo.  
Viernes 3. de agosto  
y partimos viernes 3. de agosto de rego-  
lamos de la barra de Salto de agua y nos  
andamos un fuerte viento hasta el poner  
de sol y en el fin se fira mudo y fira. y  
leguas. de fira de fira de fira de fira de fira  
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El sabado 4. de agosto  
y mediano al mediano guerra de fira  
Domingo 5. de agosto.  
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Viernes 7. de agosto

# White Settler Colonialism, Occupation and Slavery

PAGES 13-14



## Learning

**Objectives:** To understand the extent of colonialism as experienced by Indigenous and Black populations; to learn about the connections between land occupation, enslavement of Indigenous and Black populations, and how these still affect the present

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. On page 13 and 14 we witness the inhumane system of slavery imposed by the Ogres. Describe the image. Have you seen images with these themes before?
2. What is the expression on Cologre's face on page 13? What type of motivation does his facial expression convey? What are his motives?
3. Why was Cologre interested in the labor of boys and girls from AfricaTheBeautiful?

## **White Settler Colonialism, Occupation, Slavery ● ● ●**

4. Why does Rebeldita tell us to “not despair” if we had not heard this story before?
  
6. Why did Cologre make “truth something you couldn’t declare”? What is the truth that Cologre is trying to hide for the generations ahead?
  
7. Why does Rebeldita call Cologre a “DOOFUS”?
  
8. Why does Rebeldita tell us that the story of Cologre we have heard before is “all a big lie”? What are the lies she is talking about?
  
9. More than 500 years have passed since the arrival of Cologre in Abya Yala when Rebeldita narrates this story. Why does Rebeldita tell us that, “Although the Ogre Cologre isn’t around anymore, his fibs and his lies remain like before”? Where do they remain?

## **QUICK FACTS:**



European enslavement of people in the Americas began with Columbus. Columbus first enslaved Taíno people, forcing them to labor in the Spanish fields and mines and later taking many enslaved Taíno to Spain. About 50,000 Taíno died within two years of Columbus's arrival, and by 1510 the Taíno population had declined by nearly 90%, from European diseases and brutal treatment.



Between 1525 and 1866, Europeans forcibly enslaved 12.5 million African people, kidnapping them in Africa and removing them from their homeland and bringing them to the Americas. It has been documented that approximately 10.7 million enslaved people managed to live through the horrific journey known as the Middle Passage. The Transatlantic Slave Trade was a European-led enterprise, supported by their descendants in occupied territories throughout the Americas.

## ***White Settler Colonialism, Occupation, Slavery*** ● ● ●



Europeans imported over 90 percent of enslaved people from Africa into the Caribbean and South America. Only about 6 percent of slave-imports went directly to British North America (what is now the United States). The majority of the enslaved population was taken to South America.



In 1787, fifty-five of the wealthiest male residents of the United States signed a document that would form a new system of government. That document is the Constitution of the United States. The majority of the signees were enslavers, or slave-owners, or they owned manufacturing and shipping companies that relied on the system of slavery for making their wealth.



Modern-day police departments in the U.S. are an evolution from slave patrols. For more on this history, you may read “The Origins of Modern Day Policing” by the NAACP. Available: <https://naacp.org/find-resources/history-explained/origins-modern-day-policing>)



Slave labor made it profitable to mine precious metals and harvest sugar, indigo, and tobacco; enslaved people taught whites how to raise such crops as rice and indigo.



Before 1820, the number of Africans was higher than the combined total of European immigrants.



The origins of property rights in the United States are rooted in the system of racial domination that whites instituted throughout the Americas for maintaining control of people, land, and resources.



With the occupation of Abya Yala by Europeans came the imposition of new racial laws. Possession of white skin was by the 1600s codified into law by the British colonists, giving “whites” the right to own, sell and codify people, sell and own property, to dispossess people, to write and create “the law”, possess territory, restrict and/or enjoy movement. For more on this topic, view Dr. Cheryl I. Harris' work, "Whiteness as Property." Available here: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=927850](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=927850)



Between 1681 and 1682, the first slave codes appeared in what is now the United States, codifying the extreme deprivations of liberty already existing in social practice.



Throughout the Americas, enslaved Blacks and Indigenous people were not allowed to own property, as they themselves were considered property of other people.

## White Settler Colonialism, Occupation, Slavery ● ● ●



Enslaved Blacks were forbidden to leave the owner's property unless they obtained permission or were accompanied by a white person.



In some states, like Virginia, any "slave" who evaded capture for 20 days or more was to be publicly whipped for the first offense; to be branded with the letter "R" on the right cheek for the second offense ("R" for "Runaway"); to lose one ear if absent for 30 days for the third offense; and to be castrated for the fourth offense.



Under the slave codes, it was illegal for the enslaved person to read or write. Any whites operating a school or teaching reading and writing to any Black person in Missouri, for example, could be punished by a fine of not less than \$500 and up to six months in jail. Especially in the South, so-called Christian values made the Bible the only exception to the "no slaves reading" laws. More from the slave codes:

- No testimony could be made by an enslaved person against a white person. Therefore, the slave's side of the story could never be told in a court of law.
- An enslaved person accused of a crime — *any* crime — against a white person was akin to a death sentence.
- If a master killed his slave as a result of disciplining the slave, the master would be free of all punishment.
- No Right to Bear Arms or Self-Defense. If caught carrying a gun, the enslaved person would receive 39 lashes with a whip and forfeit his weapon. In some places, even free Blacks couldn't carry a gun.
- Enslaved people could travel only with written permission from their masters, and any Black person in bondage attempting to run away and leave the colony (later, state) was subject to the death penalty.
- The slave code prohibited the enslaved from assembling without a white person present.
- Only a free woman could have free offspring, but if a free white woman married an enslaved Black man, she became the property of her husband's master.
- Owners refusing to abide by the slave code were fined and forfeited ownership of their slaves.
- Enslaved people's homes were searched every two weeks for weapons or stolen goods. Punishment for violations included loss of ears, branding, nose-slitting, and death.
- No enslaved person was allowed to work for pay; plant corn, peas, or rice; keep hogs, cattle, or horses; own or operate a boat; or buy, sell, or wear clothes finer than "Negro cloth."



## *White Settler Colonialism, Occupation, Slavery* ● ● ●



1830 Indian Removal Act: Although already in practice since the arrival of the Spanish and English in what would become the United States, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 made the removal of First Nations/Indigenous peoples in North America official by way of Executive Order. This meant that enforcing the policy now officially required the U.S. Army to use military force to restrict and determine the movement of peoples who had been living in North America for over thousands of years.



Native populations located in the eastern part of the United States were relegated to geographies not of their choice: reservations in the west.



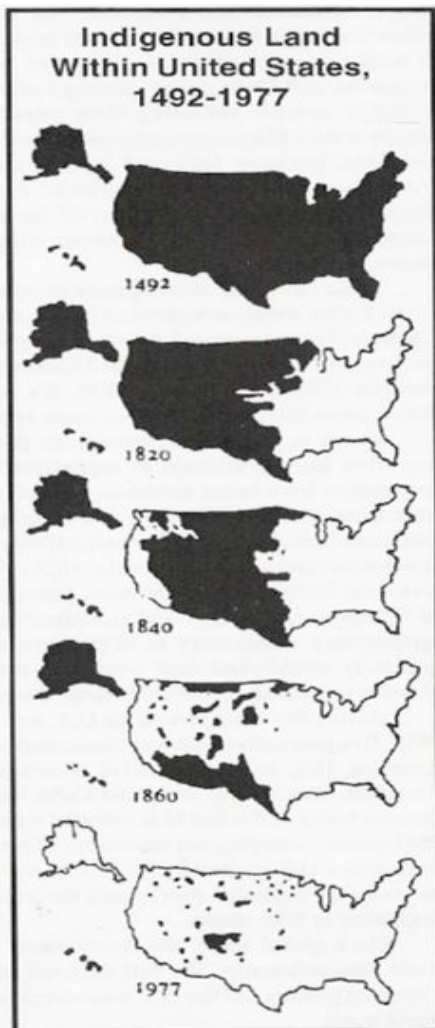
Between 1776 and the present, the United States seized an approximate 1.5 billion acres from North America's Indigenous populations. Land occupation was accompanied by violence.

Indigenous people resisting relocation orders were met with the latest military technology until the beginning of the 1900s. By the early 1900s, white occupiers in what is now “The United States” had forcibly removed most Indigenous communities from their lands, and had separated thousands of Indigenous children from their parents, by putting them away in atrocious boarding schools that had one racist purpose: in the words of General Richard Henry Pratt, to “Kill the Indian and Save the Man.” By 1900, Indigenous people represented only half of one percent of the US population, making them a small and politically minoritized community in their own lands.



## COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY: LAND THEFT

**(U.S.)** Between 1776 and the present, the United States seized an approximate 1.5 billion acres from North America's Indigenous populations. Land occupation and theft by Europeans, however, began much earlier, in 1492. Look at the interactive map created by historian Dr. Claudio Saunt, from the University of Georgia, offering a time-lapse vision of U.S. land occupation found here: [http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_vault/2014/06/17/interactive\\_map\\_loss\\_of\\_indian\\_land.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_vault/2014/06/17/interactive_map_loss_of_indian_land.html) You may also use the map provided below. Explain to students that land occupation, once the United States had consolidated itself as nation, happened by way of Executive Orders, by force, and by way of broken treaties. Furthermore, remind students that the land was not "uninhabited."



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Look at the amount of Indigenous lands as indicated by the shaded areas of the maps. What happens to indigenous lands beginning in 1492?
2. When you have learned about how the U.S. acquired its present territory, how is it explained?
3. Why do you think we hardly ever talk about land theft when talking about the foundations of the United States?
4. How does your perspective of U.S. history change when you realize we are standing on lands that were stolen from Indigenous peoples?

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY:** Look at the following two posters created by the U.S. Government. The first one is from 1911. The second one is from 1872. Both posters further facilitate the theft and occupation of Indigenous lands in what is now the United States. Please remind your students that these land sales were happening at the very same time that Indigenous populations of the North were being forcibly removed from their homes, and moved westwards, into Reservations. Reservations are not, and were not, a place of choice for Indigenous peoples.

## INDIAN LAND FOR SALE

GET A HOME  
OF  
YOUR OWN  
EASY PAYMENTS



PERFECT TITLE  
POSSESSION  
WITHIN  
THIRTY DAYS

### FINE LANDS IN THE WEST

IRRIGATED GRAZING AGRICULTURAL  
IRRIGABLE DRY FARMING

IN 1910 THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SOLD UNDER SEALED BIDS ALLOTTED INDIAN LAND AS FOLLOWS:

Location.	Acres.	Average Price per Acre.	Location.	Acres.	Average Price per Acre.
Colorado .....	5,211.21	\$7.27	Oklahoma .....	34,664.00	\$19.14
Idaho .....	17,013.00	24.85	Oregon .....	1,020.00	15.43
Kansas .....	1,684.50	33.45	South Dakota .....	120,445.00	16.53
Montana .....	11,034.00	9.86	Washington .....	4,879.00	41.37
Nebraska .....	5,641.00	36.65	Wisconsin .....	1,069.00	17.00
North Dakota .....	22,610.70	9.93	Wyoming .....	865.00	20.64

FOR THE YEAR 1911 IT IS ESTIMATED THAT **350,000 ACRES** WILL BE OFFERED FOR SALE

For information as to the character of the land write for booklet, "INDIAN LANDS FOR SALE," to the Superintendent U. S. Indian School at any one of the following places:


CALIFORNIA: Haaga. COLORADO: Ignacio. IDAHO: Laywell. KANSAS: Harris. NEBRASKA:	MINNESOTA: Oquon. MONTANA: Crow Agency. NEBRASKA: May. NEBRASKA:	NORTH DAKOTA: Fort Totten. NORTH DAKOTA: Fort Yates. OREGON: Elsiech Agency. OREGON: Pendleton. OREGON:	OKLAHOMA—Cos. See and Fox Agency. OKLAHOMA: Shawnee. OKLAHOMA: Wyandotte. OREGON: Elsiech Agency. OREGON: Pendleton. OREGON:	SOUTH DAKOTA: Cheyenne Agency. SOUTH DAKOTA: Crow Creek. SOUTH DAKOTA: Greenwood. SOUTH DAKOTA: Lower Brule. SOUTH DAKOTA: Pine Ridge. SOUTH DAKOTA: Sisseton. SOUTH DAKOTA: Sisseton.	WASHINGTON: Fort Simcoe. WASHINGTON: Fort Spokane. WASHINGTON: Teana. WASHINGTON: Twialip. WISCONSIN:
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**WALTER L. FISHER,** Secretary of the Interior.      **ROBERT G. VALENTINE,** Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

PRODUCTS WILL PAY FOR LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS!

## MILLIONS OF ACRES

View on the Big Blue, between Camden and Croft, representing Valley and Rolling Prairie Land to Nebraska.



## IOWA AND NEBRASKA LANDS

FOR SALE ON **10 YEARS CREDIT**

BY THE **Burlington & Missouri River R.R. Co.**

**AT 6 PER CENT INTEREST AND LOW PRICES.**

Only One-Seventh of Principal Due Annually, beginning Four Years after purchase.  
20 PER CENT DEDUCTED FROM 10 YEARS PRICE, FOR CASH.

**LAND EXPLORING TICKETS SOLD**

and Cost allowed in First Interest paid, on Land bought in 30 days from date of ticket.  
These **LAND EXPLORING TICKETS** are **FREE** in the State where the Land bought is located.  
These **TERMS** are **FREE** at \$5, then to pre-empt United States Land at \$2.50 per Acre.  
EXTRAORDINARY INDUCEMENTS ON FREIGHT AND PASSAGE ARE AFFORDED TO PURCHASERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Address **GEO. S. HARRIS, LAND COMMISSIONER,**  
or **T. H. LEAVITT, Asst Land Comm'r,** Burlington, Iowa.

Or apply to

FREE ROOMS for buyers to board themselves are provided at Burlington and Lincoln.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR POSTER ANALYSIS ACTIVITY:** What observations can your students make about these posters and the fine print on them? What does the language say about “Indian Land”? Where do the posters mention how the U.S. obtained all this land that it being “sold”? How are the posters making occupied lands seem like land that is “uninhabited,” “up for grabs”? Why would the first poster include the image of a Native man?

**How do you think the ownership of valuable land benefitted the new "owners" and future generations of their family?**





## ANALYSIS/COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY: THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN TWO MINUTES:

315 years. 20,528 voyages. Millions of lives. By Andrew Kahn and Jamelle Bouie: <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/09/atlantic-slave-trade-history-animated-interactive.html>  
Have students watch the interactive slave trade map and choose a time period and slave ship by pausing the video and clicking on a dot. **ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:** *What year did this slave ship travel? From where did it depart? Where did it arrive? How many enslaved people were on the ship upon departure from Africa? How many enslaved people did the ship have upon arrival to the Western Hemisphere? What happened to the people who didn't arrive? What do you think this experience was like for the people involved?*

After answering the questions above, have students watch "Life on a Slave Ship", by the History Channel, available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmQvofAiZGA>. Answer the **QUESTIONS:** *What was it like for enslaved people to be transported across the Atlantic Ocean in a slave ship? What do you think this experience was like for the slave traders? What do you think drove the slave traders to participate in the Slave Trade?*

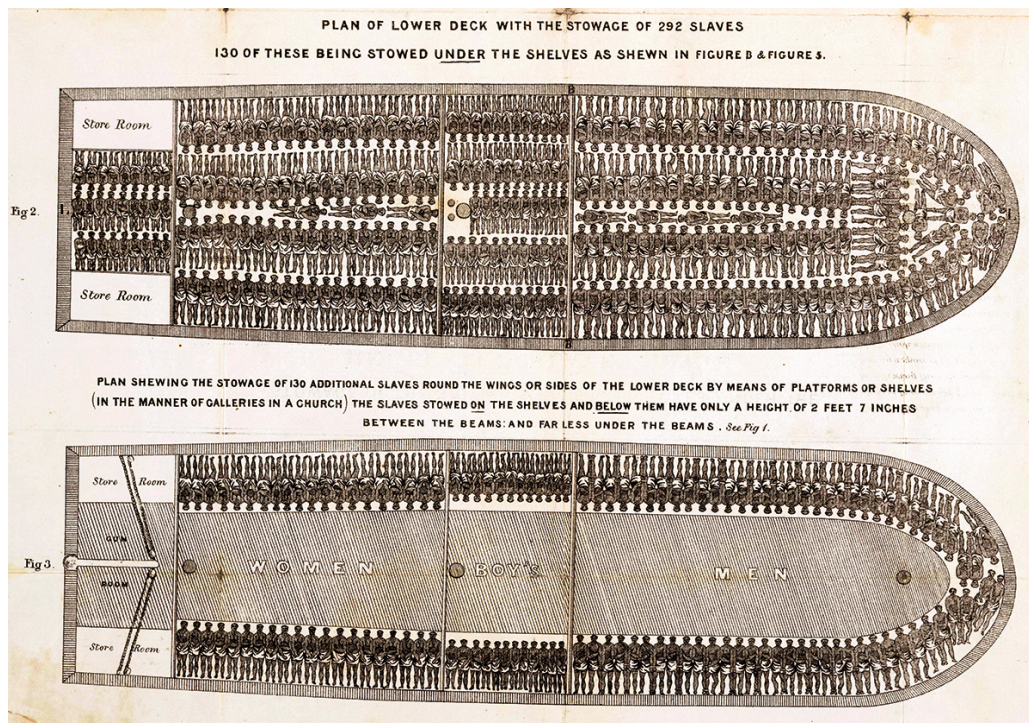


Diagram of the Brookes, 18th century. Alamy.



## **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY | Visual Learning Strategy:**

Have students analyze the image and answer the following questions in writing:

What do you see? What do you think is happening? What do you wonder?



A circa 1830 illustration of a slave auction in America. Rischgitz/Hulton Archive—Getty Images

After writing their answers down, put students in pairs or trios to share and discuss what they wrote. Then start a whole class discussion, giving students opportunities to share what they wrote and what they learned from their partners.

See full instructions for Visual Learning Strategy, elaborated by Ehecatl Wind Philosophy. Available here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mevdqOv149QaZihQMM3kOs36kO5RebxAQIZaXPbgj0Q/edit>

# Indigenous and Black Resistances

PAGES 15-24

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about resistance histories in Abya Yala from the perspective of Indigenous and Black populations; to learn about histories that are frequently omitted in history textbooks and classrooms; to understand that Indigenous and Black populations are not passive victims of colonialism, but active agents of change in resisting and creating alternative communities to more than 500 years of white settler colonialism in the Americas; to recognize slavery as a dehumanizing process of power; to construct new/others stories from the perspective of resisting communities; to further debunk the myth of discovery



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. On page 15, the *abuelita* is with the children by a large Ceiba tree. What does this picture show is happening?
2. Why does Rebeldita call *abuelita* “wise”? What does grandma know and do that is wise?

### Indigenous and Black Resistances ● ● ●

3. Where have you heard the word “refuge” before? Google it, or refer to the list of key words at the beginning of this guide. What does it mean if a person IS a refugee? What does it mean if a person finds refuge?
4. Why do *abuelita*, the children, and the puppies need a refuge?
5. Have you or someone you know ever needed a refuge? Who may need a refuge today? Do you know of any living group, or living being, that needs a refuge? Where would be a good refuge for them?
6. Have you ever known of anyone, or a group of people, that prevents people from getting the refuge they need? Why do they want to stop people from getting refuge?
7. The *abuelita* decides to escape Cologre and the Ogres, but does not go by herself. She takes 7 children and 7 puppies. Why do you think it is important for her to escape with a community of people instead of escaping alone? If you were to escape Cologre and the Ogres, would you rather do it by yourself? Or with a community of people? Why?
8. On pages 17 and 18, the children and *abuelita* are shown “Inside little caves.” The children in the image are engaging in a whole lot of activities to help maintain their self-sustainable community, away from Ogres' camps and plantations. Choose your favorite activity and talk about why you think that activity is important for the children.
9. The children think food is very important. We see them planting many seeds and growing their own food. Why is it important for the children to plant their own food?
10. Where do your fruits and vegetables come from? Who plants them? Who picks or harvests them? Who brings them to the store, puts them on the shelves, and sells them? How do they get to your house and on your plate?
11. Have you ever planted your own food? What would happen if you and your classmates could plant all of the food you needed?





12. Adinkras are Ghanaian symbols with different meanings; they are used in fabrics, pottery, and architectural designs. **Sankofa is a word in Twi (a language from Ghana) that means to go back and get the jewels from the past to continue using them in the present. Sankofa is represented with a bird walking forward, but looking backwards.** Look at the Sankofa on the *abuelita's* board. Why do you think the *abuelita* is teaching them about Sankofa? What from their past must they continue to use in their present?



13.

14. Traditionally, in Africa, drums represent the soul of the community they're found in and play an important role in every aspect of life, including the physical, emotional, and spiritual. They are used for celebrating events and rituals within the community, for communicating, mourning, and inspiring. They're played in good times and bad times, for planting and harvesting, for birth and for death. Why do you think the *abuelita* makes sure to teach the children about the drum?



15. To “resist” is to refuse to comply with a situation, or be changed by it. On page 21 and 22 the children play their traditional games while grandma watches. Why do you think the children call playing their traditional games, speaking their languages, and planting their food, a form of “resistance”? How can these actions be resistance, and what are they a resistance to?

## QUICK FACTS:



Africa was a developed and resourceful continent whose history starts 1000s of years prior to European exploitation.



Africa is a continent, not a country.



Enslaved Africans on boats engaged in at least 250 shipboard rebellions. They were not docile, passive figures receptive to the cultural inputs and wishes of their masters.



Many enslaved Africans throughout the Americas defied the slave system by escaping it. Known as *Cimarrones* in various areas of the Caribbean and Central America, or “Maroons,” these Africans' escape attempts were dangerous and uncertain. Slaveholders posted substantial rewards for the capture of those whom they considered “their property” even though they were human beings. But every year, thousands of enslaved people fled to free states, territories, or in the case of enslaved people in the Caribbean, to mountains. Others hid near the fringes of the plantations or deep in forests or swamps. On the way, they were aided by other enslaved people on nearby farms and plantations and by networks of free Blacks, Indigenous communities, and some European Americans. In the United States alone, by 1860, an estimated 400,000 people had escaped enslavement. Two of these such groups are the Garínagu in the Caribbean and the Mascogos in Mexico.



Maroons were Africans and their descendants in the Americas who formed settlements away from slavery. Some escaped from plantations, others were born free among their community. They often mixed with Indigenous peoples, thus creating distinctive Creole cultures.



## Indigenous and Black Resistances ● ● ●



Although enslavement of Indigenous and Black people existed throughout the Americas for more than 300 years, slavery was challenged and resisted every day, by its victims, by its survivors, and by those who found it morally unacceptable, including white people like John Brown, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and William Lloyd Garrison, among others.



Various people and groups who escaped enslavement managed to retain and protect their ancestral knowledges, passing these on to future generations. Today, all throughout the Americas, from the Amazon through Central America, and in Turtle Island, young, Indigenous, Black, AfroIndigenous artists are reclaiming their ancient heritages through music, art, and daily life actions that fight racial discrimination and historical amnesia and rewrite their histories.

### **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: LANDBACK** is a movement that

has existed for generations with a long legacy of organizing and sacrifice to get Indigenous Lands back into Indigenous hands. Currently, there are LANDBACK battles being fought all across Turtle Island. The movement goes beyond the transfer of deeds to include respecting Indigenous rights, preserving languages and traditions, and ensuring food sovereignty, housing, and clean air and water. Explore LANDBACK's website, <https://landback.org/> and watch their featured documentary "Hesápa."



Getty Images

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *Why do the people in the documentary say that we continue to stand on stolen lands? Why do Indigenous communities continue to fight for their land? Why is land important to them? Why do you think they need to remind us that "this is their land"?*



Garinagu in Seattle. Photo Courtesy:  
Yoelin Connor

## **ACTIVITY: THE GARÍNAGU**

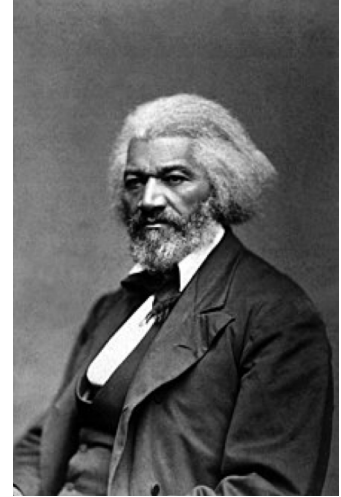
In 1635, two Spanish ships were wrecked near what is now the island of St. Vincent, in what Europeans labeled the West Indies. These two ships held people from West Africa who Europeans were going to enslave in the West Indies. These West Africans, however, escaped from the Spaniards, hiding themselves among the Indigenous people from St. Vincent. These escaped Africans adapted to the new environment in hopes of avoiding slavery, remaining under the protection of the Indigenous communities. Likewise, these Indigenous communities protected their new African neighbors because they, too, resisted European encroachment on their lands. Eventually the Indigenous Caribs and West Africans began intermarrying, and ultimately, created the

Garifuna people – the Garínagu. Today, Garínagu people live mostly on the Coast of Central America, but as of recently, many have migrated to different cities throughout the world. Find out at least 5 cities in the world where there are now Garínagu living and investigate what has motivated their migration.

**ACTIVITY:** Research what other groups, like the Garínagu, escaped slavery throughout the Americas. How did they manage to escape? Where does this group live now? What have they done to protect and keep from their heritage throughout the passing of generations?

## **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: Frederick Douglass**

was a Black social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. After escaping enslavement in Maryland, he became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York, becoming famous for his incisive antislavery writings. Do a Google search on Frederick Douglass. Choose your favorite quote by him and create a poster with your chosen quote for your classmates to see. In this poster, make sure to include the quote in big letters. Then draw or illustrate your interpretation of the quote. Present to your class on why this was your favorite Frederick Douglass quote.



## **ACTIVITY: Last Real Indians**

is a media movement ( <https://lastrealindians.com/> ). On their mission, they state: “LRI is grounded in our pre-contact ways of life. We are independent media with direction. We are an adaptation of our story-tellers. We are content creators of many origins with a vision of returning Indigenous peoples of all “races” to a

state of respect for generations unborn. We are a confluence of the waters of many peoples flowing quiet and mighty. We are taking our place, telling the world. Creating the New Indigenous Millennium.” Visit their website with your students and explore their work. Then, ask your students to report on any one of their stories and why your students think such story is important for LRI.



**TUBMAN200 - Harriet Tubman  
Bicentennial Project- ONLINE  
RESOURCE by Dr. Janell Hobson**

**ACTIVITY: #TUBMAN200** Explore the project #Tubman200, The Harriet Tubman Bicentennial Project at <https://msmagazine.com/tubman200/>, a project led by Dr. Janell Hobson. And watch the brief documentary “The breathtaking courage of Harriet Tubman,” also found at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dv7YhVKFqbQ&t=12s>

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.** *What were Tubman’s main challenges? How was Tubman able to surpass those challenges? What did Tubman mean when she said, “I go away to prepare a place for you”?*

**ACTIVITY: ZINN EDUCATION PROJECT** Go to the Zinn Educational Project’s website, <https://www.zinnedproject.org/>. This website is an excellent resource for educators and students learning about the Americas from the perspective of silenced, omitted histories. Explore the website with your students. Have students research a story of resistance in the U.S. *Why is such story a story of resistance?*

## **ACTIVITY: “Why is everything white?”**

“This is when I knew something was wrong,” and “We were robbed of our true history” are just some of the comments Muhammad Ali makes in this 1971 interview with Michael Parkinson: After watching the interview with students, discuss the following: *Which of Muhammad Ali’s questions and observations about a White world still ring true for us today? How so? Are we are robbed of our true history? Why or why not?*



Interview available here: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-52988605>





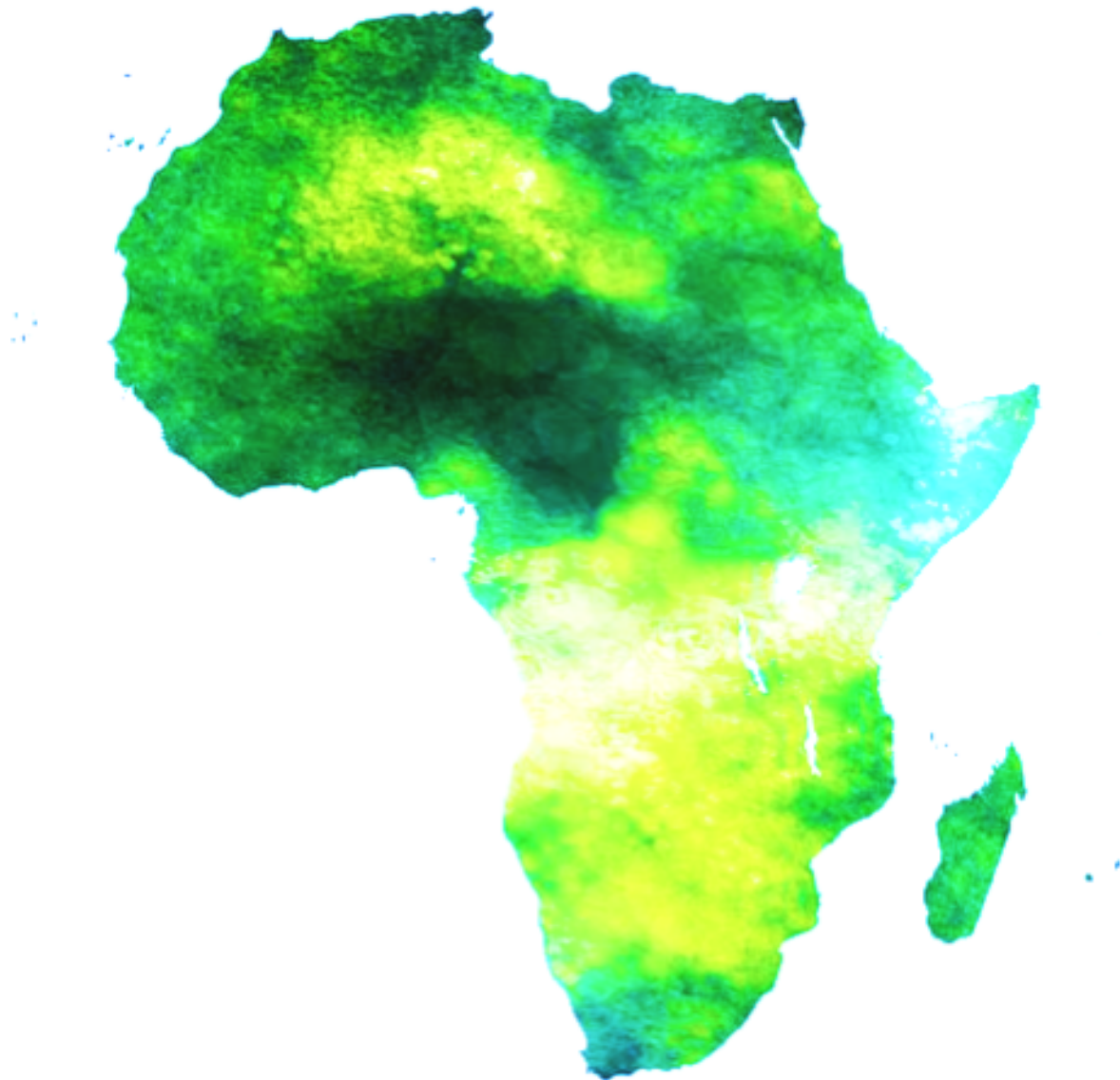
**FIND OUT WHERE - ACTIVITY:** Print out the map of Abya Yala provided above, and pinpoint all the places where there is historical documentation of Indigenous and Black resistances to white settler colonialism. Use online resources or go to your library.

**ACTIVITY:** At least 150 Indigenous languages are still spoken in North America, 112 in the U.S. and 60 in Canada. In what is now Latin America, there are over 1000 Indigenous languages – not dialects – spoken throughout. Map out at least 20 of the most spoken Indigenous languages throughout Abya Yala. On the map of Abya Yala, pinpoint where these languages are spoken. Try to find out how to say “Hello” in each one of these 20 languages, and add the word or phrase to the map!



### *Indigenous and Black Resistances ● ● ●*

**ACTIVITY:** Around 2,000 different languages are spoken in Africa today, many of these with varying dialects. Print out this map of Africa for your students and have them find out, pinpoint, and write in at least 10 of the most spoken African languages today. Go further with this activity and have your students find out about the largest ethnic groups composing Africa today



## **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: THE DANGER OF A SINGLE STORY**

Watch this empowering Ted Talk by writer Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *What does Adichie mean by a “single story”? What do you understand by it? What is dangerous about single stories? Has a single story ever been told about you? How did you find out? How did it make you feel? Have you ever told a single story? What did you do?*



*How did you come to realize it was a single story? How can we undo the telling of single stories?*

Ted Talk available:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story?language=en-t-115262](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en-t-115262)

# WRITING AS POWER PAGES 25-26

**Learning Objective:** To understand the relationship between writing and power

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After the *abuelita* transitions, Rebeldita tells us that the children from Abya Yala “got down to writing without thinking it twice,” just like the *abuelita* had asked them to do. Why do you think the children think it is important to write their story?
2. What do you think would have happened if the children had decided not to write their story?
3. How is writing their own story important in the context of the lies the Ogre Cologre leaves behind?
4. Why is it important that the children tell the truth in their story?
5. The children decide to write their story and hide it inside the Ceiba Tree “So that one day,” the children agreed, “someone frees Abya Yala from Cologre’s lies and land-grabbing greed.” How could someone in the future help them? How can we help them?
6. Why is truth-telling important for the children?



# Borders, Racism, and the Occupation of a Continent PAGES 27-30

**Learning Objective:** To understand the relationship between borders and land occupation; to understand how the language we use to speak about an issue shapes our perspective

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. On page 27, Rebeldita tells us that many years have passed since the children wrote the book they hid inside the Ceiba Tree. She is talking about more than 500 years passing! Look at the image of Cologre, now old, and how the landscape of Abya Yala changed throughout all those years. How is current day Abya Yala different from the one from before Cologre just arrived?
2. What does this image tell you about how and why the Ogres stayed in Abya Yala?
3. Why do the Ogres decide to put up walls and what are they for? Who or what do you think those walls keep out? And who or what is kept in?
4. Do you know of any real walls like the ones put up by the Ogres?
5. There is nothing natural or normal about the borders in the Americas. They haven't been there forever. They were decided upon by people in charge, and then built and enforced. Why do you think some humans build these walls on lands that were stolen from Indigenous populations? What purpose do these walls serve?

## QUICK FACTS:



The border between the United States and Mexico stretches for nearly 2,000 miles from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean and touches the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. This border traverses some of the continent's most biologically diverse regions, including forests, grasslands and salt marshes, and is home to more than 1,500 native animal and plant species.



For Indigenous peoples of the Americas, the U.S.-Mexico border is a symbol and tool of genocide and occupation. When this border was created, Indigenous peoples of the region were divided, including the Yaqui, O'odham, Cocopah, Kumeyaay, Pai, Apache, and Kickapoo.



The walls and fences on the U.S.-Mexico border have cut off, isolated, and drastically reduced populations of some of the most beautiful animals in North America, such as the jaguar. As a result of the constructed wall areas, there is also exacerbated flooding when rivers overflow.



Grassroots Indigenous organizations such as the Indigenous Alliance Without Borders, O'odham Voice Against the Wall, and Indivisible Tohono are working in the U.S.-Mexico border region to raise consciousness about the negative impacts of the border and current border enforcement policies on Indigenous peoples. They want the U.S. Government to recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples within their homelands.



The U.S.-Mexico border is one of the world's most militarized borders, even though the two countries are not at war. Since the 1993 establishment of border control policies, at least 10,000 immigrants have lost their lives attempting to cross the border.



Before policing immigrants, U.S. military forces policed the U.S.-Mexico border area looking for enslaved Africans who escaped.



The first federal law governing which excluded *immigrants* from entering the U.S. was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. With it, Chinese immigrants became the earliest targets of systematic efforts to determine which immigrants could and could not enter the United States.

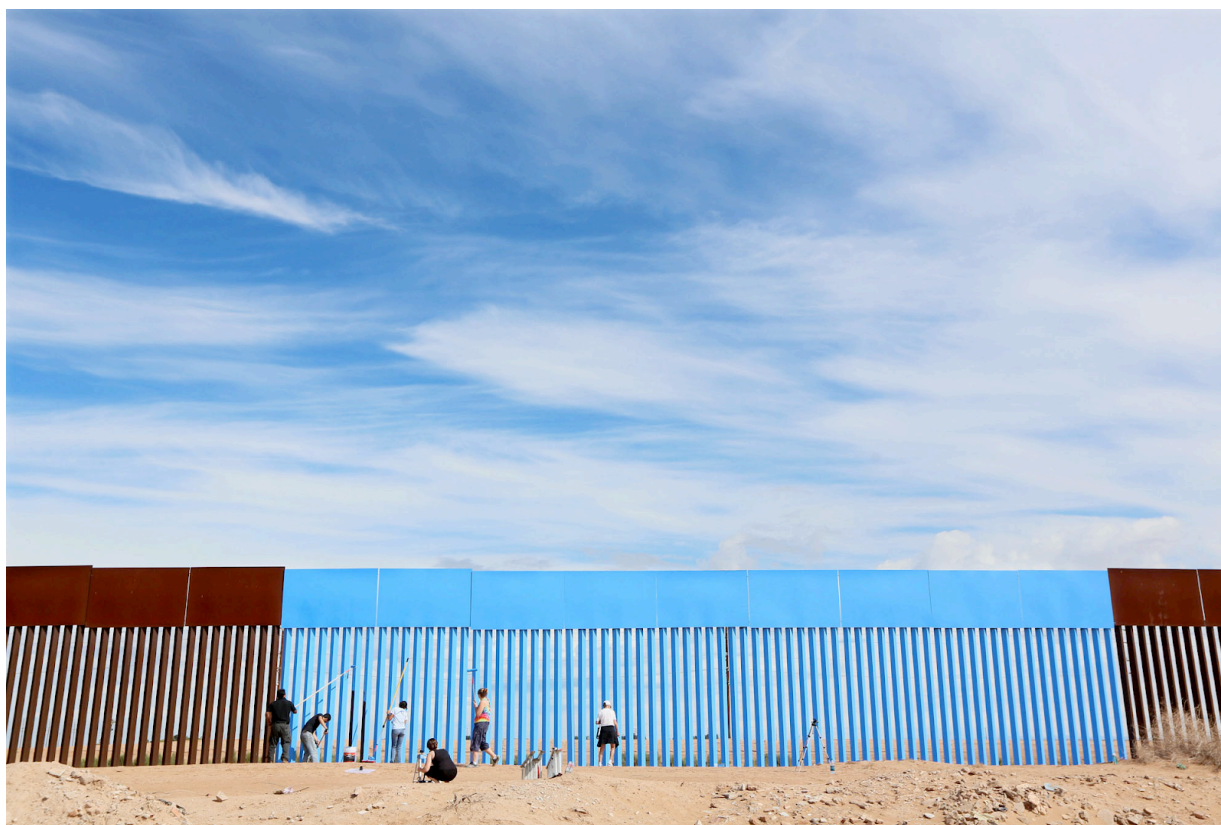


The border between the U.S. and Mexico has always been utilized to police, monitor, and, or, impede the movement of Indigenous people and people of color. It is rarely used to dictate or police the movement of whites and their descendants in what is now the United States.



*Borders, Racism and the Occupation of a Continent ● ● ●*

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY:** Thousands of families and animals are separated by the U.S.-Mexico border on a yearly basis. Thousands of children cannot see their parents, grandparents cannot be visited by their grandchildren, mothers and dads can't hug their children, animals cannot follow their migratory routes, and too often, these separations end tragically. Other times, people resist that border by thinking of ways to erase it. **DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING IMAGES WITH YOUR STUDENTS.** *What do these images say about people's opposition to the border?*



Erasing the Border Art project led by artist Ana Teresa Fernández. Mexicali, April 9, 2016. Volunteers paint the border fence between the U.S. and Mexico to give the illusion of transparency. Photo credit: The Atlantic/Sandy Huffaker / Reuters

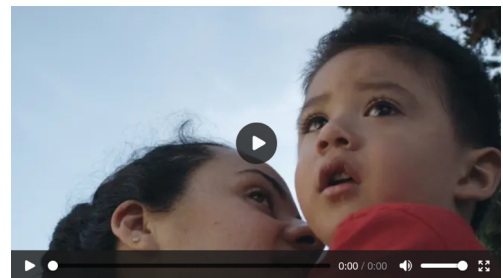
## **Borders, Racism and the Occupation of a Continent ● ● ●**



An art installation at the border near El Paso, Texas, and Juárez, Mexico, helps connect people on either side, even if they can't see each other. Photo by Ronald Rael

### **ACTIVITY: THROUGH THE WALL** A family divided by

the US-Mexico border. Short documentary by Tim Nackashi and Chelo Alvarez-Stehle - *The Guardian*. Look at this brief documentary with your students. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *How does the border wall and boundary affect this family? Why do some people believe it necessary to divide families like this? What types of communities do borders hurt the most?*



Available:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2016/mar/29/us-mexico-border-through-the-wall-video>

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY:** Look at this image taken at the U.S.-Mexico Border in 2019. Many people, unaware of the racist history of borders and immigration laws in our continent, and in the United States, call recent immigrants from Latin America “illegal.” But “illegal” is a derogatory term that we should never use to refer to a person. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** *Why should we never use the term “illegal” to refer to a human being? What things are illegal in our society? What happens when we call a human being “illegal”? What does the sign “No one is illegal on stolen land” mean? What might Rebellita say about this topic? What do you think about calling humans “illegals”?*



Demonstrator holds a sign that reads, “No one is illegal on stolen land” at a protest near the U.S.-Mexico border. Photo by SOPA Images/Getty Images



**Why is it important to say, “settler colonialism” instead of “westward expansion”?**



## **ANALYSIS ACTIVITY**



Watch this brief interview with Dr. Naoko Shibusawa, “Why is it important to say “settler colonialism” instead of “westward expansion.” **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

*What is the difference between saying “settler colonialism” and “westward expansion”? Expand on the meaning of each of these two phrases. Why do you think most history books insist on using the term “westward expansion” instead of “settler colonialism”? What connotations*

*does each term generate? How can the language we use to talk about an issue change our perspective on that one issue? Can you think of other phrases we read, hear, or use regularly that should also be omitted and rephrased? Video available:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Doi3CnnT8qs>



# Knowing Your History, Writing your Story Pages 31- End

**Learning Objectives** To empower children through storytelling, writing, and histories of resistance in Abya Yala

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



1. On page 32, Rebeldita finds and opens up the hidden book written by the children some 500 years ago, and “Each word so transformed her that she felt herself freed.” How can newfound knowledge make someone feel differently? Or in Rebeldita’s case, free?
2. What are some of the things Rebeldita learns from the book?
3. Why is it important for Rebeldita to know that the actual name of the “land she lives on” is Abya Yala, and “not the name the Ogres gave it, on maps they had drawn”? What name did the Ogres give it?
4. On the last two pages, why does Rebeldita say that “history needed to be rewritten anew”?

*Knowing your History, Writing your Story ● ● ●*

5. Why is it important for Rebeldita to share this story with us?
6. What does Rebeldita mean when she says, “Nobody can deny you your history and right to control your future and make it shine bright!”?
7. How does history we learn control who we are? How does your history shape you? How will it shape your future?
8. How did the lies the Ogre Cologre created about his greatness affect the future for the children of Abya Yala?
9. After reading this book, what does Rebeldita ask all of us to do?
10. What does Rebeldita mean when she asks that we “free Abya Yala from Ogre lies”?

## WRITING ACTIVITY: WRITE YOUR STORY

All of us are capable of writing our stories, no matter our age, our skin color, our backgrounds, or our grade-levels! **We are all knowledge producers as much as we are learners.** We all have the capacity to create history, and write our stories. Here are some key things to do when you are ready to write:

### Steps to writing your book:



1. Come up with your **BIG IDEA**. You should be able to explain this idea in very few words - no more than one sentence.
2. Make sure you are clear on your story's/book's **PURPOSE**. Answer this: What do I want people to stay with after reading my book?
3. **PLOT IT!** Ask yourself:
  - Who tells my story?
  - What happens first, after, last?
  - What is the main problem that must be resolved?
  - How is the problem resolved?
  - Conclude by inviting your readers to want to know more, make sure to leave them hooked!
4. **WRITE IT!**
5. **REVISE, REVISE, REVISE** until you love it
6. Illustrate it, if it has any illustrations
7. **PUBLISH/SHARE** it, and always **HAVE FUN!**

Rebeldita

**ANALYSIS ACTIVITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF STORIES** In small groups, have students answer the following **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**: *What do each of these points signify for you? How is each statement true, or not? What are specific examples for each one of these statements?*



**SOME MORE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON SLIDE:** What happens to us when someone else writes our story? | How do stories connect us? | How do stories have the power to alter perspectives? Offer examples from your own experiences. | How are stories all around us? | How are we products of a story? | Why does it matter to talk about the stories we hear? | How do stories affect our future? Can you think of a story that has affected your future? | What stories are you part of?



# ANOTHER CLASSROOM PROJECT IDEA:

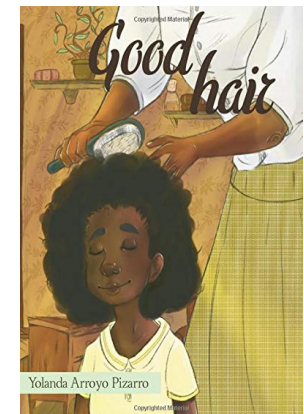
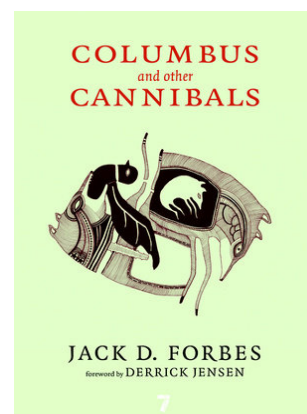
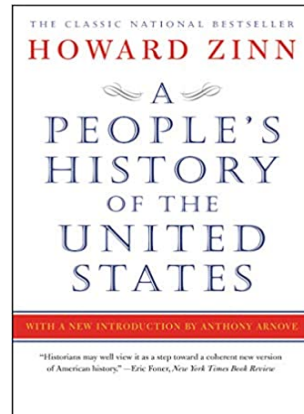
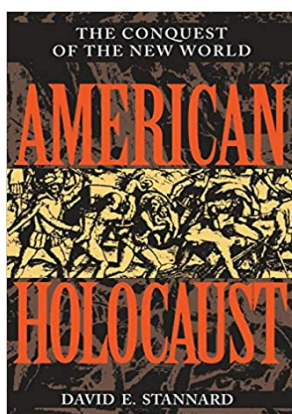
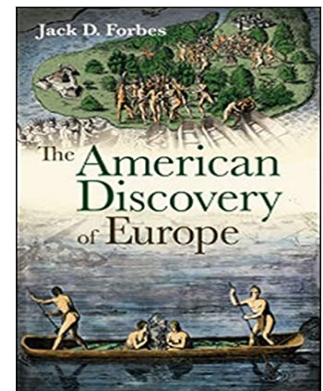
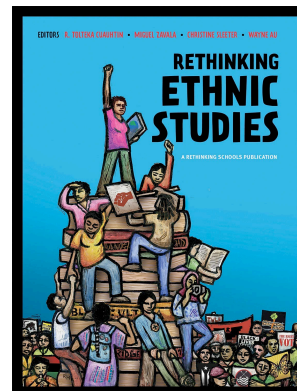
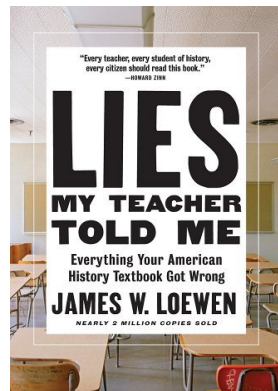
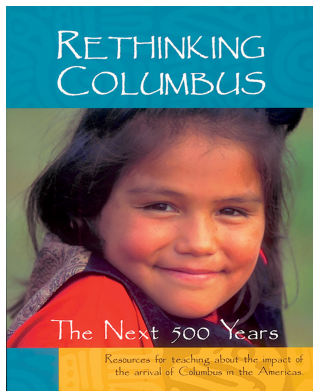
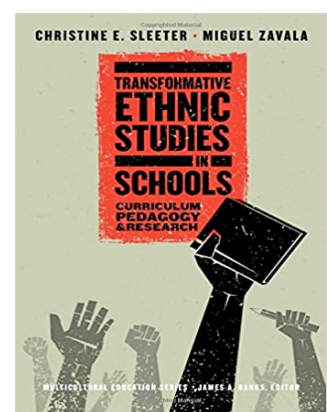
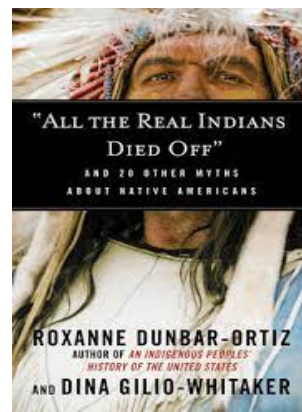
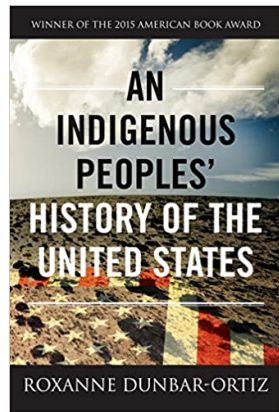
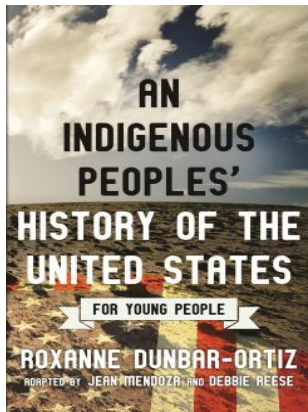
## ELIMINATE COLUMBUS DAY

Does Columbus Day still exist in your school district? Many schools, districts, counties, (and entire countries!) have raised their voices to change the name “Columbus Day” to “Indigenous People’s Day” or “Indigenous Resistance Day.”

Introduce the idea to your school board, your town council or other members of your community. Write a letter with your reasoning, and documenting how other schools, towns, cities, and countries have joined the movement to do away with “Columbus Day.” And don't forget to let Rebeldita know!

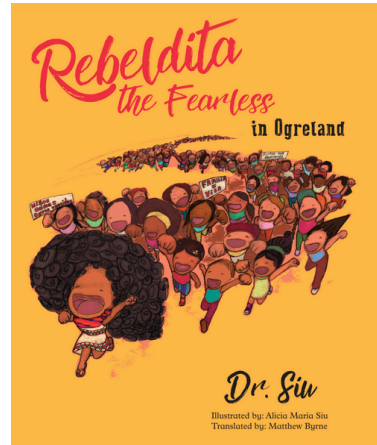
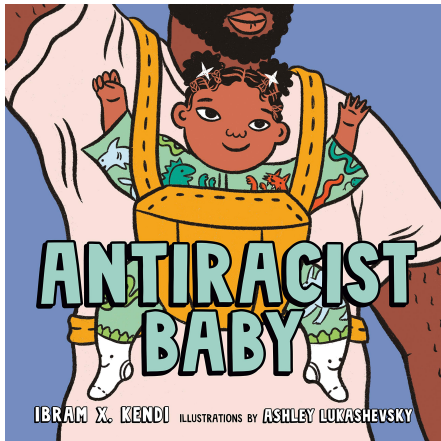


# FURTHER RECOMMENDED READINGS & RESOURCES:

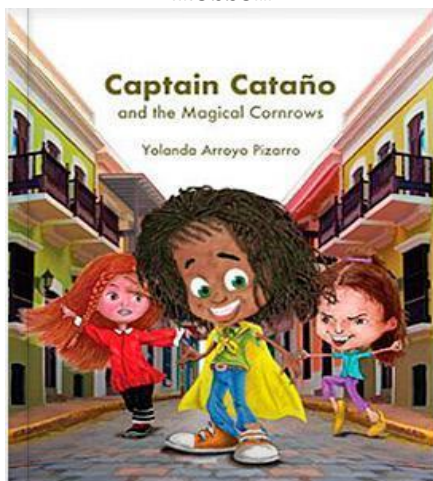




**FURTHER RECOMMENDED READINGS & RESOURCES ● ● ●**



**TUBMAN200 - Harriet Tubman  
Bicentennial Project- ONLINE  
RESOURCE by Dr. Janell  
Hobson**

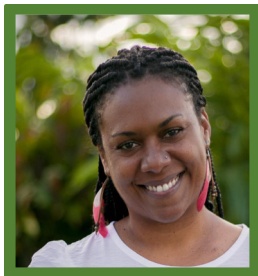


# THE AUTHORS OF THIS GUIDE:



**Dr. Oriel María Siu** (1981) is Náhuat/Pipil/Chinese - a writer, scholar, and educator born in Honduras. Daughter to a strong & mighty Náhuat/Pipil mother, and a dedicated Chinese Nicaraguan father, Dr. Siu had to leave her homeland for Los Angeles, California, in 1997. Since her arrival in Los Angeles, Dr. Siu has contributed to the creation of cultural and academic spaces for the growing Central American, Indigenous, Black and Brown communities in the U.S., helping establish the first Central American Studies Program at California State University, Northridge in 1999, and founding the Latina/o Studies program at the University of Puget Sound in 2012.

A strong proponent of Ethnic Studies, Dr. Siu holds a Masters in Latin American Literatures from UC Berkeley, and a Doctoral Degree in Cultural Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. She has taught courses on race, immigration, Central American, Chicana/o and Latinx literatures, while publishing multiple articles, chapters, and academic works on these topics in numerous national and international journals and books. Among the universities where Dr. Siu has taught are UCLA, the University of Puget Sound, Chapman University, and Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. After becoming a mother in 2013, Dr. Siu encountered the problem all socially-conscious parents face: the lack of inspiring, empowering, historically on-point, and culturally sensitive books for children of color in the U.S. So she decided to write her own. She is now writing the children's book series, ***Rebeldita the Fearless / Rebeldita la Alegre***. In this series, Dr. Siu centralizes the power of children vis-a-vis destructive ogre-forces living in society. Dr. Siu lives and writes out of Los Angeles, California, and San Pedro Sula, Honduras, with her daughter Suletu Ixakbal. In 2020, Dr. Siu was selected "Top Ten New Latino Latinx Authors" by Latino Stories for her contributions to children's literature in the United States. <https://www.orielmariasiu.com/>



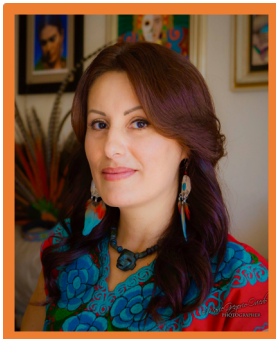
**Dr. Bárbara Idalisse Abadía-Rexach** is a Black Puerto Rican woman. She earned a BA (2001) in Communication and a MA (2006) in Theory and Research of Communication from the University of Puerto Rico. Abadía-Rexach has a Ph.D. (2015) in Social Anthropology from The University of Texas at Austin and is currently Assistant Professor of Afrolatinidades at the Latina/o Studies Department in San Francisco State University. Her academic work explores racialization from different cultural productions in Puerto Rico and its diasporas, and within Latinx

communities. She is the author of *Musicalizando la raza. La racialización en Puerto Rico a través de la música* (Ediciones Puerto, 2012), and *AFROfeminista. Raza y mujer en Puerto Rico* (Periodística Editorial, forthcoming). She is a member of the Black Latinas Know Collective and Colectivo Ilé. Abadía-Rexach co-produces the radio program NEGRAS at Cadena Radio Universidad de Puerto Rico and has been a collaborator of the Spanish digital platform Afroféminas. She is an op-ed contributor of the Puerto Rican feminist and solidarity journalist project, Todas. She describes herself as an antiracist leader, afrofeminist, activist anthropologist, and ***cimarrona*** writer.





**Dr. Kate E. Kedley** is an Assistant Professor at Rowan University in New Jersey and is a former secondary English Language Arts teacher in Iowa, Arizona, and the Central American country of Honduras. Dr. Kedley's main goal is to ensure children get the texts (books, movies, podcasts, people, etc.) they need to learn to read the world, and the tools they need to challenge the injustices they uncover as they read the world



**Verónica X. Valadez, MA.** Born to Mexican, immigrant, field-working parents in Santa Maria, CA, Verónica Xochitl Valadez is a long-time advocate of Ethnic Studies, as well as a K-16 educator, community organizer, Xicana visual artist, and traditional Aztec dancer. Verónica has a strong educational background and much work experience in the field of Ethnic Studies, with a BA in Chicana/o Studies from UC Santa Barbara and an MA in Chicana/o Studies from CSU Northridge. She is currently working towards earning a Doctorate in Education with an emphasis in Social Justice from CSU San Bernardino. Verónica currently teaches Chicana/o Studies at CSU Channel Islands and is an instructor for

UC Riverside's Ethnic Studies Certificate Program for K-12 educators. In addition to specializing in Ethnic Studies, Verónica is also well grounded in best practices for language learners. She was a K-5 Dual-Immersion teacher for 14 years in Ventura where she helped pilot and establish Ventura County's first Dual-Immersion program, which became an effective bilingual program that embraces and teaches meaningful multicultural education. As an educator, Verónica has dedicated herself to teaching a culturally relevant curriculum that promotes social justice since 2001 in elementary schools, community colleges, and university classrooms. In collaboration with other stakeholders, Verónica's advocacy and efforts helped lead to the implementation of Ethnic Studies in school districts across the State of California. Along with other social justice educators, Verónica's advocacy helped in advancing the statewide push to make Ethnic Studies a high school graduation requirement, which eventually led to the passing of AB101 in 2021. As Ehecatl Wind Philosophy's President & Co-founder, Verónica's mission is to assist school districts in establishing transformative, impactful, and sustainable Ethnic Studies programs. Verónica has created a highly sought-after professional development series that prepares educators to teach Ethnic Studies effectively, as well as an infrastructural support model for school districts to implement that ensure the sustainability of their Ethnic Studies programs. Being a traditional Aztec dancer of over 20 years has given Verónica the opportunity to absorb Indigenous "ways of being and knowing" from Indigenous elders and cultural workers. Her work is grounded in anti-racist and Indigenous perspectives that support the re-humanization and empowerment of historically marginalized and oppressed communities. For more on her work, please visit: <http://www.ehecatlwindphilosophy.com/>