

Rethinking columbus,
rediscovering
america: in search for
the promised land
essay...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Analyzing history must be one of the hardest tasks ever - with the modern discoveries, especially the ability to read even the manuscripts that have half disintegrated into dust, and the rethinking of the historical events, what used to be the obvious truth can become another popular myth in a couple of hours.

Because of the recently discovered details about Columbus and his great adventure, the whole pattern of teaching children about the famous traveler falls apart.

However, thinking through the lesson, one can find the right way to tell the elementary school kids about the numerous controversies of Columbus and his adventure.

Speaking of the most appropriate way to introduce the new facts about Columbus to the elementary school students, a teacher can possibly start with asking the kids what they know about Columbus and his adventure.

After they tell the major details, the teacher can supply a color commentary or to fill in the gaps in the students' answers about the traditional story (e. g., add the information about the dates, the key names, etc.), creating the foil for the on-coming unmasking routine.

After all the pieces fall in their places and the traditional story of Columbus' adventure is told, the teacher can create the atmosphere of a mystery, telling the class that there is more to Columbus' story than they think, and ask them what they think Columbus' nationality was.

After the expected “ Spaniard,” the teacher will say that Columbus must have been a Jew, according to the newest findings. After the predictable question about why it has been discovered only recently, the teacher can tell about the mass prosecutions which Jews suffered in the Catholic Spain of XV century.

Further on, the teacher will explain how the goals that Columbus pursued, trying to make the search for India possible.

Thus, the romantic aspect of looking for the Promised Land can be brought up, which will help soften the rough edges of the real story about Columbus’ adventure.

Emphasizing that Columbus was a kind of an outcast in his own state and did not belong where he lived can be made less outrageous.

As for the controversial issue of enslaving the native tribe, the teacher can ask the students who they think was the first person whom Columbus met when he started exploring the continent. Thus, the issues concerning Columbus’ plans and not quite diplomatic actions can be explained.

In addition, the correspondence between the king of Spain and Columbus will be mentioned and can be explained in details.

Finally, after the shocking new knowledge about Columbus, his real motives and the details about his discovery of the new continent without actually knowing that he opened a new page in the world history can be offered to the students in the least shocking way.

Thus, there is a way to tell children even about the most ambiguous historical events and help them understand that the given ambiguity is an integral part of dealing with the world history.

Thus, such ambiguous information will become not a grim new knowledge, but merely a fact that needs to be remembered and accepted. Hence, the children will be able not only to remember the new information, but also learn to analyze the past events objectively.