

Media Critical Analysis

Questions about historical, information and media literacy related to the article

Tasks (students' view):

1 Examine the engravings by Theodore de Bry on p52 and the design for the Columbus monument at the Chicago World's Fair p54

a. How do the representations of the impact of the conquest of the New World compare?

b. What message do these images put across?

2 Look at the wall cartoon at the bottom of page 55 of the article

a. In your own words, try to explain the message or 'point' that the cartoon is trying to make.

3 Research the author of the article (just do a simple Google search)

a. How do his academic credentials influence your view of his authority?

b. Should we expect him to be unbiased? If so, why?

c. Does the fact that he is a British historian, or that he is working in America have an influence on the authority and trustworthiness of his article?

4 Dominican Friar, Antonio de Montesinos

a. What are the views of the Dominican Friar, Antonio de Montesinos about Columbus?

b. Why do you think his writings were translated into English and widely circulated in the 16th and 17th centuries? (See page 51, top half of column 2).

5. What do the views of Lipsius, Daniel and Montesquieu about Spain 'conquering the New World' have in common? In what ways might their nationality influence their views?

6. In not more than 10 lines, summarise the views of Edward Gibbon and Adam Smith about the significance of Columbus's expeditions. (See pages 52 and 53).

7. Why were Americans, from 1792 onwards, generally positive about Columbus and his impact on history? (See pages 54 and 55)