

The Great Exchange

Week 17 • Tuesday • Foods and Animals Cross the Ocean

Reading Time

After the two worlds met, plants and animals began crossing the ocean in both directions. This is called the great **exchange**.

From the Americas, ships carried corn, potatoes, tomatoes, chocolate, and peanuts to Europe, Africa, and Asia. Imagine — before this, no one in Italy had ever tasted a tomato, and no one in Europe had ever sipped hot chocolate!

From Europe, ships brought horses, cows, pigs, chickens, and wheat to the Americas. Native Americans had never seen a horse before — soon, horses changed how many tribes hunted and traveled. The foods on your dinner plate tonight probably come from BOTH worlds!

Reading Questions

1. What was the great exchange?

2. Name three foods that came FROM the Americas.

3. Name two animals that came TO the Americas.

4. How did horses change life for many tribes?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

exchange

crops

corn

wheat

livestock

harvest

Which World Did It Come From?

Write A if it came from the AMERICAS, or E if it came from EUROPE.

Food or animal	A or E?
Corn	
Horses	
Tomatoes	
Cows	
Chocolate	
Wheat	
Potatoes	
Chickens	

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ Tomatoes grew in Italy before the exchange.
- ☐ Chocolate came from the Americas.
- ☐ Horses already lived all over the Americas.
- ☐ Potatoes traveled from the Americas to Europe.
- ☐ The exchange went in both directions.
- ☐ Foods we eat today come from both worlds.

Dinner Plate Detective

Think about a meal your family loves. List the foods in it, then guess which world each one came from — the Americas (A) or Europe/Asia/Africa (E). Ask a grown-up to help!

Food in my meal	A or E?

Draw the Exchange

Draw two ships passing on the ocean: one carrying corn, tomatoes, and chocolate one way, the other carrying horses and wheat the other way.



Review

I learned...	Circle one
Foods that came from the Americas	YES / NOT YET
Animals that came from Europe	YES / NOT YET
How the exchange changed meals everywhere	YES / NOT YET