

Lesson 1: The Voyages of Columbus

Vocabulary

expedition a journey made for a special purpose

colony a settlement far from the country that rules it

Columbian Exchange a movement of people, animals, plants, diseases, and ways of life between the Eastern Hemisphere and Western Hemisphere

Columbus and the Taino

In 1492 the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus sailed west from Spain. Columbus was looking for a water route from Europe to the Indies. The Indies were part of Asia. They were rich in gold, spices, and other goods. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain paid for the **expedition**, or trip, across the Atlantic Ocean. The king and queen believed that Columbus could find a cheaper and quicker way to the Indies. Columbus did not find the Indies. Instead he landed in a part of the Americas that became known as the West Indies. He claimed land in the area for Spain. He thought the land he claimed was part of the Indies. He called the people there Indians, even though they were actually named the Taino.

The Columbian Exchange

In 1493 Columbus led his second expedition to the Americas. He brought many ships with settlers, plants, and animals. He began a **colony** to make money for Spain. A colony is a settlement far from the country that rules it. People, animals, plants, diseases, and ways of life were exchanged between the Western

Hemisphere and the Eastern Hemisphere. This movement was called the **Columbian Exchange**. Many of the things exchanged during this time were good for both sides. But the Europeans also brought diseases to the Americas. These diseases killed many native people, and their way of life was changed. Many native people were forced to work on sugarcane farms. Many were forced to give up their beliefs for Christianity.

The Impact of Columbus

Other European explorers came after Columbus. America is named for the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci. He sailed to the eastern coast of South America in 1501. In 1513 Vasco Núñez de Balboa, a Spanish explorer, reached the Pacific Ocean. In 1519 Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese explorer, led the first expedition to sail around the world. Many explorers and settlers had traveled to the Americas by the early 1600s. These settlers and the European countries they came from fought for control of land in the Americas.

Lesson 2: Different Worlds Collide

Vocabulary

conquistador a Spanish conqueror

ally a friend who will help in a fight

conquest the capture or taking of something by force

convert to change from one religion to another

colonist a person who lives in a colony

The Aztecs Are Conquered

Hernando Cortés was a Spanish **conquistador**, or conqueror. He arrived in Mexico in about 1519. Cortés heard about the riches of the Aztecs. He planned to take over the Aztec Empire. Although the Aztecs outnumbered Cortés and his force, the Spanish had some advantages. The Spanish had armor, guns, and horses. The Aztecs used stone weapons. They had no armor to protect themselves from Spanish bullets. Also the Aztecs were afraid of horses because they had never seen them before. Cortés also had **allies**, or friends, who helped him. Many native peoples did not want to live under Aztec rule. They joined Cortés to fight the Aztecs. Something else helped Cortés too. The Spanish brought the disease smallpox to Mexico. Smallpox killed many Aztecs. In 1521 Cortés defeated the Aztec Empire.

Founding New Spain

First, the Spanish conquered the Aztecs. Then, after their **conquest**, or the taking of something by force, the Spanish destroyed Tenochtitlan. Tenochtitlan was the capital city of the Aztecs. The Spanish founded the colony of New Spain in 1535. They set up a government, made laws, and built schools. Roman Catholic priests traveled to New Spain to **convert** the Indians to Christianity. People came from Spain to live in the colony. These **colonists** started farms, businesses, and gold and silver mines.

The Conquests Continue

Francisco Pizarro conquered the Incan Empire for Spain. The Incan Empire was south of Mexico, in South America. In 1532 Pizarro captured the leader of the Incas. The next year, Pizarro and his soldiers captured the capital. By 1535 Pizarro founded a new Spanish colony named Peru. The Spanish and the native peoples continued to fight until most of the native peoples were defeated. Then a new culture developed. It was a mixture of Spanish culture and the culture of the native peoples.

Lesson 3: Life in New Spain

Vocabulary

society a group of people forming a community

plantation a large farm with many workers who live on the land they work

encomienda a grant that gave a wealthy settler control of the native people who lived on an area of land

missionary a person who teaches his or her religion to others who have different beliefs

mission a religious settlement where missionaries live and work

The Search for Gold

The Spanish traveled north of Mexico in search of treasure. They had heard about rich kingdoms in the area. Cíbola was one of these kingdoms. The story of Cíbola was told by an enslaved African sailor. He had searched for the kingdom, but he died without finding it. The governor of New Spain then sent Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to find Cíbola. The kingdom was never found because it did not exist. Other Spanish explorers traveled to the Americas. Juan Ponce de León landed on the Florida peninsula in 1513. In 1540 Hernando de Soto became the first European to reach the Mississippi River.

Society in New Spain

By the late 1500s, **society** in New Spain had four different groups. The most powerful group was the people who were born in Spain. They were called peninsulares. The second group was people who had a Spanish background, but were born in the Americas. The third group was made up of people with a mixed background. The lowest group in the society was the native people and Africans who did not have Spanish ancestors. Peninsulares owned **plantations**, or large farms with many workers. Some peninsulares were given **encomiendas**. Encomiendas

were grants that gave landowners control over native people living on the land. The peninsulares made a lot of money because of slave labor.


More Changes for Native Peoples

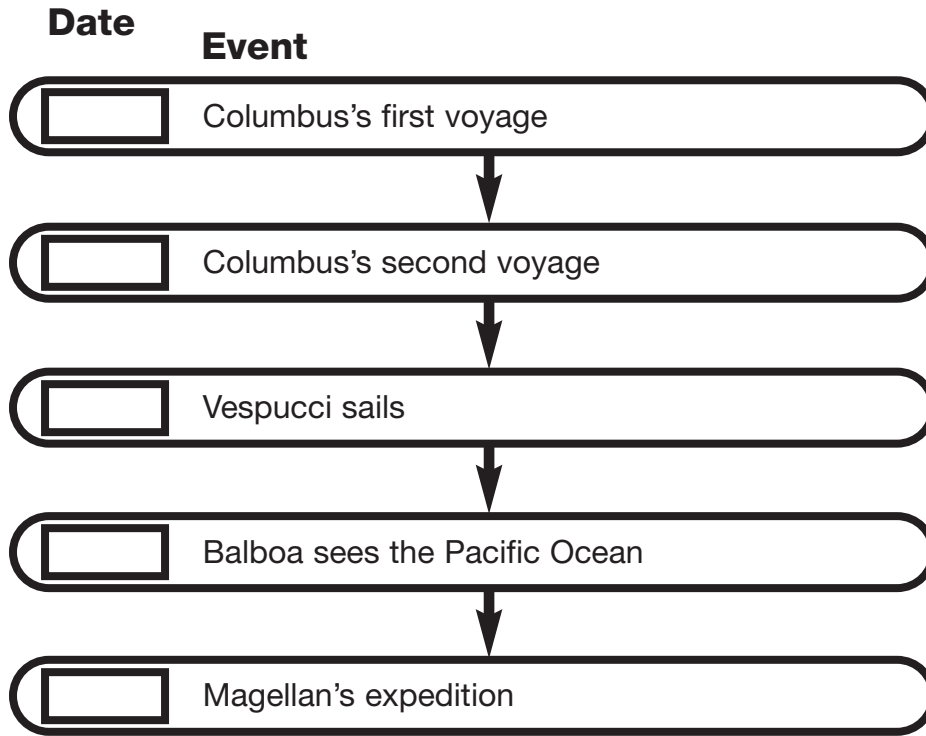
Native people on encomiendas worked as farm workers, miners, and servants. Many of them were treated poorly. Some **missions**, or religious settlements, were given encomiendas. **Missionaries** taught Christianity to native people. Priests built missions throughout New Spain. Some missionaries mistreated native people. Bartolomé de Las Casas was a priest. In 1527 he defended the rights of native people living on missions.

Slavery in the Americas

Many native people died from disease and overwork. Then, the Spanish replaced them with enslaved Africans. In 1512 the first African slaves were brought to Hispaniola, a Caribbean island. At first, Las Casas supported African slavery. He later changed his opinion. African slave labor became an important part of the economy in New Spain.

Lesson 1: Review

1.  **Sequence** Fill in the missing dates for each event on this chart.



2. Why did Ferdinand and Isabella agree to support Columbus?

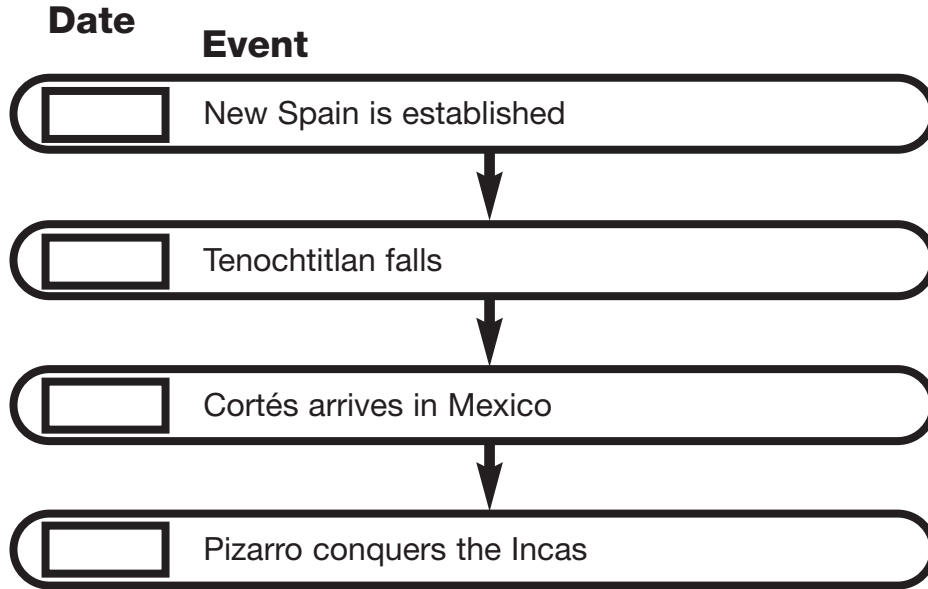
3. What was the goal of Columbus's second voyage?

4. How did the expeditions of Columbus lead to the Columbian Exchange?

5. **Critical Thinking: Draw Conclusions** How might life in Europe and the Americas have been different if Columbus had not journeyed here?

Lesson 2: Review

1. **Sequence** Place these events in the correct sequence and fill in the missing dates.



2. What were the key advantages of Hernando Cortés in defeating the Aztecs?

3. Why did Spain send priests to New Spain?

4. How long did it take Pizarro to conquer the Incan Empire?

5. **Critical Thinking: Problem Solving** The Spanish set up a government to rule New Spain. Think about how you would rule this colony. Write a short description of one problem and a suggested solution. Use the problem-solving steps on page H3 of your textbook.

Lesson 3: Review

1.  **Sequence** Fill in either the missing dates or the missing events from this time line.



2. How did stories about Cíbola affect Spanish explorers?

3. How did the structure of society in New Spain benefit the Spanish?

4. How did conquest by the Spanish change life for the native peoples?

5. **Critical Thinking: Point of View** Summarize the point of view of Las Casas about native people on the encomiendas.

Skills Practice

Directions: Use complete sentences to answer questions 1–6. Use a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.

1. What sequence of events led to the Columbian Exchange? **Sequence**

2. How did having Indian allies help Cortés conquer the Aztecs? **Make Inferences**

3. Why do archaeologists today find evidence of the ancient Aztec capital right in the center of Mexico City? **Summarize**

4. The Spanish explorers conquered Indian empires to gain land and riches. How do you think the Aztec and Incan people may have felt about these events? **Point of View**

5. What was colonial society like in New Spain? **Main Idea and Details**
