Section 1

Essential Question
- What events and technological advances paved the way for European exploration?

Reading Guide

Content Vocabulary
- classical (p. 30)
- pilgrimage (p. 33)
- technology (p. 31)
- mosque (p. 33)
- astrolabe (p. 31)
- Quran (p. 33)

Academic Vocabulary
- acquire (p. 31)
- impose (p. 32)

Key People and Events
- Crusades (p. 29)
- Marco Polo (p. 29)
- Renaissance (p. 30)
- Mansa Musa (p. 33)

Reading Strategy
Taking Notes: As you read, use a diagram like the one below to identify the advances in technology that paved the way for European voyages of exploration.

American Diary

In 1271 Marco Polo set off from Italy on a great journey to China. Polo crossed the Gobi, a desert area north of China, about which he wrote: “The length of this Desert is so great that ‘tis said it would take a year and more to ride from one end of it to the other. And here, where its breadth is least [narrowest], it takes a month to cross it. ‘Tis all composed of hills and valleys of sand, and not a thing to eat is to be found on it.”

—from The Travels of Marco Polo

Camels still cross the vast deserts of Asia today
New Ideas and Nations

Main Idea: The Renaissance began in the Italian city-states and spread throughout Europe.

History and You: What do you know about the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome? Read to learn about the renewed interest in classical learning during the Renaissance.

By the time Marco Polo returned from China, European interest in Asia had begun to grow. For centuries after the Roman Empire fell, the people of western Europe were isolated from the rest of the world. Dominated by the Catholic Church, their world was divided into a number of small kingdoms and city-states.

Meanwhile, the religion of Islam swept across the Middle East and Africa. European Christians feared losing access to the Holy Land—the birthplace of Christianity, in what is now Israel. In 1095 the Europeans launched the first of nine expeditions, known as the Crusades, to regain control of their holy sites from the Muslims.

The Crusades brought western Europeans into contact with the Middle East. Arab merchants sold spices, sugar, silk, and other goods from China and India to Europeans. As a result, European interest in Asia grew.

That interest grew even more after Marco Polo returned from China. In 1296 he began writing an account of his trip. He described Asia’s marvels in his book Travels, which was widely read in Europe. Little did Marco Polo realize that 200 years later, Travels would inspire Christopher Columbus to sail in the opposite direction to reach the East.

The Growth of Trade

Merchants knew they could make a fortune selling goods from Asia. Wealthy Europeans clamored for spices from the East. They also wanted perfumes, silks, and precious stones.

Merchants first bought goods from Arab traders in the Middle East. These merchants then sent the goods overland by caravan to the Mediterranean Sea. From there the goods were sent by ship to Italian ports. The cities of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa prospered as centers of the growing trade. Arab merchants, however, charged high prices for their goods. Europeans began looking for a route to the East that bypassed the Arab merchants.

If You Were There: A Young Explorer

En Route: Only 17 years old when his trip began, Marco Polo journeyed with his father and uncle, both Venetian merchants. If you were with them, you would have traveled on camels for more than three years. You also would have crossed almost 7,000 miles (11,265 km) of mountains and deserts before reaching your final destination: the fabled court of Kublai Khan (KOO-BLIE Khan), the Mongol emperor of China.

Critical Thinking

Explaining: How would you have traveled to China? How long would it have taken to reach your destination?
The Growth of Ideas

In the 1300s a powerful new spirit emerged in the Italian city-states and spread throughout Europe. Banking and the expansion of trade with Asia made Italian merchants wealthy. These citizens wanted to improve their knowledge of past civilizations and of the world. They studied the classical—ancient Greek and Roman—works with new interest. Taking a more experimental approach to science, many thinkers tested new and old theories and evaluated the results.

Many authors began to write about the individual and the universe. Artists studied the sculpture and architecture of the classical world. They particularly admired the harmony and balance in Greek art.

The Renaissance

This period of intellectual and artistic creativity was known as the Renaissance (reh•nuh•SAHN•TIS). The word means “rebirth” in French and refers to the renewed interest in classical Greek and Roman learning. The Renaissance spread throughout Europe over the next two centuries. It changed the way Europeans thought about themselves and the world. It also paved the way for an age of exploration and discovery.

Powerful Nations Emerge

During the Renaissance, merchants and bankers sought greater profits through foreign trade. They wanted to buy goods directly from the East. The development of nation-states in western Europe helped expand trade and interest in overseas exploration.

For years Europe was a patchwork of small states. By the 1400s, however, a new type of centralized state began to emerge in western Europe. Strong monarchs came to power in Spain, Portugal, England, and France. They began to establish national laws, courts, taxes, and armies to replace those of the local lords. These ambitious monarchs sought ways to increase trade and make their countries stronger and wealthier.

✔ Reading Check  Identifying What goods did wealthy Europeans desire from the East?

**Linking Past to Present**

**THEN** “Land ho!” The tools that early explorers used to sail the uncharted seas were much different from the instruments used today. Early navigation tools such as the astrolabe could help determine a ship’s approximate latitude by noting the locations of the stars.

**NOW** Today, navigation satellites do the work of an astrolabe—and much more. The NAVSTAR Global Positioning System (GPS) is a network of satellites launched by the United States. From space, the GPS can track the location of a ship or some other object on Earth within a few meters of its actual position.
Technology's Impact

Main Idea Technology produced better means of navigation and paved the way for European voyages of exploration.

History and You Have you ridden in a vehicle with an onboard navigation system? Read to learn how the astrolabe and compass improved navigation in the 1400s.

Advances in technology—the use of scientific knowledge for practical purposes—paved the way for European voyages of exploration. In the 1450s the introduction of the printing press made it much easier to print books. Now more people had access to books and to new information. Many Europeans read Marco Polo’s Travels when it appeared in printed form in 1477.

Better Maps and Instruments

Most early maps were inaccurate because they were drawn from the often-mistaken impressions of traders and travelers. Little by little, cartographers, or mapmakers, improved their skills. Using reports of explorers and information from Arab geographers, mapmakers made more accurate land and sea maps. These maps showed the directions of ocean currents. They also showed lines of latitude, which measured the distance north and south of the Equator.

Better instruments were developed for navigating the seas. Sailors could determine their latitude while at sea with an astrolabe. This instrument measured the positions of stars. Europeans also acquired the magnetic compass. A Chinese invention, the compass began to be widely used in Europe and the Middle East in the 1200s. The compass allowed sailors to determine their direction when they were far from land.

Better Ships

Advances in ship design allowed shipbuilders to build sailing vessels that were capable of long ocean voyages. The stern rudder and the triangular sail made it possible for ships to sail into the wind. Both of these new features came from the Arabs.

Then, in the late 1400s, the Portuguese developed the three-masted caravel. It was the first and most famous ship of the European age of exploration. The caravel sailed faster than earlier ships and carried more cargo and food supplies. It also could float in shallow water. This feature allowed sailors to explore inlets and to sail their ships up to the beach if they needed to make repairs. A Venetian sailor called the caravels “the best ships that sailed the seas.”

By the mid-1400s, the Italian ports faced increased competition for foreign trade. As a result, a new era of exploration was launched. Powerful countries such as Portugal and Spain began searching for sea routes to Asia. Portugal began its explorations by sending ships down the west coast of Africa, an area Europeans had never visited before.

- [ ] Reading Check Explaining How did the caravel affect overseas exploration in the 1400s?
African Kingdoms

Main Idea: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai were among the most powerful empires in Africa.

History and You: What items are valued today because they are rare? Read to find out how rare items, such as salt, drove the economies of early African kingdoms.

Powerful kingdoms flourished in Africa south of the Sahara between A.D. 400 and A.D. 1600. Africans mined gold, copper, and iron ore. Trade with Islamic societies in North Africa brought wealth as well as Islamic ideas and customs to the West African kingdoms.

City-states on the east coast of Africa also benefited from trade. Arab traders from the Middle East brought cotton, silk, and porcelain from India and China. They exchanged these goods for ivory and metals from the African interior.

The Portuguese sailed south along the western coast of Africa in the mid-1400s. They set up trading posts along the coastline. From these posts, they traded for gold and for enslaved people.

Ghana—A Trading Empire

Between A.D. 400 and A.D. 1100, a vast trading empire called Ghana emerged in West Africa. Well located between the salt mines of the Sahara and the gold mines to the south, Ghana prospered from the taxes imposed, or placed, on trade.

Caravans with gold, ivory, and slaves from Ghana crossed the Sahara to North Africa, where Muslim traders loaded caravans with salt, cloth, and brass and headed back to Ghana. Trading contacts led many West Africans to become Muslims.

In 1076 people from North Africa, called Almoravids, attacked Ghana and disrupted its trade routes. While Ghana fought the Almoravids, new trade routes and gold mines opened up to the east, bypassing Ghana. Ghana then began to decline, and new states emerged in the region.
Mali—A Powerful Kingdom

Mali, one of the new states, grew into a powerful kingdom. The people of Mali developed their own trade routes across the desert to North Africa. By the late 1200s, Mali’s territory included the former kingdom of Ghana. The country was mainly agricultural, but gold mines enriched the kingdom.

Mali’s greatest king, Mansa Mūsā, ruled from 1312 to 1337. He was described at the time as “the most powerful, the richest, the most fortunate, the most feared by his enemies, and the most able to do good to those around him.” Mūsā made his kingdom famous.

In 1324 Mūsā, who was a Muslim, made a grand pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Makkah (Mecca) in western Saudi Arabia. A pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place. Arab writers reported that Mūsā traveled with a huge military escort. Ahead of him marched 500 royal servants who carried gold to distribute along the way.

Mūsā returned to Mali with an Arab architect who built great mosques, Muslim houses of worship, in the capital of Timbuktu. Under Mansa Mūsā, Timbuktu became an important center of Islamic art and learning.

The Songhai Empire

Some years later the Songhai (SAWNG•hy) people, who lived along the Niger River, rose up against Mali rule. They built a navy to control the Niger and in 1468 captured Timbuktu. Askinya Muhammad brought the Songhai Empire to the height of its power. Askinya strengthened his country and encouraged trade with Europe and Asia.

Plan of Government

Askinya introduced laws based on the teachings of the holy book of Islam, the Quran. Askinya also developed a sophisticated plan for his country’s government. He divided Songhai into five provinces. To each province he appointed a governor, a tax collector, a court of judges, and a trade inspector. Everyone used the same weights and measures and followed the same legal system. In the late 1500s the North African kingdom of Morocco attacked the Songhai gold-trading centers. Using guns and cannons, the Moroccans easily defeated the empire.

Reading Check Explaining What goods did African kingdoms use for trading? What did they trade for?
Early Exploration

American Diary

In 1492 Christopher Columbus led 90 sailors on a voyage into the unknown. As the voyage dragged on, the sailors grew quarrelsome. Columbus wrote: "I am told . . . that if I persist in going onward, the best course of action will be to throw me into the sea some night."

Then, on the morning of October 12, a cannon fired from the ship Pinta, indicating that land had been sighted. At dawn, Columbus left his ship, the Santa Maria, and went ashore.

—from The Log of Christopher Columbus

Explorers

Sponsored by Portugal  Sponsored by Spain

Christopher Columbus lands on the Caribbean island that he named San Salvador.
Seeking New Trade Routes

Main Idea: Portugal took the lead in finding a sea route to India.

History and You: What do you consider a long trip? A few hours on an airplane or a few days in a car? Read to learn about the long sea voyages that Portuguese ships made to find a sea route to India.

Columbus believed he had arrived in the Indies— islands located southeast of China. Unfortunately, Columbus was wrong. The maps that Columbus and the first European explorers used did not include the Americas. They showed three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa—merged in a gigantic landmass bordered by oceans. Some explorers thought that the Western (Atlantic) and Eastern (Pacific) Oceans ran together to form what they called the Ocean Sea. No one realized that another huge landmass was missing from the maps. They also did not realize that the oceans were as large as they are.

Columbus sailed for Spain, but Portugal was the first European power to explore the boundaries of the known world. Because Portugal lacked a Mediterranean port, it could not share in the trade between Asia and Europe. The country's rulers wanted to find a new route to China and India.

The Portuguese also hoped to find a more direct way to get West African gold. The gold traveled by caravan across the desert to North Africa and then by ship across the Mediterranean. Portuguese traders needed a better route.

Early Portuguese Voyages

Prince Henry of Portugal helped lay the groundwork for the era of exploration that was beginning. In about 1420, he set up a center for exploration at Sarges, on the southwestern tip of Portugal, “where endeth land and where beginneth sea.”

Known as Henry the Navigator, the prince never intended to become an explorer himself. Instead, he planned the voyages and then analyzed the reports that his crews brought home. At Sarges, Prince Henry began his “school of navigation.” There, astronomers, geographers, and mathematicians shared their knowledge with Portuguese sailors and shipbuilders. When each new voyage brought back new information, Henry’s expert mapmakers updated the charts.

If You Were There: Ship’s Boy on the Santa María

Life Aboard Ship: Your day begins with prayers on deck. A single hot meal for the day is prepared over an open fire in the deck's sandbox. Your meal usually consists of salted meat or fresh fish, with dried peas and cheese. As a ship’s boy, your major job is letting the crew know when it is time to do their chores. You do so by turning the sandglass every half-hour and calling out, “One glass is gone, and now the second flows!” After eight turns of the glass, or four hours, a new boy comes on deck to call the time. When you are off duty, you sleep anywhere on the deck that you can find shelter.

Critical Thinking: Drawing Conclusions. What qualities would you need to be a crew member on the Santa María?
As Portuguese ships moved south along the coast of West Africa, they traded for gold and ivory and established a number of trading posts in the region. Because of its abundance of gold, the area came to be known as the Gold Coast. In the mid-1400s Portuguese traders began buying enslaved people there as well.

King John II of Portugal launched new efforts to realize the Portuguese dream of a trading empire in Asia. If the Portuguese could find a sea route around Africa, they could trade directly with India and China. In the 1480s the king urged Portuguese sea captains to explore farther south along the African coast.

**Bartholomeu Dias**

In 1487 King John sent Bartholomeu Dias to explore the southernmost part of Africa and from there to sail northeast into the Indian Ocean. Dias set out from Lisbon with two small caravels and a slower supply ship. The expedition was also assigned some of Portugal’s best pilots. They sailed for days.

After passing the mouth of the Orange River in South Africa, Dias ran into a fierce storm that lasted nearly two weeks. The strong winds carried him southward, off course, and out of sight of land. When the winds finally died down, Dias steered east and then north until he found land again. Dias realized that he had sailed past the southernmost point of Africa, called a cape because it projects into the sea.

Dias charted a course back home. On the return journey, Dias passed the cape again. He wrote that he had been around the “Cape of Storms.” On learning of Dias’s discovery, King John renamed this southern tip of land.
He called it the Cape of Good Hope. The king hoped that the passage around Africa might lead to a new route to India.

**Vasco da Gama**

The first Portuguese voyages to India were made years later. In July 1497, after much preparation, **Vasco da Gama** set out from Portugal with four ships. Da Gama did little coast hugging of Africa. Instead, his ships made a huge semicircular sweep through the Atlantic Ocean. At one point during the voyage, da Gama was closer to what is today Brazil than he was to Africa. It is said that da Gama made this unusual maneuver to reach currents that would help him round the Cape of Good Hope safely. During that huge sweep of the Atlantic, da Gama was out of sight of land for 96 days.

After rounding the Cape on November 22, da Gama visited cities along the coast of East Africa. Along the way, he met an Arab pilot who knew the Indian Ocean well. With the pilot’s help, da Gama sailed on to India. He reached the port of Calicut in May 1498, completing the long-awaited eastern sea route to Asia.

**The Portuguese Trading Empire**

Events moved quickly after that. Less than six months after da Gama’s return home, a fleet of 13 ships left Lisbon bound for the East. In command of this fleet was Pedro Alvares Cabral. With him were several captains, including Bartholomeu Dias. Cabral followed da Gama’s route. His course, however, swung so wide around Africa that he reached Brazil, where he explored some of the coastline. Cabral claimed the land for his king and sent one of his ships back to Portugal with the good news while he continued on to India. Cabral gave Portugal a stake in the Americas.

Cabral returned home from India with cargoes of spices, porcelain, and other goods. Other Portuguese fleets repeated Cabral’s success, and Portugal established its first permanent forts in India. Portuguese fleets began to make annual voyages to India. Their cargoes made the Portuguese capital of Lisbon the marketplace of Europe.

- **Reading Check**: **Analyzing** What was the significance of the voyages of Dias and da Gama?

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**The Caravel**

**A Ship for Explorers** Caravels ranged in length from 75 to 90 feet (23 to 27 m) and were suited for sailing along shallow coastlines. They were not, however, well suited for very long voyages, as they could not carry enough crew and supplies. Caravels were usually rigged with three or four masts, employing both square and triangular sails.

- **Critical Thinking**: **Explaining** How did the caravel’s lateen sails help sailors?
Columbus Crosses the Atlantic

Main Idea: After Christopher Columbus reached the Americas, Spain and Portugal divided the world's unexplored regions.

History and You: Do you like traveling to new places? Read to learn about the European exploration of the Americas.

Christopher Columbus had a different plan for reaching Asia. He planned to get there by sailing west. Born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451, Columbus became a sailor for Portugal. He had traveled as far north as the Arctic Circle and as far south as the Gold Coast.

In the 1400s most educated people believed the world was round. A more difficult matter was determining its size. Columbus was among those who based their estimates of the Earth's size on the work of Ptolemy, an ancient Greek astronomer. Columbus believed Asia was about 2,760 miles (4,441 km) from Europe—a voyage of about two months by ship. Ptolemy, however, underestimated the size of the world.

The Viking Voyages

Several centuries before Columbus, northern Europeans called Vikings had sailed to North America. In the A.D. 800s and 900s, Viking ships visited Iceland and Greenland and established settlements. According to Norse sagas, or traditional stories, a Viking sailor named Leif Eriksson explored a land west of Greenland about the year A.D. 1000. It was known as Vinland. Other Norse sagas describe failed attempts by the Vikings to settle in Vinland, which historians believe was North America. Archaeologists have found the remains of a Viking settlement in Newfoundland. No one is sure what other parts of North America the Vikings explored.

The Viking voyages to other lands were not well-known. Europeans did not “discover” the Americas until Columbus made his great voyage.
Spain Backs Columbus
For most of the 1400s, Spanish monarchs devoted, or committed, their energy to driving the Muslims out of Spain. The last Muslim kingdom in Spain fell in 1492. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain could then focus on other goals. The Spanish were watching the seafaring and trading successes of neighboring Portugal with envy. They, too, wanted the riches of Asian trade.

Columbus needed a sponsor to finance his project of a westward voyage to Asia. He visited many European courts looking for support. After years of frustration, he finally found a sponsor in Spain.

Queen Isabella, a devout Catholic, was finally persuaded by her husband’s minister of finance to support the expedition for two reasons. First, Columbus promised to bring Christianity to any lands he found. Second, if he found a way to Asia, Spain would become wealthy through the trade that would open up. The queen promised Columbus a share of any riches gained from lands he discovered on his way to Asia.

Columbus’s First Voyage
On August 3, 1492, Columbus set out from Palos, Spain. He had two small ships, the Niña and the Pinta, and a larger one, the Santa María. Columbus served as captain of the Santa María, his flagship. The three ships carried about 90 sailors and a six-month supply of provisions. The small fleet stopped at the Canary Islands off the coast of West Africa for repairs and to stock up on supplies. Columbus then set out on the difficult voyage westward across unknown and mysterious stretches of the Atlantic Ocean.

The ships had good winds, but after a month at sea the sailors began to worry. Columbus, however, was determined.

People IN HISTORY

Isabella
Queen of Spain
Queen Isabella was a devout Catholic, and her beliefs were reflected in many aspects of her rule. She insisted that Columbus treat the Native Americans fairly and ordered Columbus to release several Native Americans that he brought back as slaves. Isabella truly hoped to Christianize the Native Americans. She decreed that because "Indians . . . run away from the Christians . . . I order you . . . to compel the Indians to have dealings with the Christian settlers . . . to work on their buildings, to mine and collect gold . . . and to work on their farms and crop fields."

Christopher Columbus
Italian Explorer
On his voyages, Columbus proved himself to be a great navigator and sailor. He believed he would discover great riches and new lands while exploring the Atlantic on the way to Asia. Before his first voyage, Columbus wrote: "Your Highnesses commanded me . . . [to] go to . . . India, and for this accorded me great rewards and ennobled [praised] me so that from that time henceforth I might style myself 'Don' and be high admiral of the Ocean Sea and . . . Governor of the islands and continent which I should discover."

CRITICAL Thinking

1. Explaining Based on the quotation, what were Columbus’s goals for himself and his voyage?
2. Analyzing Which do you think was more important to Queen Isabella: converting the Native Americans to her religion or getting them to work? Explain your answer.
He told the men, "I made this voyage to go to the Indies, and [I] shall continue until I find them, with God’s help." To convince the crew that they had not traveled too far from home, Columbus altered, or changed, the distances in his ship’s log.

"Tierra! Tierra!"
On October 12, 1492, at two o’clock in the morning, a lookout shouted, "Tierra! Tierra!"—"Land! Land!" He had spotted a small island, part of the group of islands now called the Bahamas. Columbus went ashore, claimed the island for Spain, and named it San Salvador. Although he did not know it, Columbus had reached the Americas.

Columbus explored the area for several months, convinced he had reached the East Indies, the islands off the coast of Asia. Today the Caribbean Islands are often referred to as the West Indies. Columbus called the local people Indians. He noted that they regarded the Europeans with wonder and often touched them to find out "if they were flesh and bones like themselves."

Columbus returned to Spain in triumph. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand received him with great honor and agreed to finance his future voyages to the lands in the west. Columbus earned the title of Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

Columbus’s Later Voyages
Columbus made three more voyages from Spain, in 1493, 1498, and 1502. He explored the Caribbean islands of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Cuba, and Jamaica. He also sailed along the coasts of Central America and northern South America. He claimed the new lands for Spain and established settlements. Columbus also mapped the coastline of Central America.

Later explorations made it clear that Columbus had not reached Asia at all.
He had found a part of the globe that was unknown to Europeans, Asians, and Africans. In the following years, the Spanish explored most of the Caribbean region. In time their voyages led to the establishment of the Spanish Empire in the Americas.

**Dividing the World**

Both Spain and Portugal wanted to protect their claims, and they turned to Pope Alexander VI for help. In 1493 the pope drew a line of demarcation, an imaginary line running down the middle of the Atlantic from the North Pole to the South Pole. Spain was to control all lands to the west of the line; Portugal controlled all lands to the east of the line. Portugal, however, protested that the division favored Spain. As a result, in 1494 the two countries signed the Treaty of Tordesillas (tawr•day•SEE•yuhks), an agreement to move the line farther west. The treaty divided the entire unexplored world between Spain and Portugal.

**Exploring America**

After Columbus, other voyagers explored the Americas. In 1502 Amerigo Vespucci sailed along South America’s coast. Vespucci concluded that South America was a continent, not part of Asia. European geographers soon began calling the continent America, in honor of Amerigo Vespucci.

Another Spaniard, Vasco Núñez de Balboa (bahl•BOH•uh), heard stories of the “great waters” beyond the mountains of Panama, in Central America. He hiked through steamy rain forests until he reached the opposite coast. There, in 1513, Balboa found a vast body of water, claiming it and the adjoining lands for Spain. Balboa was the first European to see the Pacific Ocean from the Americas.

**Sailing Around the World**

In 1520 Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese seaman sailing for Spain, reached the southernmost tip of South America. He sailed through the stormy waters of a strait, or narrow sea passage, into the ocean Balboa had seen. The waters were so peaceful—**pacifico** in Spanish—that Magellan named the ocean the Pacific. Although Magellan later died in the Philippine Islands, his crew continued west, arriving in Spain in 1522. They became the first known people to **circumnavigate**, or sail around, the world.

[Image of a map or illustration related to the text]
Spain in America

American Diary

In 1519 Hernán Cortés prepared to leave Cuba for Mexico with 11 ships carrying about 550 Spanish soldiers and 16 horses. Before setting off, Cortés said to his men: “I know in my heart that we shall take vast and wealthy lands, peoples such as have never before been seen. . . . If you do not abandon me, as I shall not abandon you, I shall make you in a very short time the richest of all men who have crossed the seas.”

—from Cortés: The Life of the Conqueror by His Secretary

Reading Guide

Content Vocabulary
conquistador (p. 43) encomienda (p. 47)
pueblo (p. 46) plantation (p. 47)
mission (p. 46)

Academic Vocabulary
grant (p. 43) found (p. 46)

Key People
Hernán Cortés (p. 43)
Montezuma (p. 43)
Francisco Pizarro (p. 44)
Atahualpa (p. 44)
Hernando de Soto (p. 46)

Reading Strategy
Taking Notes As you read, use a diagram like the one below to rank the social classes in the Spanish colonies.

Enslaved Africans
Explorers and Conquests

**Main Idea:** Spanish explorers conquered Native American empires and found new lands.

**History and You:** What would you look for as you hike along a nature trail? Read to learn what some Spanish explorers looked for as they traveled on foot through the Americas.

Stories of gold, silver, and kingdoms wealthy beyond belief greeted the early Spanish explorers in the Americas. The reports led them far and wide in search of fabulous riches.

These explorers, known as *conquistadors* (kah-n•KEES•tuh•dawrs), received *grants*, or special privileges, from the Spanish rulers. These grants gave them the right to explore and establish settlements in the Americas. In exchange, they agreed to give the Spanish crown one-fifth of any gold or other treasure discovered. This arrangement allowed Spanish rulers to launch expeditions with little risk. If a conquistador failed, he lost his own fortune. If he succeeded, both he and Spain gained wealth and glory.

**Cortés Conquers the Aztec**

When Hernán Cortés landed on the east coast of present-day Mexico in 1519, he was looking for gold and glory. He came with more than 500 soldiers, some horses, and a few cannons. Cortés soon learned about the great Aztec Empire and its capital of Tenochtitlán (*tay•NAWCH•teet•LAHN*).

The Aztec conquered many cities in Mexico to build their empire. These cities were forced to give crops, clothing, gold, and precious stones to the Aztec as tribute, or money paid for protection. Cortés formed alliances with a number of these conquered people against the Aztec. Then he marched into Tenochtitlán with his small army and his Native American allies.

The Aztec emperor, Montezuma (*MAHN•tuh•ZOOR•muh*)—also spelled Moctezuma—welcomed Cortés and his soldiers and provided them with food and a fine palace. However, Cortés took advantage of the hospitality and made Montezuma his prisoner. The Aztec rebelled in the spring of 1520. During the fighting, which lasted for days, Montezuma was killed.

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**Primary Source: The Aztec and the Spanish**

**An Aztec View** Hernán Cortés and his soldiers arrived on the Mexican coast in April 1519. The people of eastern Mexico felt fear and awe as they watched the soldiers. One Aztec later recalled:

“They came in battle array, as conquerors... their spears glinted in the sun, and their pennons [banners] fluttered like bats. They made a loud clamor as they marched, for their coats of mail and their weapons clashed and rattled... They terrified everyone who saw them.”

—from The Broken Spears

**Critical Thinking**

**Comparing and Contrasting** How do you think the Aztec’s report differs from Cortés’s speech?
Eventually, the Spanish were forced to leave Tenochtitlán. Cortés, however, was determined to retake the city. He waited until more Spanish troops arrived, and then he attacked and destroyed the Aztec capital in 1521. An Aztec poem describes the scene:

**Primary Source**

"Without roofs are the houses,
And red are their walls with blood.

Weep, my friends,
Know that with these disasters
We have lost our Mexican nation."

—from Stolen Continents

The Aztec Empire disintegrated, and Spain seized control of the region.

**Pizarro Conquers the Inca**

The conquistador Francisco Pizarro sailed down the Pacific coast of South America with about 180 Spanish soldiers. Pizarro had heard tales of the incredibly wealthy Inca Empire in what is now Peru. In 1532 Pizarro captured the Inca ruler, Atahualpa (AHT ah • WAHL • pah), and destroyed much of the Inca army.

The following year, the Spanish falsely accused Atahualpa of crimes and executed him. Without their leader, the Inca were not able to fight effectively. Pizarro soon gained control of most of the vast Inca Empire.

**Why Spain Succeeded**

The conquistadors’ victories over the Aztec and Inca were quick and lasting. How could Cortés and Pizarro, with only their small armies, conquer such mighty empires?

First, the Spanish arrived with weapons—guns and cannons—and animals that the Aztec and Inca had never seen. The Spanish rode horses and had huge, ferocious dogs. To the Native Americans, the Spanish seemed almost like gods. Second, some Native Americans in the region disliked their Aztec overlords.
These peoples assisted the conquistadors in overthrowing the Aztec. Finally, disease played an extremely large role in the Spanish conquest. With no immunity to European diseases, the Aztec and the Inca quickly fell victim to epidemics of smallpox and other diseases. This situation weakened their resistance to the invaders.

Spain in North America

Mexico and Peru were rich in silver and gold. Hoping to find similar wealth to the north, conquistadors explored the southeastern and southwestern parts of North America.

Juan Ponce de León made the first Spanish landing on the North American mainland, arriving on the east coast of present-day Florida in 1513. According to legend, Ponce de León hoped to find not only gold but also the legendary fountain of youth, “a spring of running water of such marvelous virtue” that drinking it “makes old men young again.” Ponce de León’s exploration led to the first Spanish settlement in what is now the United States. In 1565, the Spanish built a fort at St. Augustine, Florida.

The Seven Cities of Cibola

Many other conquistadors searched for quick riches and several lost their lives trying. Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (kah•BAY•sah deh VAH•kah) was part of a Spanish expedition to Florida in 1528.

After encountering troubles in Florida, the expedition, led by Pánfilo de Narváez, sailed south toward Mexico. However, in November 1528, three of the five boats were lost in a storm. The two boats that survived went aground on an island near what is now the state of Texas. Within a few months, only a handful of the Spaniards were still alive.

To survive among the Native Americans, de Vaca and an enslaved African named Estevanico became medicine men. Cabeza de Vaca later wrote that their method of healing was “to bless the sick, breathing on them,” and to recite Latin prayers.
In 1533 the Spaniards set off on a long trip across the Southwest. Reaching Mexico in 1536, Cabeza de Vaca related tales about seven cities of gold.

Inspired by these stories, Hernando de Soto led an expedition to the west. For three years they wandered throughout the present-day southeastern United States, seizing food and supplies from Native Americans. In 1541 De Soto crossed the Mississippi River. After reaching what is today Oklahoma, de Soto died of fever.

Francisco Vásquez de Coronado also wanted to find the “Seven Cities of Cibola.” Traveling through northern Mexico and present-day Arizona and New Mexico, his expedition reached a Zuni settlement in 1540. They realized at once that there was no gold. Members of the expedition traveled west to the Colorado River and east into what is now Kansas. They found nothing but “windswept plains” and strange “shaggy cows” (buffalo).

Spanish Rule

Main Idea As the Spanish settled their colonies in the Americas, a strict social class structure formed.

History and You Have you ever visited or seen pictures of old Spanish missions in the American Southwest? Read to learn how the Spanish settled the Americas.

Spanish law called for three kinds of settlements in the Americas—pueblos, missions, and presidios. Pueblos, or towns, were established as centers of trade. Missions were religious communities that usually included a small town, surrounding farmland, and a church. A presidio, or fort, was usually built near a mission.

The Spanish sent Juan de Oñate (dā ohn·yah·tā) from Mexico to gain control over frontier lands to the north and to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. In 1598 Oñate founded, or established, the province of New Mexico and introduced cattle and horses to the Pueblo people there.
Social Classes
A class system developed in Spain’s empire. At the top were people who were born in Spain, called peninsulares. The peninsulares owned the land, served in the Catholic Church, and ran the local government. Below them were the creoles, people who were born in the Americas to Spanish parents. Lower in order were the mestizos (meh•STER•zohs), people with Spanish and Native American parents. Still lower were the Native Americans, most of whom lived in great poverty. At the bottom were enslaved Africans.

In the 1500s, the Spanish government granted conquistadors who settled in the Americas an encomienda, the right to demand taxes or labor from Native Americans living on the land. This system turned the Native Americans into slaves. Grueling labor took its toll. Many Native Americans died from malnutrition and disease.

A Spanish priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas, condemned the cruel treatment of the Native Americans. He pleaded for laws to protect them. Las Casas claimed that millions had died because the Spanish “made gold their ultimate aim, seeking to load themselves with riches in the shortest possible time.”

Las Casas’s reports influenced the Spanish government to pass the New Laws in 1542. These laws forbade making slaves of Native Americans. Although not always enforced, these laws did correct the worst abuses.

The Plantation System
Some Spanish settlers made large profits by exporting crops and raw materials to Spain. In the West Indies, the main exports were tobacco and sugarcane. To raise these crops, the Spanish developed the plantation system. A plantation is a large farm.

The Spanish used Native Americans to work their plantations. Las Casas suggested replacing them with enslaved Africans—a suggestion he bitterly regretted later. He thought the Africans could endure the labor better than the Native Americans. As a result, thousands of Africans from West Africa were brought to the Americas. The Africans who survived the brutal ocean voyage were sold to plantation owners. By the late 1500s, plantation slave labor was an essential part of the economy of the colonies.

✔ Reading Check: Identifying Whom did Las Casas try to protect?
American Diary

In 1639 a French nun named Marie of the Incarnation arrived in Quebec, New France’s first colony. To convert Native Americans, she learned their languages and wrote religious books in those languages. In a letter, she wrote:

“You will perhaps laugh that at the age of fifty years I am beginning to study a new tongue [language], but one must undertake all things for the service of God and the salvation of one’s neighbour.”

—from the book Word From New France

Sister Marie and other French nuns arrive in Quebec.
A Divided Church

Main Idea: Protestantism became a powerful religious force in Europe during the 1800s.

History and You: What motivates people to demand changes? Read to find out why Christianity changed in the 1500s.

The desire to spread Christianity was a major reason that Europeans explored and settled North America. The earlier explorers and settlers were Roman Catholics. As overseas exploration was advancing in the 1500s, a religious upheaval in Europe was sparking religious divisions.

In 1517 Martin Luther, a German priest, nailed a list of complaints about the Catholic Church on a local church door. Luther declared that the Bible was the only true guide for Christians. He rejected many Church practices—even the authority of the pope—because they were not mentioned in the Bible. Luther also believed that faith rather than good deeds was the way to salvation.

Within a few years, Luther had many followers who broke away from Catholicism to begin their own Christian churches. Luther’s protests were the start of a great religious and historical movement known as the Protestant Reformation.

Protestantism Spreads in Europe

From Germany, Luther’s ideas spread rapidly. John Calvin, a French religious thinker who lived in Geneva, Switzerland, also broke away from the Catholic Church. Like Luther, Calvin rejected the idea that good works alone would ensure a person’s salvation and believed in the all-powerful nature of God.

Calvinists spread their faith to other people. Missionaries were sent from Geneva to all parts of Europe. Calvinism was established in France, the Netherlands, Scotland, and central and eastern Europe.

In England, King Henry VIII also left the Catholic Church, but not for strictly religious reasons. Pope Clement VII refused Henry’s request to declare his first marriage invalid. In 1534 the English Parliament, working with the king, denied the authority of the pope and recognized the king as the head of the new Church of England.

Primary Source: Fur Trader Among the Native Americans

The Peacemaker: Born in France, Jean Nicollet arrived in Quebec in 1618 at the age of 19. He became a fur trader and set out to learn Native American languages. For two years he lived among the Algonquins, “always accompanying [them] on their expeditions and travels.” In about 1622 he succeeded in making peace between the Algonquins and the Iroquois. Eventually, Nicollet settled among the Nipissings, “having his cabin apart, doing his own fishing and trading,” but taking part in their frequent councils.

—from The American Geologist

Critical Thinking: Comparing and Contrasting

Do you think Nicollet’s actions toward Native Americans were like or unlike the actions of other Europeans in North America? Explain.
Henry's daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, continued his religious reforms. England became firmly established as a Protestant nation.

**Religious Rivalries in the Americas**

The religious divisions between Catholics and Protestants in Europe also crossed the Atlantic. Spanish and French Catholics worked to spread their faith to the Native Americans. The Spanish settled in the southwestern and southeastern regions of North America, and the French settled in the northeast.

Dutch and English Protestants established colonies in lands along the Atlantic coast between the French and the Spanish settlements. Some of the English settlements were founded by Protestants who wanted to practice their beliefs in peace.

**Economic Rivalry**

**Main Idea** European nations competed to establish colonies in the Americas.

**History and You** Do you know if land in some parts of your neighborhood is more valuable than in other parts? Read to learn what the Dutch paid for Manhattan Island.

Religion was only one of the factors that pushed European nations across the Atlantic Ocean. The promise of great wealth was equally strong, especially as other Europeans watched Spain acquire gold and other riches from its colonies.

According to the economic theory of *mercantilism*, which was popular at the time, a nation's power is based on its wealth. Rulers tried to increase their nation's total wealth by acquiring gold and silver and by developing a continuing trade with other regions.

**The Columbian Exchange**

Europeans brought wheat, grapes, and livestock to the Americas. Europeans also introduced diseases to which the Native Americans were not immune.

Many foods associated with European cooking originated in the Americas. Ireland came to depend on the potato as a staple crop, while tomatoes form the basis of many Italian dishes.
Mercantilism provided great opportunities for individual merchants to make money. It also increased rivalry between nations.

Several countries in Europe competed for overseas territory that could produce wealth. They wanted to acquire colonies in the Americas that could provide valuable resources, such as gold and silver, or raw materials. The colonies would also serve as a place to sell European products.

**The Columbian Exchange**

The voyages of Columbus and other European explorers brought together two parts of the globe that previously had no contact: the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa in one hemisphere and the Americas in the other. These contacts led to an exchange of plants, animals, and diseases that greatly altered life on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Scholars refer to this transfer as the **Columbian Exchange**.

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**European Products in the United States**

Food products introduced from Europe to the Americas are today a significant part of U.S. agriculture. The United States now exports many of these products to other countries, including Europe.

**U.S. Farm Exports, 2007**

- Wheat: 9.5 billion dollars
- Rice: 3.5 billion dollars
- Corn: 1.8 billion dollars
- Soybeans: 1.3 billion dollars
- Others: 4.9 billion dollars

*Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates*

**Critical Thinking**

**Identifying** Which of the agricultural exports in the chart above originated in the Americas? What percentage of exports did that product represent in 2007?

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**A Northwest Passage**

The Treaty of Tordesillas had divided the Americas between Spain and Portugal. It did not allow for claims by other nations. England, France, and the Netherlands ignored the treaty. During the 1500s and early 1600s, these countries sent explorers to chart, or map, the coast of North America and, later, establish trade and colonies. Because the voyage to Asia—either around the southern tip of Africa or around South America—was long and difficult, they hoped to discover a **Northwest Passage** to Asia, a direct water route through the Americas.

In 1497 England sent **John Cabot**, an Italian, to look for a northern route to Asia. Cabot probably landed on the coast of present-day Newfoundland. England used Cabot’s voyage as the basis for its claims to North America.

In 1524 France hired an Italian, Giovanni da Verrazano, to look for a northern sea route. Verrazano explored the coast of North America from present-day Nova Scotia down to the Carolinas.

In 1535, French explorer **Jacques Cartier** (KAR-tyay) sailed up the St. Lawrence River, hoping it would lead to the Pacific. From a mountain next to a Huron village on the river, Cartier wrote, “one sees a very great distance.” He named the peak Mont-Royal, which means “royal mountain.” This is the site of the city now called Montreal. Cartier heard stories about gold, but he found neither gold nor a sea route to Asia.

**Hudson’s Discoveries**

The Netherlands, too, wanted to find a passage through the Americas. The Dutch nation hired **Henry Hudson**, an English sailor, to explore. In 1609 he discovered the river that now bears his name. In his ship, the Half Moon, Hudson sailed north on the Hudson River as far as the site of present-day Albany. Deciding that he had not found a passage to India, he turned back. The following year Hudson tried again, this time sent by England.
On this voyage, Hudson and his crew discovered the huge bay that today bears his name. Thinking he had reached the Pacific, Hudson spent months looking for an outlet. His unhappy crew, however, rebelled. Hudson, his son, and a few sailors were set adrift in a small boat—and never seen again.

French Trading Posts

France showed little interest in building an empire in the Americas. Its rulers focused on political and religious conflicts at home. The French saw North America as an opportunity to make profits from fishing and fur trading rather than as a place to settle.

Furs were popular in Europe. Traders made large profits from beaver pelts acquired in North America from Native Americans. In 1608 a French fur-trading company sent Samuel de Champlain to found a settlement in Quebec in what is now Canada. Champlain made several trips to the region and discovered Lake Champlain. He described the beautiful scenery and abundant wildlife, as well as the Native Americans he met there.

From Quebec, the French moved into other parts of Canada, where they built trading posts to collect furs gathered by Native Americans and French trappers. The trappers were called couriers de bois (ku•RUHR duh BWAH), meaning “runners of the woods.”

Dutch Settlements

After Hudson’s voyage, the Dutch began to explore North America. Eager for world trade, the Netherlands had a large fleet of trading ships that sailed all over the world. In 1621 the Dutch West India Company set up a colony, New Netherland, in North America. There they settled at Fort Orange (later Albany) on the Hudson River and on Burlington Island in New Jersey. They also set up Fort Nassau near what is today Philadelphia.

The center of the new colony was New Amsterdam, located on the tip of Manhattan Island, where the Hudson River enters New York Harbor. In 1626 Governor Peter Minuit paid the Manhates people 60 Dutch guilders (about $24) in goods—cloth, axes, and hoes—for the island, which is today New York City.

🔄 Reading Check 🔄 Analyzing How did mercantilism create rivalries between European nations?
Motive for Exploration

The Renaissance sparks an age of European exploration and discovery.

European nations seek direct trade routes to Asia in order to bypass Arab traders.

Nation-states in Europe compete for power based on wealth.

Result

Technological advances in navigation and ship design allow long sea voyages.

Explorers sail to the Americas and along western Africa to India. West African gold and slave trade develops.

Queen Isabella of Spain

Spain funds settlements in the Americas. Cortés defeats the Aztec, and Pizarro conquers the Inca.

Portugal, Spain, England, France, and the Netherlands explore North America and set up colonies to provide raw materials, markets, and trade goods.

City of St. Augustine

Catholics and Protestants clash after the Protestant Reformation.

Colonies in the Americas are established as bases for missionary work or areas where people can practice their religion freely.
Chapter 2
Assessment

STANDARDIZED TEST PRACTICE

TEST-TAKING TIP
For multiple-choice questions, think of answers in your head before looking at the possible answers on the test. Doing so will help you recognize a correct answer immediately.

Reviewing the Main Ideas

Directions: Choose the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. Why did Europeans seek trade routes to the East that bypassed Arab merchants?
   A European rulers forbade trading with non-Christians.
   B Arab merchants charged high prices for their goods.
   C Arab merchants offered inferior goods.
   D Arabs refused to trade with Europeans.

2. The Portuguese took the lead in exploring the boundaries of the known world because
   A they were the best sailors in the world.
   B their invention of the compass gave them an advantage in navigation.
   C lack of a Mediterranean port prevented Portugal from joining in the profitable trade between Asia and Europe.
   D they wanted to convert the entire world to Christianity.

3. Who conquered the Aztec?
   A Hernán Cortés
   B Francisco Pizarro
   C Christopher Columbus
   D Hernando de Soto

4. The German priest Martin Luther
   A helped strengthen Roman Catholicism.
   B rejected the idea that good works alone would ensure a person’s salvation.
   C taught the doctrine of predestination, the idea that God had already chosen those who would be saved.
   D believed the pope’s authority should take precedence over the teachings of the Bible.

Short-Answer Question

Directions: Base your answer to question 5 on the excerpt below and on your knowledge of social studies.

All whom I saw were young, not above thirty years of age, well made, with fine shapes and faces; their hair short ... combed toward the forehead, except a small portion which they suffer to hang down behind, and never cut. Some paint themselves with black, which makes them appear like those of the Canaries [Canary Islands], neither black nor white; others with white, others with red ... Some paint the face, and some the whole body; others only the eyes, and others the nose.

—Christopher Columbus, The Log of Christopher Columbus

5. Who was Columbus describing, and why did he include such detail?

Review the Essential Questions


To help you write your essay, review your answers to the Essential Questions in the section reviews and the chapter Foldables Study Organizer. Your essay should include:

• technological innovations of the 1300s and 1400s;
• growth of trade among Europe, Africa, and Asia;
• reasons behind European exploration and colonization of the Americas;
• treatment of Native Americans under the Spanish; and
• the influence of mercantilism and the impact of the Columbian Exchange.
Document-Based Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow.

Document 1

This excerpt from The Saga of Eric the Red describes the Norsemen’s encounters with the native peoples, whom the Norsemen called Skrellings, in Vinland.

The Skrellings put down their bundles then, and loosed them, and offered their wares [for barter], and were especially anxious to exchange these for weapons; but Karlsefni forbade his men to sell their weapons, and, taking counsel with himself, he bade the women carry out milk to the Skrellings, which they no sooner saw than they wanted to buy it, and nothing else.

Source: The Saga of Eric the Red, 1387

7. Based on this document, describe the relations between the Norsemen and the native Vinlanders. What did the two peoples trade and why?

Document 2

This is an excerpt from A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies (1542) by Bartolome de Las Casas.

The pattern established at the outset has remained unchanged to this day, and the Spaniards still do nothing save tear the native to shreds, murder them and inflict upon them untold misery, suffering and distress, tormenting ... and persecuting them mercilessly.

Source: A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies

8. Based on the document, what was the view of Las Casas toward Spanish treatment of the native peoples they encountered? Explain.

Document 3

The following excerpt is from Thomas Mun’s England’s Treasure By Forraign Trade (1664).

The ordinary means therefore to increase our wealth and treasure is by Forraign Trade, wherein wee must ever observe this rule; to sell more to strangers yearly than wee consume of theirs in value.

Source: England’s Treasure By Forraign Trade, 1664

9. Based on the document, state the central belief of mercantilism.

Document 4

The Protestant Reformation spread a number of new Christian religions across Europe.

10. Which parts of Europe were predominantly Lutheran? Calvinist? Catholic?

11. Expository Writing Using the information from the four documents and your knowledge of social studies, write an essay in which you:

• explain how and why Europeans became leaders in world trade; and
• identify at least one consequence of the Protestant Reformation on the colonization of the Americas.