

# **Unit Title: The People and Gold of Pre-Hispanic Colombia**

Created by: Cathleen Rosen

Grade Levels: 6–7

Topic Areas: Social Science, English Language Arts, Multimedia / Technology

Time Frame: One to two weeks

## **Summary:**

The extraordinary accomplishments of ancient metalsmiths of the Pre-Hispanic societies of Colombia will provide an avenue to investigate their political, economic, religious, and social structures. Students will select one of the pre-Hispanic societies to research and study. Using one particular website and ancillary resources students will create PowerPoint presentations about the culture with a focus on the society's art forms—mainly the metal creations.

## **Standards Alignment:**

*Common Core State Standards—Writing*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

*Common Core State Standards—Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

*California History—Social Science Content Standards*

7.7. Students compare and contrast the geographic, political, economic, religious and social structures of the Meso-America and Andean civilizations.

**Objectives:**

Students will learn vocabulary associated with social studies concepts.

Students will identify the geographic region of the society they are studying.

Students will research an assigned topic.

Students will organize and synthesize information from the resources.

Students will use paraphrasing to help them write.

Students will select images to accompany presentation.

Students will use the multimedia for classroom presentation.

**Essential Questions:**

How did the society use the natural resources?

What might the society use as a trading item?

Why would the people want to have leaders?

What might the leaders do in a community?

Who are shamans?

What was done during some of the spiritual ceremonies?

Note: This unit might come after previous studies on Mesoamerica. It could also include a discussion of the South American Chavin and Chimu groups, who were early goldsmiths. A study of the Inca civilization would most likely be best after this unit.

**Lesson Plans:****Day 1**

Students will begin with a brief introduction about Colombia. Share this National Geographic slide show as a preview of the country:

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/colombia/>

**Geographic Regions of Colombia:** Provide a blank map of Colombia (attached) and ask the students to fill in the five natural regions on the map. They include: Andes mountain range, Pacific coastal region, Caribbean coastal region, Amazon Rainforest region, and the Llanos region. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombia#Geography>

Use the Archaeological Regions Map (attached) to guide students about where the specific Pre-Hispanic groups lived. Have them write the names in on their maps.



## Archaeological Regions



## **Day 2: Gold**

Introduction: Read the quote and point out that gold is still a special commodity in the world, but we do not view it in the same way that past cultures did. “The Sun, the Moon, lightening and water, together with shiny artifacts, were associated by many societies with the supernatural forces that were responsible for life in the world.” —The Gold Museum

Begin by asking the students to discuss the uses of gold today. Students will most likely share the uses of adornment. Discuss why gold is still admired and sought after. Students may not be aware of the use of gold in electronics, industry, and medicine.

Show the “History of Metalworking” video: <http://www.banrepcultural.org/gold-museum/pre-hispanic-societies/pre-hispanic-metallurgy/a-history-of-metalworking>  
The video is thirteen minutes and the timeline and images are good. The voiceover is in Spanish; however, a text of the video in English is provided on the same web page as the video.

Discuss the earliest known finds of gold. These would be Central Europe, Western Asia, and Egypt. Show some of the artifacts from Egyptian tombs. Ask the students who was buried in the tombs. Would the ordinary Egyptian use gold or have gold objects in their burial site? We know probably not. The same is true of the funeral sites for Pre-Hispanic societies. Most tombs would have been for the elites, and gold would be buried along with the leaders.

Go to the Gold Museum of Bogotá website to continue with the introduction:

<http://www.banrepcultural.org/gold-museum>

The site provides history about the beginning of the usage of gold in the Americas. Either read the excerpt “The Working of Metal” (attached) with students or summarize for them.

## **The Working of Metal**

Metallurgy is one of mankind's greatest achievements. From the time it first began, about 9,000 years ago in the Near East, metalwork transformed societies and community life. When man discovered the malleability, hardness and resistance of copper, of iron, and of alloys of these, he used them for making tools, weapons and utensils; when he marveled at the beautiful color and the shine of gold and silver, and at the unchanging eternity of golden metal, he created symbols with them which honored those who governed him and recreated his gods.

Metallurgy was invented at different times in various parts of the world. There were diverse, independent metallurgical developments in Anatolia, China, the Great Lakes region in North America, and in the Central Andes. Some of these developments, such as those in South America, spread over wide areas.

Gold work reached Colombia from the south 2,500 years ago. The ancient goldsmiths in this region continued the tradition of experimenting with gold, copper and alloys of these, and invented or perfected techniques like casting using the lost wax method, or welding by granulation. They even discovered how to work platinum, a metal that Europe was not able to use until the 18th century, due to its high fusion temperatures.

### Day 3: Metal Working

Place students in groups of 4–5 in order to study Pre-Hispanic metallurgy. Assign each group a subheading under “Pre-Hispanic Metallurgy”:

<http://www.banrepcultural.org/gold-museum/pre-hispanic-societies/pre-hispanic-metallurgy>

The best subtopics on the website for this assignment:

- What is a Metal?
- Gold, Copper, Silver and Platinum
- What are Mining, Metallurgy and Processing?
- Tools and Working Instruments

Have students read through the subtopics and create a poster showing the early processes of metal working.

### Day 4: Metal Working

Poster Presentations: Have the groups share their posters and discuss the various aspects of gold making.

Then show students the pictures of some of the gold artifacts in Google Art Project Virtual Communities: <http://www.googleartproject.com/es/collection/museo-del-oro-bogota/>

Vocabulary: Provide the students with the following words. Discuss the meanings.

- **Shamans**—when they are transformed they may be able to protect their communities, cure illnesses, or predict the future. This transformation can happen with the wearing of masks, ornaments, and skins. Special rituals can assist the shaman or elite members of the society to become transformed.
- **Indigenous**—originating in and characteristic of a particular region or country. The Pre-Hispanic societies of Colombia are indigenous to this region.
- **Funerary**—pertaining to a burial or funeral ceremony or place. Objects that are often placed in the tombs of chieftains or leaders are called funerary objects.

### Day 5: Pre-Hispanic Societies

Show students the PowerPoint Presentation about the Pre-Hispanic People and Gold of Colombia (available for download from this website).

*The Main Project:* Group the students into pairs or trios and assign them a Pre-Hispanic Society to research on the website for the Museo del Oro:

<http://www.banrepcultural.org/gold-museum>

The Pre-Hispanic groups the students will be assigned to research on the Museo del Oro website:

- Nariño (teacher example)

- Tumaco
- Calima
- San Agustín
- Tierradentro
- Tolima
- Quimbaya
- Cauca
- Zenú
- Tairona
- Muisca

NOTE: Do not use Urabá or Chocó.

### **Day 6: Pre-Hispanic Societies**

Show the class the PowerPoint presentation on the Nariño people (available for download from this website).

Show students how to access the different groups by selecting the Pre-Hispanic Societies tab. Under each main heading they will have different subheadings for their societies.

Each of the presentations will vary because of this. Read the information provided on the website about the society you and your partner will study.

Give students the “Pre-Hispanic Societies of Colombia PowerPoint Presentation” handout (attached).

Images for the slide show: Photographs from the Gold Museum taken by Cathleen Rosen (folder of images available for download from this website), the Museo del Oro, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



## **Pre-Hispanic Societies of Colombia PowerPoint Presentation**

Directions:

1. Read the information provided on the website about the assigned society.
2. Divide up the subtopic headings between you and your partner. Reread to find the main ideas of each one. Record the main ideas in an outline form.
3. Share your outline with your partner.
4. Combine the outlines together into one. Besides using the subtopic headings, be sure to include these ideas as appropriate: Location, Map, Subsistence, Natural Resources, Culture, Method/Techniques of Gold Production, Uses of Gold Objects, Symbols, Trade, Spiritual Practice(s), Special Design Elements.
5. Write out the sentences by paraphrasing; do not copy the text from the website. Be sure to limit text so it will explain the most important ideas. It may be necessary to divide information into two slides. Remember the purpose of a PowerPoint presentation is to provide the main ideas. Be prepared to answer questions, or provide some details that may not be part of the actual slide show.
6. Check the Internet for any additional information about the region, people, and ideas you are researching.
7. Images: Look through the images from the Gold Museum Photographs folder and find the best ones to enhance the PowerPoint slide show on the society you are researching.
8. Images: Decide if there are any images from the Museo del Oro website for the slide show.
9. Images and Text: Check the Metropolitan Museum to see if there are some artifacts you can find for your Pre-Hispanic Society. Review the information about the object to see if it would be important to include in the slide show.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/search-results?ft=precolumbian+gold&pg=1&cat=Collections>
10. Construct the slide show. Revise and edit all slides. Practice with your partner. Split up the presentation so that both partners will equally share in the presentation.
11. Give the presentation.

**Day 7 and 8: Pre-Hispanic Societies**

Continue to work on slide show.

**Day 9 and 10: Pre-Hispanic Societies**

Presentations of slide show. Use the Oral Presentation Rubric (attached) to score presentations.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## Oral Presentation Rubric

	4—Excellent	3—Good	2—Fair	1—Needs Improvement
<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds attention of entire audience with the use of direct eye contact, seldom looking at notes</li> <li>Speaks with fluctuation in volume and inflection to maintain audience interest and emphasize key points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent use of direct eye contact with audience, but still returns to notes</li> <li>Speaks with satisfactory variation of volume and inflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays minimal eye contact with audience, while reading mostly from the notes</li> <li>Speaks in uneven volume with little or no inflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds no eye contact with audience, as entire report is read from notes</li> <li>Speaks in low volume and/or monotonous tone, which causes audience to disengage</li> </ul>
<b>Content/ Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates full knowledge by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration</li> <li>Provides clear purpose and subject; pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics; supports conclusions/ideas with evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is at ease with expected answers to all questions, without elaboration</li> <li>Has somewhat clear purpose and subject; some examples, facts, and/or statistics that support the subject; includes some data or evidence that supports conclusions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions</li> <li>Attempts to define purpose and subject; provides weak examples, facts, and/or statistics, which do not adequately support the subject; includes very thin data or evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not have grasp of information and cannot answer questions about subject</li> <li>Does not clearly define subject and purpose; provides weak or no support of subject; gives insufficient support for ideas or conclusions</li> </ul>
<b>Enthusiasm/ Audience Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates strong enthusiasm about topic during entire presentation</li> <li>Significantly increases audience understanding and knowledge of topic; convinces an audience to recognize the validity and importance of the subject</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows some enthusiastic feelings about topic</li> <li>Raises audience understanding and awareness of most points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows little or mixed feelings about the topic being presented</li> <li>Raises audience understanding and knowledge of some points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fails to increase audience understanding of knowledge of topic</li> <li>Shows no interest in topic presented</li> </ul>

**Day 11: Art**

## Final Celebration: Foil Pendant

Ask students to select a design from one of the gold objects they have seen over the course of the unit. Have them draw the design on a small rectangle or triangle. Students will then create a foil pendant. Either purchase a gold foil craft foam sheet from an arts and craft store or make your own. Cut a hole in the foam and thread yarn to make the completed shape into a pendant.

See some examples at:

<http://pinterest.com/bonkaperry/crafts-metal-tooling-and-embossing/>