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Gran Quivira: A Blending of Cultures in a Pueblo Indian Village

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(National Park Service)

At first, one encounters a soothing silence broken only by a constant breeze and the chirr of insect wings. Sparse desert flora partially hides the remains of ancient stone houses built by early American Indians who inhabited this area of central New Mexico. Farther along the trail an excavated mound reveals the broken foundations of a large apartment house and several ceremonial kivas typical of the southwest Pueblo Indian culture. Nearby, the ruins of two mission churches attest to the presence of Spanish priests in this isolated region. The quiet remnants of the village of Las Humanas, now called Gran Quivira, only hint at the vibrant society that thrived here until the late 17th century. Today it is one of three sites that make up Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

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Where this lesson fits into the curriculum

Time Period: 7th century to 17th century

Topics: The lesson could be used in U.S. history, social studies, and geography courses in units on early American Indian culture or the colonial presence of the Spanish in the Southwest.

Relevant United States History Standards for Grades 5-12

This lesson relates to the following <u>National Standards for History from the UCLA National</u> <u>Center for History in the Schools</u>:

US History Era 1

- Standard 1A- The student understands the patterns of change in indigenous societies in the Americas up to the Columbian voyages.
- Standard 2A- The student understands the stages of European oceanic and overland exploration, amid international rivalries, from the 9th to 17th centuries.
- Standard 2B- The student understands the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the Americas.

US History Era 2

- Standard 1B- The student understands the European struggle for control of North America.
- Standard 3A- The student understands colonial economic life and labor systems in the Americas.

Relevant Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

Theme I: Culture

- Standard B: The student explains how information and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- Standard B The student explains how information and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.

Theme III: People, Places and Environments

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- Standard C : The student uses appropriate resources, data sources, and geographic tools such as aerial photographs, satellite images, geographic information systems (GIS), map projections, and cartography to generate, manipulate, and interpret information such as atlases, data bases, grid systems, charts, graphs, and maps
- Standard G: The student describes how people create places that reflect cultural values and ideals as they build neighborhoods, parks, shopping centers, and the like.
- Standard J :The student observes and speculates about social and economic effects of environmental changes and crises resulting from phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought.

Theme V: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

• Standard B: The student analyzes group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture.

Relevant Common Core Standards

This lesson relates to the following Common Core English and Language Arts Standards for History and Social Studies for middle school and high school students:

Keys Ideas and Details

• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Craft and Structure

• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.10

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About This Lesson

This lesson is based on the National Park Service documentation from Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. It was published in 2000. This lesson was written by Waynette Burnett, Seasonal Park Ranger at Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. It was edited by Fay Metcalf, education consultant and Teaching with Historic Places staff. This lesson is one in a series that brings the important stories of historic places into classrooms across the country.

Objectives

1. To understand the daily life of the Pueblo Indians of Gran Quivira over several centuries ;

2. To describe how the village of Gran Quivira changed with the influence of the Anasazi, the Plains Indians, and other Pueblo Indians ;

3. To explain the influence of Spanish missionaries on the lives and culture of the people of Gran Quivira ;

4. To compare the life ways of the people who lived at Gran Quivira at different time periods with the experiences of early American Indian groups of their own region .

Materials for students

The materials listed below can either be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students.

- 1. Two maps of early Puebloan communities and the Salinas basin;
- 2. two readings about village life and the coming of the Spaniards;
- 3. Three photos of Gran Quivira Unit, a kiva, and an aerial view of Gran Quivira;
- 4. Three drawings of a typical kiva, a plan and artist's conception of Gran Quivira

Visiting the site

Gran Quivira, administered by the National Park Service, may be reached by taking 1-25 south from Albuquerque, New Mexico to US 60. Drive east on US 60 to Mountainair where the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument museum and headquarters are located. From there you will drive south on NM 55 to Gran Quivira (Las Humanas). The monument is open daily except January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25. For more information, contact the Superintendent, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, P.O. Box 517, Mountainair, NM 87036, or visit the park's web page at http://www.nps.gov/sapu.

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Getting Started



What do you think is represented in this photo?

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Photo Analysis Worksheet

Step 1:

Examine the photograph for 10 seconds. How would you describe the photograph?

Step 2:

Divide the photograph into quadrants and study each section individually. What details--such as people, objects, and activities--do you notice?

Step 3:

What other information--such as time period, location, season, reason photo was taken--can you gather from the photo?

Step 4:

How would you revise your first description of the photo using the information noted in Steps 2 and 3?

Step 5:

What questions do you have about the photograph? How might you find answers to these questions?

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Setting the Stage

Be aware that the Spanish word for a village is "pueblo" and American Indians who live in villages in the Southwest are known as "Puebloans" or "Pueblo Indians." In the remote Salinas basin in central New Mexico stand the weathered ruins of three Puebloan villages and the 17th-century Spanish colonial missions that make up Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. Two ancient southwestern cultural traditions--the Mogollon (muggy-own) and Anasazi--overlapped here and resulted in the Puebloan communities of Abó, Quarai, and Gran Quivira (also known as Las Humanas). From about A.D. 1000 to the 1600s, these three villages operated as major regional centers of trade with Indians from the Plains, the Pacific Coast, and the Great Basin. Gran Quivira, the largest of the Salinas villages, became a bustling community of 3,000 inhabitants.

Beginning in the 16th century, exploration and colonization by the Spanish greatly influenced the lives of the Puebloan people. Spain established missions throughout the Salinas basin in an attempt to Christianize and bring the roughly 10,000 Indian people living there into Spanish society. These missions were self-sufficient communities that included the Indian village or *pueblo*, a church, the friars' quarters or *convento*, fields, hunting and gathering areas, and work areas. Under the mission system, villagers received regimented instruction in Christianity as well as in European social and agricultural practices. But, the mission system did not survive long in the Salinas basin, and by the late 1670s, the inhabitants of this once thriving area were all but gone.



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Locating the Site

Map 1: Early Puebloan communities in present day New Mexico.



(National Park Service)

Gran Quivira, the largest of the Salinas pueblos, lies in the 6,500-foot-high Salinas basin, now called the Estancia Valley, between the rocky Chupadera Mesa on the west and the Gallinas Mountains on the east. The area receives little water and has a short growing season.

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Questions for Map 1

1) Locate and circle Gran Quivira, Quarai, and Abó, the three pueblos that make up Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

2) What do you notice about the location of most of the villages? Why might this be the case?

3) How does the location of Gran Quivira compare with that of most other pueblos on the map? Use the map scale to determine Gran Quivira's approximate distance from the Rio Grande and the Rio Pecos. How might this have affected Gran Quivira's inhabitants?

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Locating the Site

Map 2: The Salinas basin



(National Park Service)

The Spanish called this region the Salinas Province because of the lakes to the north where Indians collected salt. Salt was a major trade item in New Mexico that Indians used as food and to preserve meat and cure hides.

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Questions for Map 2

1. Locate Gran Quivira. Why do you think the Spanish established so many missions in a relatively small area?

2. Why might they have established a *visita*, a place where priests came to minister once a week or so, instead of a full mission at some pueblos? What neighboring pueblo do you think Gran Quivira's priest provided services to?

3. Use the scale to estimate the distance between Gran Quivira and the salt lakes. Approximately how long do you think it took the inhabitants of Gran Quivira to travel that distance on foot? How long would it take to travel that distance today by car?



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Determining the Facts

Reading 1: Village Life

The earliest people to settle in the area of Gran Quivira likely came from--or were influenced bythe Mogollon (muggy-own) culture that occupied much of the land to the west and south. As the Mogollon prospered, they extended out from their original lands. They obtained much of their food from small-game hunting and gathering roots, seeds, berries, and insects. Evidence from archaeological studies tells us that the people had a sophisticated and varied diet. Bones from antelope, deer, and rabbit indicate the villagers hunted successfully. Numerous bison bones show that either they occasionally hunted big game on the Great Plains or they traded for it with the Plains Indians. The ruins also show that the villagers ate a variety of small-eared corn and that they used salt, which was gathered from the salt lakes to the north.

Archeologists believe the first Mogollon-style houses found in the Gran Quivira area date from about A.D. 600. The people made simple pithouses by digging a shallow hollow in the ground and covering it with a domed framework of branches and mud. A hearth near the center of the pithouse kept residents warm. Because the houses were very small, cooking and most other activities usually took place outside. As time passed, the Mogollon people improved the pithouses by using a framework of posts and timbers to support the roof. Many houses had a cutout doorway that led through a small room to the main room. The entry had no door to close and lock because the people had no metal tools or knowledge of metal fasteners. In the later, more strongly-built pithouses, residents entered by climbing a ladder to the roof and then crawling down a second ladder that emerged through a hatchway in the roof. If homeowners feared an intruder, they simply pulled the ladders through the hatchway into the house, leaving the trespasser without means of entering.

Substantial Mogollon villages flourished in the Salinas basin by the 10th century. However, influences from the north became evident by about 1150. The Anasazi culture spread from the Four Corners area (where Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona meet), influencing and perhaps intermarrying with the population at Gran Quivira. The pottery made by the people at Gran Quivira began to change from the simple brownware of the Mogollon to the intricately painted type used by the Anasazi. A new type of housing called *jacales* (hah-CALLS) also began to appear. Jacales featured walls of wooden posts and adobe or wattle-and-daub (woven twigs plastered with clay). The placement of upright stone slabs separated the space into as many as 10 rooms. Villages consisted of up to 50 such houses.

By 1300 jacales had evolved into large, multistory stone complexes, some with hundreds of small rooms, surrounding plazas. Residents used the rooms for sleeping, for storing food and clothing, and for protection from bad weather. They performed daily activities on the roofs and in the plazas. Women cooked and made pottery, children played or helped with chores, and men fashioned tools and weapons. Underground ceremonial structures, called *kivas*, dotted the village plazas. Everyone became a member of one of the pueblo's kiva societies, and each society took charge of particular religious ceremonies important to the well being of the tribe. Members performed these sacred ceremonies and rituals in kivas. They also used kivas to carry out initiation rights and to instruct the young. Typically, kivas had flat timber roofs supported by posts set in the floor and wall. An opening in the roof provided access by ladder and served as a smoke hole for the fire pit in the floor. Some archaeologists believe the design of the kiva evolved from the early pithouses.



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More changes to the pueblo occurred during the 16th century, including the construction of new rectangular room blocks on top of the old structures and the introduction of a new pottery style known as Tabira Black-on-White. A change in burial practices occurred when the people of Gran Quivira began to practice cremation in addition to traditional burial. Despite these changes, many old cultural practices continued.

During its heyday from about A.D. 1000 to the 1600s, Gran Quivira and the nearby villages of Abó and Quarai became major regional centers for trade with people from Mexico, the Plains, and the Pacific Coast. The Puebloans exported salt, pottery, corn, cotton, and piñon nuts. In return, they received bison meat and hides from the Great Plains, freshwater shells and flint from the panhandle of Texas, macaw feathers from southern Mexico, and alabaster shells from the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Coast. This bustling trade center reached its peak by the early 17th century.

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Questions for Reading 1

1) Who were the first settlers of Gran Quivira?

2) How did they build their houses at first? What do those houses indicate about the technology of the time?

3) What changes took place when the Anasazi culture came to the region?

4) What is a kiva and how was it used?

5) Why do you think trading with other Indian groups was important to the Puebloans?

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Determining the Facts

Reading 2: The Coming of the Spaniards

In 1598, a Spanish expedition led by Don Juan de Oñate entered New Mexico to establish a permanent colony. Three major battles between the Spanish and Pueblo Indians occurred between 1599 and 1601. When the Spanish soldiers finally established control they declared their intention to Christianize the Indians and demanded supplies and other support for their missionaries. Oñate collected tribute from the villagers of Gran Quivira and demanded their allegiance to the Spanish King. In the early 1600s, another Spanish expedition entered the region, this time from the south. These Spaniards named the Gran Quivira community "Pueblo de Las Humanas," and called the people who lived there "Rayados," meaning "Indians with striped faces." Many pictographs (rock paintings) in this region depict faces with stripes over the nose, a practice characteristic of Plains Indians.

The Spanish did not inhabit the village until 1627, when a Franciscan priest named Fray Alonso de Benavides arrived to introduce the Christian religion. Soon thereafter Fray Francisco Letrado became the first resident priest at Las Humanas. With Indians as laborers, Fray Letrado quickly began constructing the first permanent church. But within two years he requested a transfer to serve in a more remote area. The next resident priest, Fray Diego de Santander, did not arrive until 1659. In the interim, Las Humanas became a *visita* or preaching station serviced by Abo, located 25 miles to the north. Frequently, the Abó priest and choir traveled seven hours to Las Humanas to lead mass and tend to the religious needs of the converted Christians.

At first, contact with Spanish priests did not dramatically alter the daily lives of the people of Gran Quivira. For the most part, residents continued their farming, hunting, and trading. The Puebloans accepted the Christian God as one of the many gods they worshiped. In return for religious instruction and military protection, the Spanish expected the Indians to help build and maintain the missions and work in the fields. Paying this tribute did not seem too difficult for the Puebloans as long as times remained good, but deepening cultural conflicts and environmental hardships were soon to change this. In the early 1660s, Spanish priests, intent on forcing the Puebloans to worship only one God, tried to suppress Puebloan religious rituals by destroying ceremonial objects and burning the sacred kivas. In response, the Puebloans, who considered their rituals essential to bring rain and plentiful harvests, moved their ceremonies to an above ground location out of the priests' view. By the mid-1660s, Gran Quivira's population had dropped from 3,000 to 1,000. Many inhabitants died of smallpox and other diseases carried by Europeans to the New World. Many more villagers perished during a severe, four-year drought that destroyed crops. Stored foods vanished quickly. The Apache, also starving, began to raid the village to find food.

During the drought, Fray Santander organized the Pueblo Indians and began to construct a large missionary complex similar in plan to most other New Mexican missions of the period. He apparently succeeded at having the Indian laborers complete the *convento* (the rooms used for housing the priests), but he and his successor could not finish the church before the village became deserted. In 1669 Fray Juan Bernal described the situation:

One of these calamities is that the whole land is at war with the widespread nation of the Apache Indians, who kill all the Christian Indians they can find. No road is safe; everyone travels at the risk of his life; for the heathen traverse them

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all; being courageous and brave. They hurl themselves at danger like people who know no God nor that there is any hell.

The second misfortune is that for three years no crop has been harvested. Last year, 1668, a great many Indians perished of hunger, lying dead along the roads, in the ravines, and in their hovels. There were pueblos, like Las Humanas, where more than four hundred and fifty died of hunger. The same calamity still prevails, for, because there is no money, there is not a *fanege* of maize or wheat in all the kingdom. As a result the Spaniards, men as well as women, have sustained themselves for two years on the cowhides they have in their houses to sit on. They roast them and eat them. And the greatest woe of all is that they can no longer find a bit of leather to eat.¹

Hunger finally drove both the Pueblo Indians and the Spaniards from the area. Las Humanas was one of the first villages to be abandoned. Early archaeologists found the mass burial of the 450 victims of starvation described by Juan Bernal. The surviving Indians had gone to live with cultural relatives in other pueblos. In 1680, the Puebloans north of the Salinas Province, in an uncharacteristic show of unity, revolted and expelled the Spaniards from New Mexico. In the general exodus of Indians and Spaniards, the survivors of Las Humanas and other pueblos moved south to the area of El Paso, Texas. Absorbed by Indian communities there, they became the only linguistic group among the Pueblo Indians during the historic period to lose their language and their homeland. Today we know of them mainly from written reports of the Spaniards, from what archaeologists can piece together from evidence uncovered from the ancient village, and from the remembered stories of their scattered kin.

The pueblo of Las Humanas did not receive its current name until after it had been abandoned. In 1540, explorer Coronado had unsuccessfully sought the fabled land of "Quivira" on the Great Plains. The name "Gran Quivira" became fixed in New Mexican folklore as the place where a fortune could be found. No one knows why the ruins of Las Humanas began to be called Gran Quivira, however, because no treasure existed there.

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Visual Evidence

Photo 1: Gran Quivira Unit, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument



(National Park Service)

This photo shows the pueblo ruins in the foreground and San Buenaventura, the second mission church, in the background.

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Questions for Photo 1

1) How would you describe the structures in the photo in terms of materials and construction techniques?

2) What missing features might help you better understand what these structures looked like when they were inhabited? Why do you think these no longer exist?

3) Why was the second mission church never completed?

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Visual Evidence

Photo 2: A kiva at Gran Quivira



(National Park Service)



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Drawing 1: A typical kiva



(Illustration by Lawrence Ormsby, copyright 1993 by Southwest Parks and Monuments Association.)

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Questions for Photo 2 and Drawing 1

1) Compare the photo with the sketches of a typical kiva. How different would the kiva appear if its roof still existed?

2) Does the plan of the kiva give you any clues as to its use?

3) Why do some people think that the kiva evolved from the design of the pithouses?



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Visual Evidence

Photo 3: An aerial view of Gran Quivira



(National Park Service)

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Visual Evidence

Drawing 2: Plan of Gran Quivira



(National Park Service)

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Questions for Photo 3 and Drawing 2

1) Carefully study the two images above, and note that each depicts Gran Quivira from a different perspective. Use Drawing 2 to help you identify the features shown in the photo.

2) How do the mission churches compare in size and plan to the Indian buildings?

3) What do the circular features on the photo and the drawing represent?

4) When Gran Quivira first became part of the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, the ruins of the mission churches received the most attention. Much of the interest has since shifted to the structures built by the Pueblo Indians. Why might this have happened?



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Visual Evidence

Drawing 3: An artist's conception of Gran Quivira



(Illustration by Lawrence Ormsby, copyright 1993 by Southwest Parks and Monuments Association.)

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Questions for Drawing 3

1) Identify and label as many features as you can on the drawing.

2) Does this drawing help you to understand life at Gran Quivira in the 17th century? If so, how?

3) Why must we refer to this drawing as an artist's "conception" of Gran Quivira in the 17th century? Why can't we be positive of its accuracy?

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Putting It All Together

The following activities help students put their knowledge of Gran Quivira into a broader perspective.

Activity 1: Retrieving Data

Have students make a retrieval chart for the information they learned from this lesson and for data they find in their textbooks and other sources about the groups of people Gran Quivira's inhabitants probably traded with. Encourage them to be creative about the categories they use, but suggest that across the top of their paper they consider headings such as Diet, Architecture, Making a Living, and Religions. Headings on the left side of the chart might include Anasazi, Apache, Mohave, Navajo, and Spanish Missionaries. Explain that they also might need to be creative in using inferences for some of the data they would like to include. Have the students divide up into groups of four or five and discuss their completed charts. Have two or three groups put a composite list on the chalkboard. Complete the activity by inviting other students to add to those lists. Discuss with students the significant amount of trade that took place between American Indians long before Europeans came to the continent.



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Activity 2: Constructing a Model of a Pueblo

Have students locate articles in encyclopedias and other reference works about the Pueblo Indians. Using the materials in *Visual Evidence* as references, have groups of three or four students each build a model of one of the components of the village of Gran Quivira. Models should be of the same general scale and should include typical Puebloan dwellings, a few kivas, and a mission church and convento. Students may use any craft materials they can find, but frosting-covered shoeboxes, papier-mache, and homemade adobe of clay and straw work well. Put the completed models on dried grass and dirt covered poster boards and assemble the village. Have students use Drawings 2 and 3 and Photo 3 to help them decide where to place their models. Show the completed pueblo to other classes.

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Activity 3: The Puebloans and Local Indians

Working in small groups, have students research the lives of American Indians who lived in their own region from about A.D. 1300 to 1660. Have groups find answers to the following questions: How did they make a living? What kind of possessions did they have--tools, weapons, etc? What type of houses did they live in? What foods did they eat? What kind of ceremonies did they participate in? Why did they leave the area (if they did)? When did their first contact with Europeans occur? What were the results of European contact? Have each group report its findings and then have students discuss similarities and differences between these groups and the people of Gran Quivira.

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References and Endnotes

Reading 1

Reading 1 was compiled from Dan Murphy, *Salinas Pueblo Missions* (Tucson, Ariz: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1993); and the text of an exhibit at the Gran Quivira Museum, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, prepared on September 25, 1985.

Reading 2

Reading 2 was compiled from "Gran Quivira," a trail guide prepared by the Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 2nd edition, 1994; Dan Murphy, *Salinas Pueblo Missions* (Tucson, Ariz.: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1993): and the text of an exhibit at the Gran Quivira Museum, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, prepared on September 25, 1985.

¹As cited in Charles Wilson Hackett, ed., "Historical Documents Relating to New Mexico, Nuevo Vizcaya and Approaches Thereto, to 1773," Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 330, Vol. 3 (Washington, DC: 1937).



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Additional Resources

By looking at *Gran Quivira: A Blending of Cultures in a Pueblo Indian Village,* students will learn about the Puebloan Indians before, during and after Spanish contact. Those interested in learning more will find that the Internet offers a variety of interesting materials.

Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument

Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument is a unit of the National Park System. The <u>park's</u> <u>web pages</u> provide detailed information on the once, thriving American Indian trade communities in this remote frontier area of central New Mexico. Included are essays on the Pueblos and the coming of the Spaniards, a history of Gran Quivira, as well as a trail guide.

Glimpses of Our National Monuments

The National Park Service provides further information about <u>Gran Quivira National</u> <u>Monument</u> in the on-line book, *Glimpses of Our National Monuments*.

American Southwest--National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary

The American Southwest with its distinctive building traditions, its languages, religions, and foods, reflects the vitality of the Spanish, Mexican, Indian and Anglo cultures which formed its history and the Southwest we see today. <u>This National Register of Historic Places Travel</u> <u>Itinerary</u> highlights over 58 historic places, including Salinas Pueblo National Monument, teaching us about the contributions of the various people who settled this distinctive area.

American Historical Images

<u>American Historical Images</u> is a site developed by Troy Johnson, a professor at California State University, Long Beach. This site highlights drawings depicting scenes from early Native American culture and contact with the Spanish.

New Perspectives on the West

<u>New Perspectives on the West</u> is a site produced as a supplement to the PBS documentary *The West*, by Ken Burns and Stephen Ives. Included are primary source documents on the Pueblo revolt, time lines to understand the events that took place in New Mexico during the Spanish conquest, and images from the history of the American west.

1492: An On-Going Voyage

<u>1492: An On-Going Voyage</u> is maintained by the Library of Congress. Explore this site to learn about the Americas at the time of Spanish exploration.

For Further Reading

Students and educators wishing to learn more about Gran Quivira may want to read: Dan Murphy, *Salinas Pueblo Mission* (Tucson, Ariz.: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1993); David Grant Noble, ed., *Salinas: Archaeology, History, and Prehistory* (Santa Fe, N. Mex.: Ancient City Press, 1993); and Gordon Vivian, *Gran Quivira*(Tucson, Ariz.: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, 1979).













Top view of Kiva





