The Age of Exploration

Europe Encounters the World
Age of Exploration - Age of Discovery Overview
From the 1400s to the 1700s, Europe experienced an “Age of Exploration.”

As a result of exploration, European nations grew powerful & spread their influence throughout the world.

The Renaissance encouraged curiosity & a desire for trade.

Motivations:
Why did Europeans want to explore?
Why did explorations happen when they did?

- A variety of factors all came together to make the time period (1450-1700) the “Age of Exploration”
- Some of these factors were agricultural and other resources they wished to have (gold, silver, spices, precious stones, etc.)
- Some were pulls, motivations and things that attracted the Europeans
Why Explore in the First Place

1. Motives for Exploration (Notes)
   1. Technological Advances
   2. Improved Ship Design
   3. Improved weapons

2. Desire for Wealth
   1. Gain access to the Spice Trade
   2. Find new sources of Gold and Silver

3. Expand their Control = More land = More Power

4. Religious Devotion
   1. Convert more people to Christianity

5. Renaissance Spirit and Values
   1. Desire to learn about new lands and people
   2. Desire for adventure, fame, glory
   3. Marco Polo traveled through Asia and wrote about it which sparked a new interest in foreign lands
What factors were pushing Europeans to explore?

- Decline of Mongol Empire in 1400s made goods from the east harder to get, more expensive
- Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 was a major block to trade
Ottoman Turks (Muslim) Empire
What is the easiest way to remember it all?

● The Three G’s:
  - Gold
  - Glory
  - God

● Although a little simplistic, this mnemonic is a great way to remember the main motivations of the European explorers.
Gold (Money)

The Crusades & Renaissance stimulated European desires for exotic Asian luxury goods. Merchants began looking for quick, direct trade routes to Asia to avoid Muslim & Italian merchants and increase profits.
The First G: Gold

- Gold was a hot item that explorers were looking for, but remember that it is really wealth, not just literal gold that explorers were after.
- Europe needed gold (and silver) to fuel the rising banking system.
- Europeans also desired spices (Da Gama’s voyage to India made him a 3000% profit!)
- Other natural resources would come to be sold for profit as well (timber, sugar, tobacco, ivory, etc.)
- This competition will be enhanced by the idea of mercantilism that emerges, the idea that there is only so much wealth in the world, and that to make your kingdom strong you must have more gold and wealth than the other kingdoms.
Kings who sponsored voyages of exploration gained overseas colonies, new sources of wealth for their nation, & increased power.

Exploration presented Europeans the opportunity to rise from poverty and gain fame, fortune, & status.
The second G: Glory

- Just like the first G, Gold, Glory was a relatively new idea in Europe.
- Came out of the Renaissance ideal of Humanism, and the focus on individual achievement.
- With the rise of the printing press, the idea of gaining fame for one’s actions was more possible.
- Also, individual kings wanted glory for their kingdoms, competition spreads.

*The Triumph of Fame*, a Flemish tapestry from 1502.
European Christians, especially Catholics, wanted to stop the spread of Islam & convert non-Christians to the faith. Explorers were encouraged to spread Christianity or bring missionaries who would focus only on conversions.
The third G: God

- As members of a universalizing religion, Europeans had always seen spreading Christianity as a good thing.
- Especially after the Reformation, competition will spring up.
- Colonization will become a race to convert native peoples to a particular brand of Christianity.
- Jesuits (Catholics) are some of the most active.
Means:
How were explorers able to sail so far & make it back again?

Before the Renaissance, sailors did not have the technology to sail very far from Europe & return.
European shipbuilders built a better ship; The caravel was a strong ship that could travel in the open seas & in shallow water.

Cannons & rifles gave ships protection.

Caravels had triangular lateen sails that allowed ships to sail against the wind.

A moveable rudder made the caravel more maneuverable.

Its shallow draft (depth of the ship's keel below the water) allowed it to explore close to the shore.
New Maritime Technology

Hartman Astrolabe (1532)

Mariner’s Compass

Better Maps

Sextant
New Weapons Technology

CARAVEL
Portuguese navigators of the 1400s sailed in caravels.

WHEEL LOCK
This wheel-lock pistol was made in northern Europe

[Diagram of a caravel and a wheel-lock pistol]
Who were the explorers, where did they go, & how did they change world history?
A Map of the Known World, pre- 1492
European Exploration Concept Map

Causes
- Crusades
- Competition between nations
- Spread Christianity
- Wealth
- Gold, trade and other raw materials.

European Exploration

Effects
- Spread of disease.
- Collapse of native Aztec and Incan Empires in the
- Colonization
- Parts of Asia, Africa and the Americas.
- Exchange of food and resources.
- Columbian Exchange
- Triangular Trade.
Europeans were not the 1st

Islamic Voyagers

From 1405 to 1433, Zheng He led the Chinese treasure fleet on 7 expeditions to SE Asia, India, & Africa during the Ming Dynasty.

Chinese Voyagers

Islamic merchants explored the Indian Ocean & had dominated the Asian spice trade for centuries before European exploration.
But in the late 1400s, the European sailors did what neither Muslim nor Chinese explorers could: Begin global (not regional) exploration & create colonies to increase their wealth & power.
In Portugal, Prince Henry the Navigator started a school of navigation to train sailors. He brought in Europe’s best map-makers, ship-builders, & sailing instructors. He wanted to discover new territories, find a quick trade route to Asia, & expand Portugal’s power.
How did these explorations begin?

- Started an institute for seafaring and exploring
- Combined ship technology learned from Islam with new European innovations
- By the time of his death in 1460, Portuguese had sailed as far south as the Gold Coast of West Africa
During the Age of Exploration, Portugal created colonies along the African coast, in Brazil, & the Spice Islands in Asia.
The Spanish government saw Portugal’s wealth & did not want to be left out.

More than any other European monarch, Ferdinand & Isabella of Spain sponsored & supported overseas expeditions.
During the Age of Exploration, Spain created colonies in North & South America.
Spain sent explorers called conquistadors to the New World to find gold, claim land, & spread Christianity

Cortez conquered the Aztecs
Pizarro conquered the Inca

The influx of gold from America made Spain the most powerful country in Europe during the early years of the Age of Exploration
England, France, & the Netherlands became involved in overseas exploration & colonization as well.
The French would soon carve out a large colony along the Mississippi River from Canada to New Orleans. The French explorer Samuel de Champlain searched Canada for a northwest passage to Asia. After failing to do so, Champlain founded the French colony of Quebec.
Line of Demarcation

Treaty of Tordesillas
46° 37' W
1494

Cape Verde

Brazil

Atlantic Ocean

Pope Alexander VI
38° W
1493
Line of Demarcation

- Line down Atlantic Ocean dividing undiscovered territories between Portugal and Spain.
  - Territories East—Portugal, Territories west—Spain.
  - Explorers now race to discover new territories.
  - This is why South America speaks both Spanish and Portuguese.
The English explorer James Cook was the first European to make contact with Australia, New Zealand, & Hawaii.
Like England, the Netherlands (the Dutch) allowed private companies to fund exploration. The Dutch had colonies in America & Africa, but the Dutch East India Company dominated trade in Asia.
NOW... It’s your turn

- Individual Explorer Presentations will be Friday, 11/09, Tuesday, 11/13 and Wednesday, 11/14.
- I WILL RANDOMLY DRAW NAMES FOR PEOPLE TO GO IN THAT ORDER ON THOSE DAYS, SO BE PREPARED!
- Use the next 3 days for your research and WebQuest activity.
Economic Impact

- Europeans go crazy for gold/ riches in Americas.
  - The supply is low but the demand is very high.
  - Allows for successful explorers to make a huge profit.
- Completely changes trade—new network between Europe and Americas.
  - Faster and shorter route.
Outcome

- Better maps
- New centers of commerce
- Growth of capitalism
- New economic system – market economy
- Labor – people now working for hirer, instead of trade
- New economic policy - mercantilism
Global Impact

1. Portugal lacked the numbers and wealth to dominate trade in the Indian Ocean.

2. Spain in Asia → consolidated its holdings in the Philippines.

3. First English expedition to the Indies in 1591.
   - Surat in NW India in 1608.

4. Dutch arrive in India in 1595.
Global Impact

Africa In An Age of Transition

- European expansion affected Africa with the dramatic increase of the slave trade.

- Traditional political systems and cultures continued to exist in most of Africa.