Guiding Questions for Reading Like a **Historian**

**What is the author’s point of view?**

**Why was it written?**

**Is this source believable? Why? Why Not?**

**What would it look like to see this event through the eyes of someone who lived back then?**

**What claims does the author make?**

**What evidence does the author use to support those claims?**

**What information does the author leave out?**

**The Tainos**

The first people Columbus encountered in the West Indies were the Tainos. They received Columbus in a friendly manner and didn’t object when Columbus took possession of their land, in the name of Spain. Of course, this is what Columbus later reported but if the Tainos had understood Columbus and objected to his take over of the land, it would not have made any difference to Columbus. He would have still followed through with his possession. Columbus had been told by the King and Queen of Spain to bring back gold when the boats returned to Spain. Since Columbus couldn’t find much gold, he decided to include some of the Tainos on the boats returning to Spain. In later years, Columbus sent a shipload of 500 Tainos and in a desperate effort to find gold, he forced all Taino men, over the age of 14, to fill small bowls of gold and give them to the Spaniards. If any man could not give the gold, he would be executed. Columbus used the Tainos as slave labor and future explorers followed his example. These explorers would often be very cruel to the slaves and said it didn’t matter if a heathen was treated cruelly. By 1500 the population of 25,000 native Tainos were reduced to 5,000, and by 1520 the Tainos were virtually gone.

\*Adapted from Around the World in a Hundred Years.

<http://www.coreknowledge.org/mimik/mimik_uploads/lesson_plans/233/European%20Exploration%20Trade%20and%20Colonization.pdf>

Guiding thoughts for Reading Like a **Historian**

**I already know that \_\_\_\_ is happening at this time…**

**From this document I would guess that people at this time were feeling…**

**I think the audience is…**

**The author agrees/disagrees with…**