

# History Snapshots

## *De Soto in Georgia (047-5)*

### *Lesson Topic*

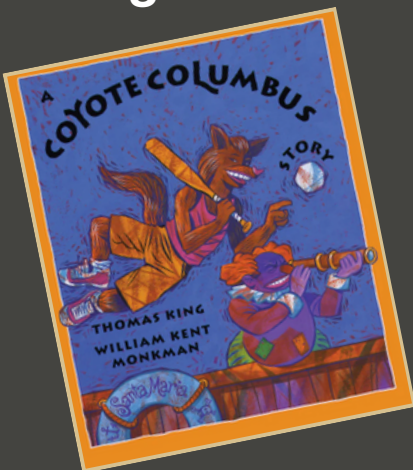
**Hernando de Soto and Native Americans in the Age of Exploration**

### *Georgia Standards*

**SS8H1 Evaluate the impact of European exploration and settlement on American Indians in Georgia.**

### *Lesson Picture Book*

**A Coyote Columbus Story by Thomas King**



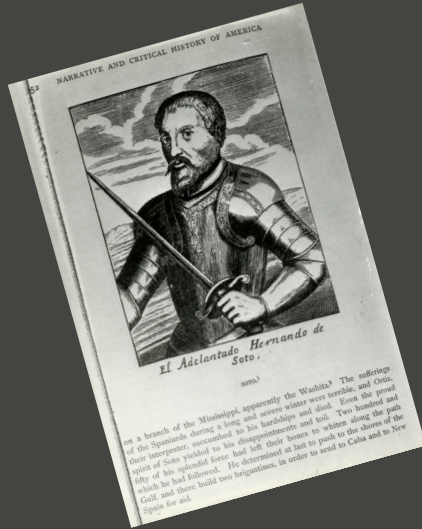
## **Hernando de Soto Spanish Conquistador**

Hernando de Soto (c. 1496/97 - 1542) was a Spanish conquistador known for his exploration of North America. Inspired by Christopher Columbus' success several decades earlier, he decided at a young age to explore the Americas. In May of 1539, de Soto landed in what is now the Tampa Bay area of Florida with 600 men. De Soto proceeded to explore what is now the southeastern U.S. over the next four years in search of wealth. Today, archaeologists and historians continue to study his route, debating the specifics of his travels. De Soto often stopped at Native American settlements to steal supplies and kidnap local people as guides. His visit brought diseases like smallpox to the New World, devastating and even wiping out local communities as a result. He died in May of 1542, having traveled more than 4,000 miles across parts of present-day Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana.

## Materials

- [List of Survivors of de Soto's Exploration, Appendix II of "Los Sobrevivientes de la Florida: The Survivors of the De Soto Expedition" by Ignacio Avellaneda](#)
- ["Hernando De Soto" by PBS World Explorers](#)
- [A Coyote Columbus Story by Thomas King](#)
- [Photo of the De Soto Hotel](#)
- [Portrait of Hernando de Soto](#)
- [De Soto in Georgia Historical Marker](#)
- [Tuesday, October 5, 1540, Account by Rodrigo Randel](#)
- [Spanish and Native Americans in the Age of Exploration Worksheet](#)

## GHS Primary Sources



## Lesson Introduction

Show the list of survivors from de Soto's expedition in what is now the southeastern U.S. from Appendix II of *Los Sobrevivientes de la Florida: The Survivors of the De Soto Expedition* by Ignacio Avellaneda. Have students think about and discuss what de Soto, a Spanish conquistador that was one of the first Europeans to explore America, wished to accomplish on his journey based on the list of survivors and their occupations. Why was de Soto in North America? Of over 600 initial Spanish men, why were there so few survivors?

## Direct Introduction

Watch "[Hernando De Soto](#)," the video by PBS World Explorers, with the class to introduce students to De Soto and his exploration of the Americas.

Read *A Coyote Columbus Story* aloud to the class. The teacher will place the story of Columbus' arrival in the Caribbean in 1492 in the context of the Age of Exploration, approximately half a century before de Soto's arrival in modern-day Florida.

Teacher will review the difference between primary and secondary sources with students before splitting into small groups.

## Guided Practice

Create small groups of 4-5 students, depending on class size. Provide each group with a copy of the book, *A Coyote Columbus Story*, and an envelope of the [set of primary sources](#).

Have students read the historical marker. Then, review the photos of de Soto and the account of his travels in 1540. Compare these to the picture book. Students will analyze the impact of Spanish exploration on Native Americans in North America and determine if the book is a fair portrayal of the first encounters between Europeans and Native Americans.

Upon completion, groups will complete the worksheet for each source, evaluating the Spanish's treatment of Native Americans in comparison to how this period is portrayed.

## Independent Practice

Teacher will lead student into a whole group moderated discussion over the small group activity:

- Teacher will have a spokesperson for each group share their observations, reflections, and questions.
- Teacher will ask students how viewing these sources may have influenced their opinions and beliefs about the Age of Exploration and its impact on indigenous peoples and groups.