

Adventure in the AMERICAS

Fascinating Facts

- In Columbus's day "the Indies" was the term that people in Europe used for lands such as India, China, and Japan.
- Columbus was born in Italy, yet it was Spain that paid for his voyages.
- In 1507 a German mapmaker wrote "America" in honor of Amerigo Vespucci on one of his maps. People in Europe started to use this new name for the country.

Genre	Comprehension Skill	Text Features
Nonfiction	Cause and Effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossary • Captions • Illustrations • Headings

Scott Foresman Social Studies



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by Barbara Fifer





Explorers journeyed to distant lands in search of riches, excitement, and fame. In this book you will learn about some of the explorers who opened whole new worlds.



Vocabulary

explorer

colonies

fleet

cargo

conquer

strait



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Spices were one of many things that explorers searched for.



A Whole New World

In the 1300s people in Europe read Marco Polo's book about India and China. He was from Venice, Italy, and had gone to China with relatives when he was a teenager. He stayed there for many years. His stories made people eager to trade with these distant countries. Spices were very valuable because they helped preserve food and made it taste better.

By the late 1400s people in Europe knew the world was round. They hoped that by sailing westward on the oceans India and China could be reached easily. First, though, an **explorer** had to find the way. The explorer would travel to unknown places and draw maps so others could follow the same routes. No one knew that the Americas were between Europe and China!



Portugal's Explorations

Africa was one of the first places that European explorers visited. Starting in the early 1400's, explorers from Portugal began to sail down Africa's west coast.

Besides gathering information, explorers started **colonies** in Africa and on islands. Colonies sent raw materials to their "mother countries" and bought products from them. Portugal's first colonies included the island of Madeira, which is off the west African coast.

Each explorer used information from the previous journey and each traveled farther than the last. Ships could stop at the colonies for supplies and repairs. By 1498 Vasco da Gama had sailed all the way around Africa to India. Thirteen years later explorers from Portugal reached the Spice Islands. This remained one of Portugal's colonies until the Dutch took control of them in the 1600s.



Christopher Columbus sailed for Spain.



Columbus Explores “China”

While Portuguese explorers were thinking about sailing east to India and China, Christopher Columbus believed he could reach India sooner by sailing west. He was Italian but he went to Spain’s rulers to ask them for money.

Columbus sailed three small ships across the Atlantic Ocean. Columbus and his crew left the Canary Islands and sailed for thirty-seven days. When they found land on October 12, 1492, Columbus was sure it was near China, but it was really San Salvador in the Bahamas. His ships went on to Cuba, which Columbus thought was China.

Columbus made three later trips back to this area, stopping on many islands and on the north coast of South America. He sailed around the Caribbean Sea and started colonies.



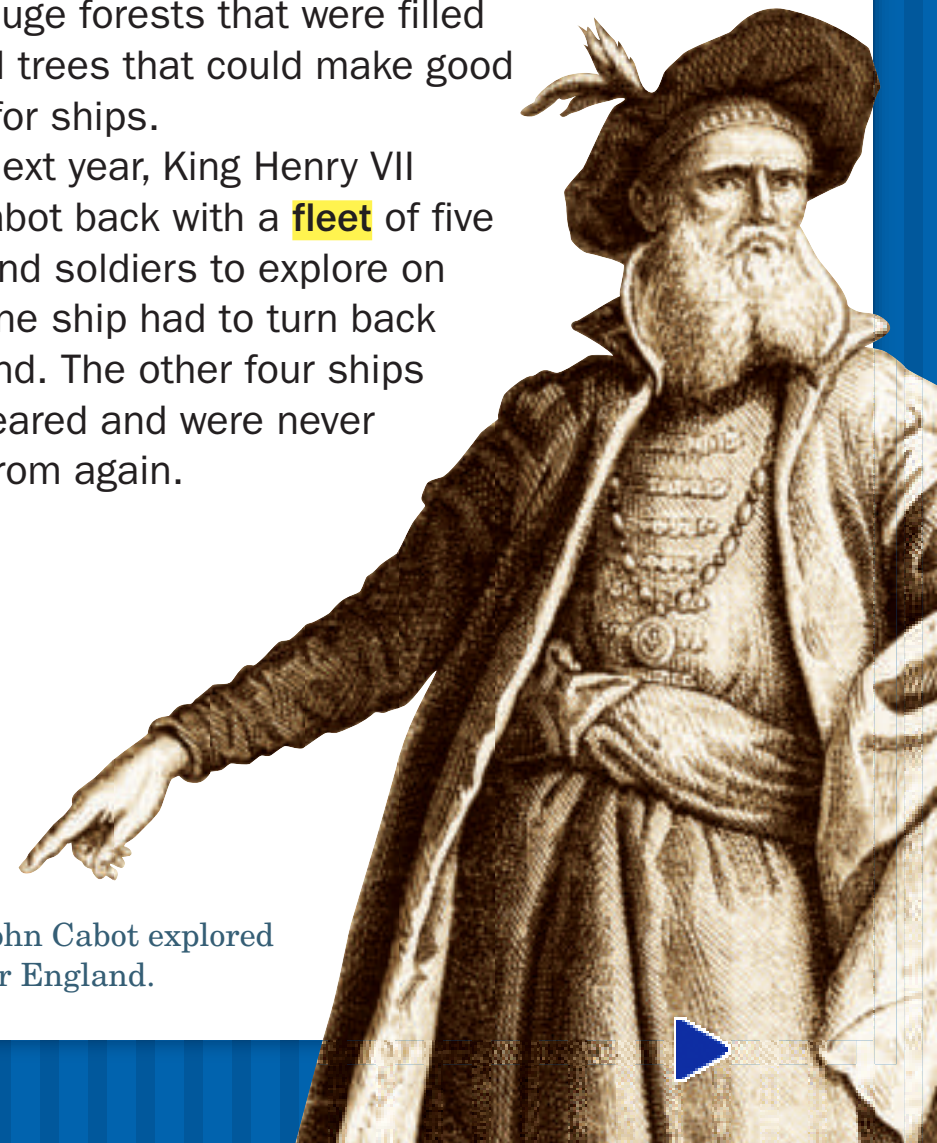
Cabot’s Explorations

John Cabot read Columbus’s story of his trip to “China.” He believed Columbus had gone too far south. Cabot got King Henry VII of England to send him across the Atlantic Ocean in 1497.

With only one ship, Cabot sailed to Newfoundland, a large island that is now part of Canada.

Cabot did not find spices or gold, but he found huge forests that were filled with tall trees that could make good masts for ships.

The next year, King Henry VII sent Cabot back with a **fleet** of five ships and soldiers to explore on land. One ship had to turn back at Ireland. The other four ships disappeared and were never heard from again.




John Cabot explored for England.

Early Spanish Colonies

As soon as Spain claimed land in the New World, it tried to start a colony. Columbus left men on the island of Hispaniola on his first trip in 1492. The men, however, stole from and fought with the Taino Indians. By the time Columbus returned the next year, his men had all been killed.

Portugal did not start colonies in the New World as quickly and gave more attention to building colonies in Indonesia.


The colonists used the people living there as slaves. They demanded that the people living there give them gold and silver to send back home. Some of the metals were sent to the kings and queens in Europe. Soon ships carrying the treasure began traveling across the Atlantic Ocean. Explorers also bought diseases that killed many of the Taino Indians.

 The Taino Indians lived on islands in the Caribbean Sea when explorers first arrived from Europe. By the 1580s the Taino Indians had nearly died off.

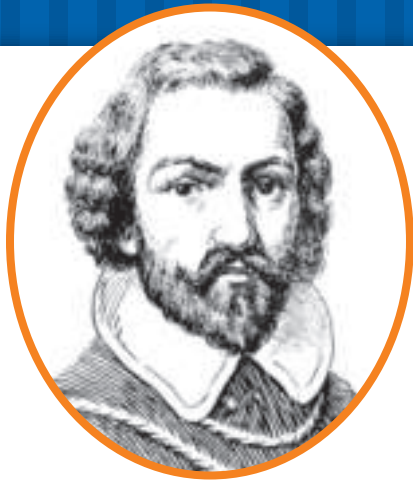


Pirates and Privateers

The ships carrying treasure from the New World back to Europe became targets for robbers. There were two types of robbers: privateers and pirates. Privateers were citizens hired by a king or queen to steal **cargo** from ships of other countries. These thefts by privateers were considered to be acts of war. Pirates were outlaws, or thieves, who stole on their own.

 Sir Francis Drake of England was a privateer and an explorer. He sailed around the world from 1577–1580.





Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo explored California.



Cabrillo Explores California

Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo began his career by helping the Spanish military explore parts of the New World. He settled in Guatemala and built ships for transporting goods.

The governor of Guatemala asked Cabrillo to lead an expedition to present-day California for Spain. In 1542 Cabrillo left with three ships and a few hundred men. They sailed for three months before discovering what is now the San Diego Bay. They continued north but had to turn back because of bad weather.

During the expedition Cabrillo died after breaking his leg. While he did not find new trade routes, Cabrillo is remembered for mapping the California coast.



Cartier Goes Up the St. Lawrence

France joined North American explorers when King Francis I sent Jacques Cartier. The year was 1534, forty-two years after Columbus sailed.

Cartier made three trips to what is now Canada. He sailed up the St. Lawrence River and claimed the land for France. This opened the way for later French explorers who went west by land.

Some of Cartier's men died from scurvy, an illness caused by not eating enough fruits and vegetables. Others were killed by the Iroquois Indians. Cartier treated the Iroquois Indians badly. Cartier later returned home and wrote a book about his travels.

Jacques Cartier was born in northern France. He sailed to North America.



Francisco Vázquez de Coronado

After explorers from Spain had traveled around Mexico, they moved into what is now America's Southwest and west coast. Colonists followed them.

Starting in 1540 Francisco Vázquez de Coronado took three hundred Spanish men and eight hundred American Indian men with him as he explored what we now call Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Some of his men saw the Grand Canyon.

Spain's king thought Coronado failed because he did not find gold or other treasure. People believed a story that seven cities built of gold were in that area—and Coronado had not found them!

More than two hundred years later, missionaries and soldiers went to California. In 1769 Father Junípero Serra began building nine missions near the Pacific Ocean. The first mission was built at San Diego.



De Soto, Joliet, Marquette, and LaSalle Explore

Hernando de Soto and an army of six hundred men, exploring for Spain, traveled in the middle of today's United States. They marched from western Florida through Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

Their goals were to find gold and **conquer** the American Indians who lived in the area. In 1541 they found the Mississippi River.

Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette of France explored the northern end of the river in 1673. From 1679–1682 a nobleman with the title of Sieur de LaSalle explored the whole river.

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado explored the Southwest for Spain.



Samuel de Champlain explored far into the future Canada and the United States.



Champlain Explores and Explores

Samuel de Champlain was a New World explorer for France. Beginning in 1603 Champlain sailed to the future Canada several times over the course of thirty years. He was looking for a way to sail through North America. Instead, he found the Ottawa River and two of the five Great Lakes: Ontario and Huron. He also found Lake Champlain, which is located on the border between today's New York State and Vermont. Champlain started a colony that later became the city of Québec.



Henry Hudson and the Hudson River

Henry Hudson was English but was sailing for Dutch traders in 1609. He meant to go past Norway and then east to China, but ice stopped his ship.

Hudson decided to go west across the Atlantic Ocean and look for a **strait** that went through North America to China. Later, Hudson sailed his ship up the Hudson River from today's New York City to Albany.

Henry Hudson sailed for the English and the Dutch.



Colonization by the English, Dutch, and Swedish

The Netherlands, sometimes called Holland, is home to the Dutch. Because of Henry Hudson's exploration, the Dutch began the colony of New Netherland in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Delaware in 1624.

The Dutch bought Manhattan Island from the American Indians, paying for the land with glass beads and other things that the American Indians could not make. There the Dutch started a town that they named New Amsterdam. Later, England took it over and called it New York.

Sweden sent colonists to North America. They were at first helped by the Dutch. New Sweden began in 1638 with Fort Christina, named for the queen of Sweden. Today it is called Wilmington, Delaware. First the Dutch, then the English, took over this colony.



New World colonists could take along only a little food. They had to clear the land and plant crops quickly so they did not run out.



The Rewards of Exploration

Early explorers sailed on very long voyages with many dangers. They might run out of food and drinking water, or even get sick. Many died from illness or fighting.

Explorers traveled because it was their job, working for a king or queen or a trading company. Some wanted fame or knowledge, while others wanted riches.

Colonists had to clear the land and plant crops. They often went hungry at first. They knew a supply ship would not return before the next year and never knew for sure that it would come at all. The explorers and the colonists who followed them found adventure and opened up a whole new world.

Glossary

cargo the group of things being taken from one place to another on a ship

colonies towns or states that belong to distant countries

conquer to take control, by force, of people and the land where they live

explorer a person who travels looking for new lands and discoveries

fleet a large group of ships

strait a narrow body of water connecting two larger bodies of water

Write to It!

Explorers go to far away places and discover new things. Is there a place that you would like to explore? Why? Write two paragraphs about your ideas.

Write your paragraphs on a separate sheet of paper.

Photographs

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