

## LESSON 4

# European Exploration in the Americas



 **BOUNCE**  
TO ACTIVATE

 **VIDEO**

## GET READY TO READ

### START UP


Study the replica of one of the ships Christopher Columbus used to reach North America. Write three questions you have about sea travel during that time.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS


- Why did Europeans explore the Americas?
- What was the impact of European exploration of the Americas?
- How did European and American Indian interactions affect both cultures?

### TAKE NOTES

#### Literacy Skills: Identify Cause and Effect

Use the graphic organizer in your  Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

### PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your  Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

#### Vocabulary

colony  
turning point  
circumnavigate  
Columbian Exchange

#### Academic Vocabulary

modification  
despite

Many stories exist about early people from Europe or Asia sailing to the Americas. Yet, real evidence has been hard to find. Most experts agree that such voyages were rare, if they occurred at all. Unlike other possible early voyagers to the Americas, the Vikings left behind a detailed record of their voyages.

### Contact with the Americas

In 1001, Viking sailors led by Leif Erikson reached the eastern tip of North America. Archaeologists have found evidence of the Viking settlement of Vinland in present-day Newfoundland, Canada. The Vikings did not stay in Vinland long and no one is sure why they left. However, Viking stories describe fierce battles with Skraelings, the Viking name for the Inuit.

Evidence suggests that Asians continued to cross the Bering Sea into North America after the last ice age ended. Some scholars believe that ancient seafarers from Polynesia may have traveled to the Americas using their knowledge of the stars and winds.



**Analyze Images** The Vikings were one of the first groups to travel from Europe to the Americas. Their boats were powered by sail and oars. **Draw Conclusions** What disadvantages do you see in using this type of boat for travel in the ocean?

Modern Polynesians have sailed canoes thousands of miles in this way. Still others think that fishing boats from China and Japan blew off course and landed on the western coast of North or South America. Perhaps such voyages occurred. If so, they were long forgotten. Before 1492, the peoples of Asia and Europe had no knowledge of the Americas and their remarkable civilizations.

 **READING CHECK** **Identify Supporting Details** Why are we uncertain whether early people from Europe or Asia, other than the Vikings, sailed to America?

## The Voyages of Columbus

Portuguese sailors had pioneered new routes around Africa toward Asia in the late 1400s. Spain, too, wanted a share of the riches. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella hoped to keep their rival, Portugal, from controlling trade with India, China, and Japan. They agreed to finance a voyage of exploration by Christopher Columbus. Columbus, an Italian sea captain, planned to reach the East Indies by sailing west across the Atlantic. Finding a sea route straight to Asia would give the Spanish direct access to the silks, spices, and precious metals of Asia. The spice trade was a major cause for European exploration and a reason the Spanish rulers supported Columbus's voyage. They also wanted wealth from any source. "Get gold," King Ferdinand said to Columbus. "Humanely if possible, but at all hazards—get gold."

**Crossing the Atlantic** In August 1492, Columbus set out with three ships and about 90 sailors. As captain, he commanded the largest vessel, the *Santa María*. The other ships were the *Niña* and the *Pinta*.

After a brief stop at the Canary Islands, the little fleet continued west into unknown seas. Fair winds sped them along, but a month passed without the sight of land. Some sailors began to grumble. They had never been away from land for so long and feared being lost at sea. Still, Columbus sailed on.

### Did you know?

Many streets in the United States have been named in honor of Christopher Columbus, such as this one in New York City.



On October 7, sailors saw flocks of birds flying southwest. Columbus changed course to follow the birds. A few days later, crew members spotted tree branches and flowers floating in the water. At 2 A.M. on October 12, the lookout on the *Pinta* spotted white cliffs shining in the moonlight. “*Tierra! Tierra!*” he shouted. “Land! Land!”

At dawn, Columbus rowed ashore and planted the banner of Spain. He was convinced that he had reached the East Indies in Asia. He called the people he found there “Indians.” In fact, he had reached islands off the coasts of North America and South America in the Caribbean Sea. These islands later became known as the West Indies. For three months, Columbus explored the West Indies. To his delight, he found signs of gold on the islands. Eager to report his success, he returned to Spain.

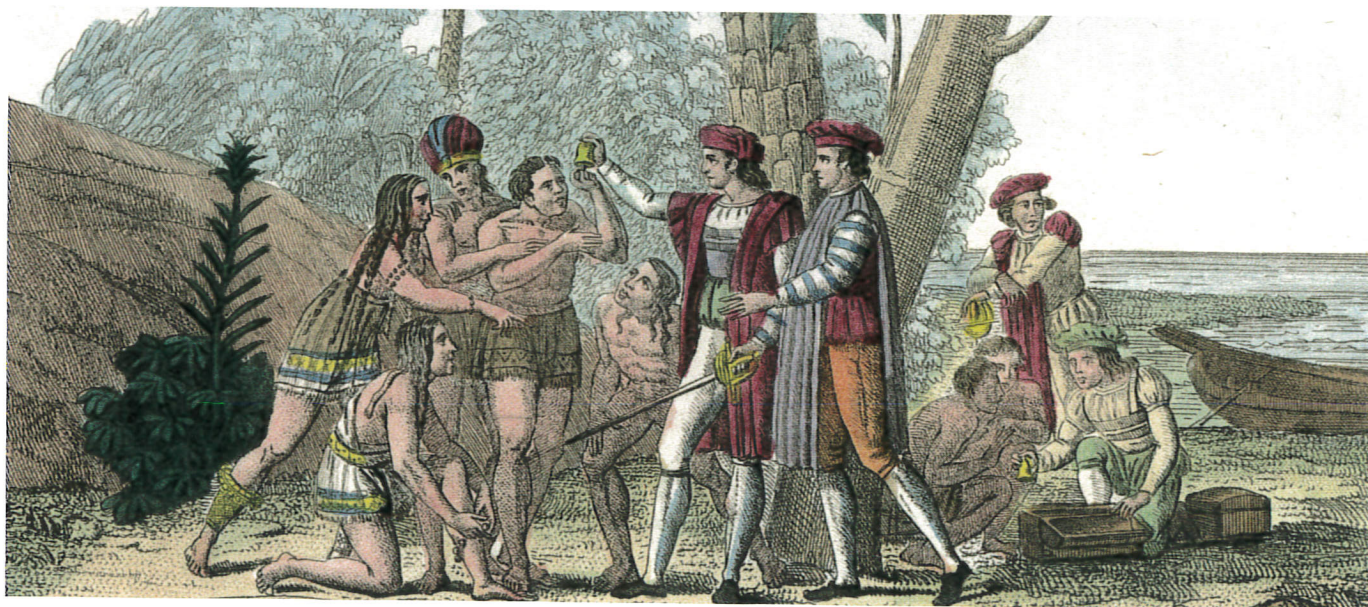
**Columbus Claims Lands for Spain** In Spain, Columbus presented Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand with gifts of pink pearls and brilliantly colored parrots. Columbus brought with him many things that Europeans had never seen before: tobacco, pineapples, and hammocks used for sleeping. Columbus also described the “Indians” he had met, the Taino (TY noh). The Taino, he promised, could easily be converted to Christianity and could also be used as slaves.

The Spanish monarchs were impressed. They gave Columbus the title Admiral of the Ocean Sea. They also agreed to finance future voyages. The promise of great wealth, and the chance to spread Christianity, gave them a reason to explore further.

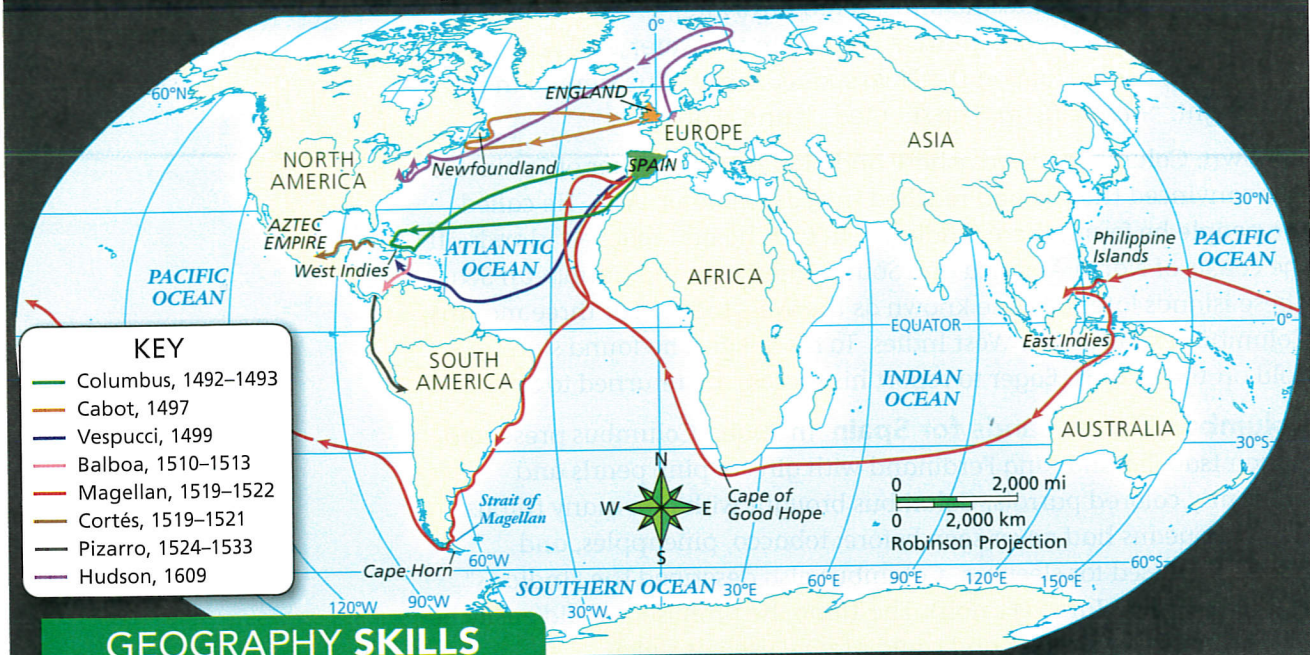
Columbus made three more voyages across the Atlantic. In 1493, he founded the first Spanish colony in the Americas, Santo Domingo, on an island he called Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic). A **colony** is an area settled and ruled by the government of a distant land. Columbus also explored present-day Cuba and Jamaica. He sailed along the coasts of Central America and northern South America. He claimed all of these lands for Queen Isabella of Spain.

Columbus proved to be a better explorer than governor. During his third expedition, settlers on Hispaniola complained of his harsh rule. Queen Isabella appointed an investigator, who sent Columbus back to Spain in chains.

**Analyze Images** This illustration shows Columbus meeting the Taino of the West Indies. His voyages benefited Spain but brought much misery to the world of the Taino. **Infer** How do you think the Taino might have reacted to Columbus’s arrival?



## European Voyages of Exploration, 1492–1609



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

Many Europeans went on voyages of exploration in the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.

1. **Location** From which European country did most voyages of exploration originate?
2. **Infer** Why do you think Magellan was the only explorer to sail around the world?

In the end, the queen pardoned Columbus, but he never regained the honors he had won earlier. He died in 1506, still convinced that he had reached Asia.

**The Impact of Columbus's Voyages** Columbus has long been honored as the bold sea captain who “discovered America.” Today, we recognize that American Indians had settled these lands long before 1492. Still, in at least one sense, Columbus deserves the honors history has given him. Europeans knew nothing of the Americas until Columbus told them about this “new world.” His daring voyages marked the beginning of lasting contact among the peoples of Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

For a great many American Indians, contact had tragic results. Columbus and those who followed were convinced that European culture was superior to that of the Indians. The Spanish claimed Taino lands and forced the Taino to work in gold mines, on ranches, or in Spanish households. Many Taino died from harsh conditions or European diseases. The Taino population was wiped out.

For better or worse, the voyages of Columbus signaled a turning point for the Americas. A **turning point** is a moment in history that marks a decisive change. Curious Europeans saw the new lands as a place where they could settle, trade, and grow rich.

**READING CHECK Identify Main Ideas** What reasons did Spain have for sending Columbus on his voyages?

## Spanish Exploration Continues

After the voyages of Columbus, the Spanish explored and settled other Caribbean islands. They wanted to take advantage of the land Columbus had found, seeking gold, crops, slaves, and converts to Christianity for the Spanish crown. By 1511, they had conquered Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Cuba. They also explored the eastern coasts of North America and South America in search of a western route to Asia.

In 1513, Vasco Núñez de Balboa (bal BOH uh) crossed the Isthmus of Panama. American Indians had told him that a large body of water lay to the west. With a party of Spanish soldiers and Indians, Balboa reached the Pacific Ocean and claimed the ocean for Spain.

The Spanish had no idea how wide the Pacific was until a sea captain named Ferdinand Magellan (muh JEL un) sailed across it. The expedition—made up of five ships and about 250 crew members—left Spain in 1519. Fifteen months later, it cut through the stormy southern tip of South America by way of what is now known as the Strait of Magellan and entered the Pacific Ocean. Crossing the vast Pacific, the sailors ran out of food:

### Primary Source

**“We remained 3 months and 20 days without taking in provisions or other refreshments and ate only old biscuit reduced to powder, full of grubs and stinking from the dirt which rats had made on it. We drank water that was yellow and stinking.”**

—Antonio Pigafetta, *The Diary of Antonio Pigafetta*

## Quest CONNECTIONS

What fact from Magellan's biography helps you to verify the facts in Pigafetta's account? Record your ideas in your  Active Journal.



### INTERACTIVE

Reasons to Explore

## 5 BIOGRAPHY Things to Know About

### FERDINAND MAGELLAN

Portuguese Explorer 1480–1521



- He sailed around South America and spent 99 days crossing the Pacific Ocean.
- He became interested in sea exploration as a boy, when he worked for the family of Portugal's queen.
- He launched his journey because he was looking for the Spice Islands, which are off the coast of Indonesia.
- During the journey, members of his crew rebelled against him and tried to take over the fleet, but Magellan stopped them.
- Magellan died in battle before he reached the Spice Islands.

**Critical Thinking** Why do you think Magellan's crew rebelled against him?



## INTERACTIVE

The Columbian Exchange

### Academic Vocabulary

**modification** • *n.*, a change

**Analyze Images** Horses and other domesticated animals were introduced to the Americas by Europeans. Horses soon became part of American Indians' way of life. **Understand Effects** In what ways do you think horses helped American Indians?

Magellan himself was killed in a battle with the local people of the Philippine Islands off the coast of Asia.

In 1522, only one ship and 18 sailors returned to Spain. They were the first people to **circumnavigate**, or sail completely around, the world. In doing so, they had found an all-water western route to Asia. Europeans became aware of the true size of the Earth.



**READING CHECK Understand Effects** Explain the significance of Magellan's voyage.

## How Did the Columbian Exchange Affect the Rest of the World?

The encounter between the peoples of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres sparked a global exchange of goods and ideas. Because it started with the voyages of Columbus, this transfer is known as the **Columbian Exchange**. The Columbian Exchange refers to a biological and cultural exchange of animals, plants, human populations, diseases, food, government, technology, the arts, and languages.

The exchange went in both directions. Europeans learned much from American Indians. At the same time, Europeans contributed in many ways to the culture of the Americas. This exchange also brought about many **modifications**, or changes, to the physical environment of the Americas, with both positive and negative results.

**Changing Environments** Europeans introduced domestic animals such as chickens from Europe and Africa. European pigs, cattle, and horses often escaped into the wild and multiplied rapidly. Forests and grasslands were converted to pastures. As horses spread through what would become the United States, Indians learned to ride them and used them to carry heavy loads.



# THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

Famines and starvation were common events in Europe during the Middle Ages. Famine affected native peoples of the Americas as well. As a result of the Columbian Exchange, newly arrived species made the food supply more abundant and diverse on both sides of the ocean.

## CORN OR MAIZE

Previously unknown, corn became a dietary staple in Mediterranean, African, and Asian countries.



## WHEAT AND RICE

Brought by Spaniards, wheat and rice grew well in the Americas. Rice was sometimes used as a substitute for corn.



## FROM THE AMERICAS TO EUROPE, AFRICA, AND ASIA

- maize
- beans
- peppers
- potatoes
- peanuts
- pineapples
- sweet potatoes
- squash
- tomatoes
- pumpkins
- cocoa



## FROM EUROPE, AFRICA, AND ASIA TO THE AMERICAS

- wheat
- grapes
- pigs
- sugar
- olive oil
- cows
- bananas
- dandelions
- goats
- rice
- horses
- chickens

## SUGAR

Europeans brought both sugar cane and enslaved Africans to grow it to the Americas.



## COWS AND PIGS

Cows and pigs were unknown in the Americas before Europeans brought them. Over time, American Indians added beef and pork to their diets.



Plants from Europe and Africa changed the way American Indians lived. The first bananas came from the Canary Islands. By 1520, one Spaniard reported that banana trees had spread “so greatly that it is marvelous to see the great abundance of them.” Oranges, lemons, and figs were also new to the Americas. In North America, explorers also brought such plants as bluegrass, the daisy, and the dandelion. These plants spread quickly in American soil and modified American grasslands.

Tragically, Europeans also brought new diseases, such as smallpox and influenza. American Indians had no resistance to these diseases. Historians estimate that within 75 years, diseases from Europe had killed almost 90 percent of the people in the Caribbean Islands and in Mexico.

**American Indian Influences on Europe, Africa, and Asia** For their part, American Indians introduced Europeans, Africans, and Asians to new foods, customs, and ideas. After 1492, elements of American Indian ways of life gradually spread around the world. Sadly, disease also spread from the Americas to Europe and other parts of the world.

American Indians introduced Europeans to valuable food crops such as corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, tomatoes, manioc, squash, peanuts, pineapples, and blueberries. Today, almost half the world’s food crops come from plants that were first grown in the Americas.

Europeans carried the new foods with them as they sailed around the world. Everywhere, people’s diets changed and populations increased. In South Asia, people used American hot peppers and chilies to spice stews. Chinese peasants began growing corn and sweet potatoes. Italians made sauces from tomatoes. People in West Africa grew manioc and corn.

**Analyze Graphs** The Columbian Exchange affected people all over the world. **Identify Main Ideas** What were some positive consequences of the Columbian Exchange?

## Quick Activity



Plan a dinner party using food from the Columbian Exchange. Record your plan in your Active Journal.



**Analyze Images** In the 1600s, European settlers traveled along the Mississippi River in canoes. **Synthesize Visual Information** What is one difference between this canoe and the boats the Vikings used?

European settlers often adopted American Indian skills. In the North, Indians showed Europeans how to use snowshoes and trap beavers and other fur-bearing animals. European explorers learned how to paddle Indian canoes. Some leaders studied American Indian political structures. In the 1700s, Benjamin Franklin admired the Iroquois League and urged American colonists to unite in a similar way.

### Positive and Negative Consequences

Through the Columbian Exchange, Europeans and American Indians modified their environments and gained new resources and skills. At the same time, warfare and disease killed many on both sides. Europeans viewed expansion positively. They gained great wealth, explored trade routes, and spread Christianity. Yet their farming, mining, and diseases took a toll on the physical environment and left many American Indians dead. **Despite** these negatives, the Columbian Exchange shaped the modern world, including what would become the United States.

**Academic Vocabulary**  
**despite** • *prep.*, in spite of; notwithstanding


**READING CHECK Summarize** How would you define the Columbian Exchange?

## Lesson Check

### Practice Vocabulary

1. What was the first Spanish **colony** in the Americas?
2. How did the **Columbian Exchange** affect Europe and the Americas?

### Critical Thinking and Writing

3. **Use Evidence** How did European expansion in the Americas affect American Indians?
4. **Compare and Contrast** How did the expeditions of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa and Ferdinand Magellan differ?
5. **Summarize** the career of Christopher Columbus.
6. **Draw Conclusions** Why were American Indians so susceptible to European diseases, such as influenza?
7. **Writing Workshop: Develop a Clear Thesis** You should now choose the invention or improvement for your paper. Write a thesis in your  Active Journal in which you address the question: How did a travel-related invention or improvement in one of the societies covered in this topic impact people's lives?



# Christopher Columbus, Diary

During his voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, Christopher Columbus recorded his thoughts. In these excerpts, you will see that Columbus was concerned about his crew.

► When Columbus returned to Europe from his first voyage, he gave his journal, written during the expedition, to Queen Isabella.



**Sunday, 9 September.** Sailed this day nineteen leagues ①, and determined to count less than the true number, that the crew might not be dismayed if the voyage should prove long. ② In the night sailed one hundred and twenty miles, at the rate of ten miles an hour, which make thirty leagues. The sailors steered badly, causing the vessels to fall to leeward toward the northeast, for which the Admiral reprimanded them repeatedly.

**Monday, 10 September.** This day and night sailed sixty leagues ③, at the rate of ten miles an hour, which are two leagues and a half. Reckoned only forty-eight leagues, that the men might not be terrified if they should be long upon the voyage. . . .

**Thursday, 11 October.** Steered west-southwest; and encountered a heavier sea than they had met with before in the whole voyage. Saw pardelas ④ and a green rush near the vessel. The crew of the Pinta saw a cane and a log; they also picked up a stick which appeared to have been carved with an iron tool, a piece of cane, a plant which grows on land, and a board. The crew of the Nina saw other signs of land, and a stalk loaded with rose berries. These signs encouraged them, and they all grew cheerful. ⑤

After sunset steered their original course west and sailed twelve miles an hour till two hours after midnight, going ninety miles, which are twenty-two leagues and a half; and as the Pinta was the swiftest sailer, and kept ahead of the Admiral, she discovered land and made the signals which had been ordered.

## Analyzing Primary Sources

Cite specific evidence from the document to support your answers.

1. Why was it a problem that the sailors accidentally steered the ship toward the northeast?
2. How do you think Columbus's crew felt when they saw land, after more than two months at sea? Explain.

## Reading and Vocabulary Support

① A *league* is a unit of measurement equal to about four miles.

② Why do you think Columbus wanted his crew to believe they had traveled fewer miles than they had?

③ How many miles is 60 leagues?

④ A *pardela* is a type of bird.

⑤ Why do you think the crew was encouraged by all the signs of land they had seen?

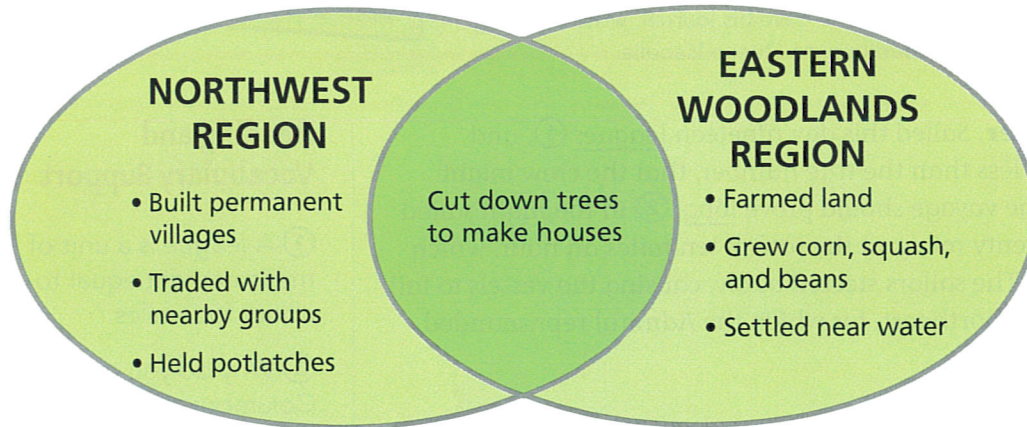
## Quest CONNECTIONS

Do you believe Columbus's account of his journey? Do the details he provides give credibility to his account?

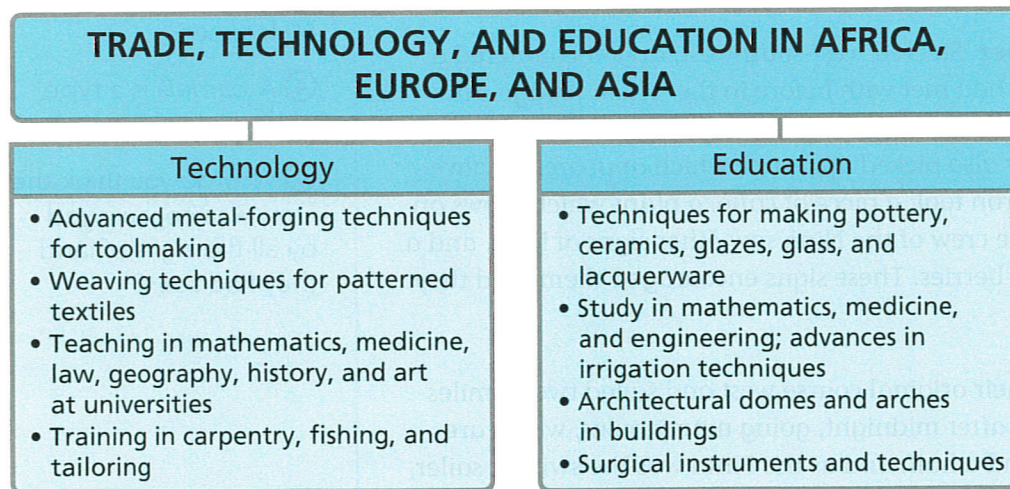
# Review and Assessment

## VISUAL REVIEW

### Life in the Northwest and Eastern Woodlands Regions



### Trade in Africa and Eurasia



## READING REVIEW

Use the Take Notes and Practice Vocabulary activities in your Active Journal to review the topic.

### INTERACTIVE

Practice Vocabulary using the Topic Mini-Games.

### **Quest** FINDINGS

#### Write Your Essay


Get help for writing your essay in your Active Journal.

# ASSESSMENT

## Vocabulary and Key Ideas

- 1. List** What were the early **civilizations** of Central and South America?
- 2. Define** What is a **city-state**?
- 3. Describe** What are some ways that American Indian **tribes** interacted with one another?
- 4. Describe** life for most people living under **feudalism**.
- 5. Check Understanding** What happened during the **Renaissance**?
- 6. Identify** Who founded the first Spanish **colony** in the Americas?
- 7. Explain** How did the **Columbian Exchange** change the relationship between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres?

## Critical Thinking and Writing

- 8. Identify Supporting Details** How did the Maya and Aztec civilizations use science and math?
- 9. Compare and Contrast** How did the physical environment of the Chipewyan and Carrier affect settlement patterns?
- 10. Identify Cause and Effect** What was the impact of the Crusades on the trading relationship between Europe and the Middle East?
- 11. Identify Main Ideas** What were the political, religious, and economic reasons for Spanish exploration of North America?
- 12. Revisit the Essential Question** How much did geography affect the lives of American Indians and European explorers?
- 13. Writer's Workshop: Write a Research Paper** Using the notes you made in your  Active Journal, answer the following question in a research paper: How did a travel-related invention or improvement in one of the societies covered in this topic impact people's lives?

## Analyze Primary Sources

14. How would you describe the people who Christopher Columbus met?
  - A. suspicious
  - B. friendly
  - C. angry
  - D. religious

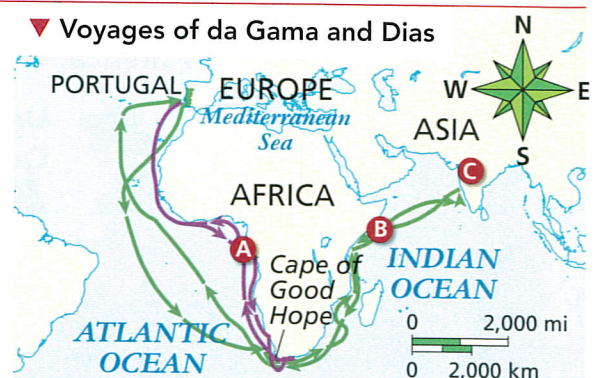
"As I saw that they were very friendly to us, and perceived that they could be much more easily converted to our holy faith by gentle means than by force, I presented them with some red caps, and strings of beads to

wear upon the neck, and many other trifles of small value, wherewith they were much delighted . . . Afterwards they came swimming to the boats, bringing parrots, balls of cotton thread, javelins, and many other things which they exchanged for articles we gave them, such as glass beads, and hawk's bells; which trade was carried on with the utmost good will."

—from the diary of Christopher Columbus

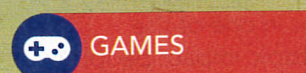
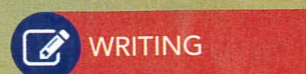
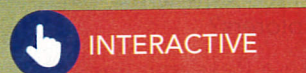
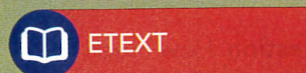
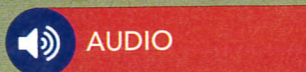
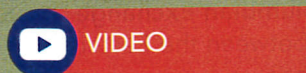
## Analyze Maps

15. Which letter represents the route of Bartolomeu Dias?
16. Which letter represents the route of Vasco da Gama? How did it differ from that of Dias?
17. What was the easternmost point of da Gama's sea route?



# European Colonization of North America (1500–1750)

GO ONLINE  
to access your  
digital course



## Go back five centuries

to the time of the **EUROPEAN COLONIZATION OF NORTH AMERICA**. Colonists from England came to North America for many reasons. Some wanted to practice their religions freely, while others were looking for economic opportunities or to start a new life.

## Explore The Essential Question

### Why do people move?

North America is far from Europe. Despite this, about 400 years ago many people began to emigrate to the land that would one day become the United States of America. Why?

Unlock the Essential  
Question in your  
 Active Journal.