



Name: _____ Class Period: _____

HOW SHOULD THE SPANISH TREAT NATIVE AMERICANS?

Document 1

Source: Bartolomé de las Casas, Spanish priest, *In Defense of the Indians*, 1550

Concerning the treatment of Native American workers:

When they were allowed to go home, they often found it deserted and had no other recourse than to go out into the woods to find food and to die.

When they fell ill, which was frequently because they are a delicate people accustomed to such work, the Spaniards did not believe them and pitilessly called them lazy dogs, and kicked and beat them; and when illness was apparent they sent them home as useless, giving them some cassava for the twenty- to eighty-league journey.

They would go then, falling into the first stream and dying there in desperation; others would hold on longer, but very few ever made it home. I sometimes came upon dead bodies on my way, and upon others who were gasping and moaning in their death agony, repeating "Hungry, hungry."



Document 2

Source: Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, Spanish priest, *Concerning the Just Causes of the War Against the Indians*, 1547

The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between savage and cruel races and the most merciful, between the most intemperate and the moderate, and, I might even say, between apes and men.

Compare, then, these gifts of prudence, talent, magnanimity, temperance, humanity, and religion with those possessed by these half men, in whom you will barely find the vestiges of humanity, who not only do not possess any learning at all, but are not even literate or in possession of any monument to their history except for some obscure and vague reminiscences of several things put down in various paintings; nor do they have written laws, but barbarian institutions and customs.

Well, then, if we are dealing with virtue, what temperance or mercy can you expect from men who are committed to all types of intemperance and base frivolity, and eat human flesh? And do not believe that before the arrival of the Christians they lived in that pacific kingdom of Saturn which the poets have invented; for, on the contrary, they waged continuous and ferocious war upon one another with such fierceness that they did not consider a victory at all worthwhile unless they sated their monstrous hunger with the flesh of their enemies.

HOW SHOULD THE SPANISH TREAT NATIVE AMERICANS?



Write a dialogue between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. The dialogue must focus on how the Spanish should treat Native Americans, it must be at least ten sentences, and it must include at least five of this week’s SFIs.
