

Jamestown, Québec, Santa Fe: Three North American Beginnings

Topic/Content: Thinking About Identity

People of the 1600s tended to think of themselves as English, French, or Spanish; Akan, Ndongo, or Mande; Hopi, Pamunkey, or Wendat. Europeans often distinguished between Christians and non-Christians, and they often referred to Native people as “heathens” or “savages.” Yet, only over several generations did people come to see each other primarily through the prism of race.

Main Messages:

- Human beings like to divide the world into “people like us” and “other people.”
- Sometimes this is helpful for protecting and building a society.
- Sometimes this is harmful, if it becomes a reason for name-calling, discrimination, or even violence against people who are “not like us.”

Applicable Standards of Learning:

Based on information compiled from:

Virginia Public Schools

<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml>

New Mexico Public Schools

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/standards/index.html>

Ontario Ministry of Education

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/>

Students will:

- Develop a general understanding of early settlements in North America;
- Identify the effects of colonization on indigenous peoples, Africans, and European settlers;
- Describe cultural interactions that led to cooperation and conflict; and
- Interpret ideas from different historical perspectives.