

PAPER 3 (HL ONLY)

HL option 2: History of the Americas

Three sections must be selected for study. Only people and events named in the guide will be named in examination questions.

2: European explorations and conquests in the Americas (c1492–c1600)

This section focuses on Spanish, Portuguese, French and British exploration and conquest in the Americas. It examines European exploration and conquest in Latin America, focusing particularly on Spanish and Portuguese contact with indigenous societies, as well as French and British exploration and occupation in North America. The emphasis of this section is on contact, interaction and consequences of exploration and conquest for the indigenous populations.

- Exploration and conquest in North America: Columbus; conquest of the Caribbean; French and British exploration and occupation in North America
- Exploration and conquest in Latin America: Cortés and the conquest of the Aztecs; reasons for Spanish success and Aztec defeat; Pizarro and the conquest of the Incas; later defeat of Manco Inca; reasons for Spanish success and Inca defeat
- Economic impact of exploration and conquest: exploitation of resources; acquisition of gold and silver; fur trade; tobacco trade; the “Columbian Exchange”
- Treatment of indigenous populations; Law of Burgos (1512), New Laws of the Indies (1542); assimilation; eradication; social stratification; use of indigenous labour; women; multiracial issues
- European rivalries; Treaty of Tordesillas (1494); conflicting land claims based upon exploration; impact of conflicting claims

14: Political developments in Latin America (1945–1980)

This section focuses on domestic and political developments in Latin America after 1945. Most Latin American countries experienced social, economic and political changes and challenges. Political responses to these forces varied from country to country—from the continuation of democracy to “populist” movements to outright conflict, revolution and the establishment of authoritarian regimes in the 1960s and 1970s. Areas of study include: conditions for the rise to power of new leaders; economic and social policies; treatment of minorities.

- The Cuban Revolution: political, social and economic causes
- Rule of Fidel Castro: Cuban nationalism; political, economic, social and cultural policies; treatment of opposition; successes and failures; impact on the region
- Populist leaders in two countries: rise to power and legitimacy; ideology; social, economic and political policies; the treatment of opposition
- Democracy in crisis: reasons for the failure of elected leaders
- Rise of a military dictatorship in one country: reasons for their rise to power; economic and social policies; repression and treatment of opposition
- Guerrilla movements in one country: origins, rise and consequences
- Liberation theology in Latin America: origins, growth and impact

16: The Cold War and the Americas (1945–1981)

This section focuses on the development and impact of the Cold War on the region. Most of the second half of the 20th century was dominated by the global conflict of the Cold War. Within the Americas, some countries were closely allied to the United States and some took sides reluctantly. Many remained neutral or sought to avoid involvement in Cold War struggles. A few, influenced by the Cuban Revolution, instituted socialist governments. No nation, however, escaped the pressures of the Cold War, which had a significant impact on the domestic and foreign policies of the countries of the region.

- Truman: containment and its implications for the Americas; the rise of McCarthyism and its effects on domestic and foreign policies of the United States; social and cultural impact of the Cold War
- Korean War, the United States and the Americas: reasons for participation; military developments; diplomatic and political outcomes
- Eisenhower and Dulles: New Look and its application; characteristics and reasons for the policy; repercussions for the region
- United States' involvement in Vietnam: the reasons for, and nature of, the involvement at different stages; domestic effects and the end of the war; Canadian non-support of the war; Latin American protest against the war
- United States' foreign policies from Kennedy to Carter: the characteristics of, and reasons for, policies; implications for the region: Kennedy's Alliance for Progress; Nixon's covert operations and Chile; Carter's quest for human rights and the Panama Canal Treaty (1977)
- Cold War in either Canada or one Latin American country: reasons for foreign and domestic policies and their implementation