Europeans were interested in the goods of Africa and Asia. In order to find new routes to these goods and to find new lands to settle, many European nations sent explorers on voyages.
The Vikings were the first Europeans to make contact with North America.

Leif Eriksson, the son of Erik the Red, set off for Greenland.

Strong winds blew his ship off course, and he landed on the North American coast.

The Vikings settled in a coastal area that Eriksson called Vinland, but they left after a few years.

Europeans did not return to the continent for centuries.
Erik the Red's voyage
A.D. 983 to A.D. 986

Leif Eriksson
1000 A.D.
Portugal became a leader in world exploration. 

Prince Henry the Navigator helped Portugal’s explorers.

He built an observatory and a school of navigation to teach better methods of sailing.

Europeans had several reasons to explore the world.

– They wanted spices from Asia,
– They wanted to learn more about Asia and its culture.
– They also wanted to convert Asians to the Christian faith.

European sailors were able to travel in open seas without landmarks to guide them because of new technology.

The Caravel was a new kind of ship that was smaller, lighter, and easier to steer.
History Close-up

The Caravel

A special type of ship called the caravel became the workhorse of many European explorers. Though small, caravels were sturdy. They could sail across huge oceans and up small rivers. Caravels featured important advances in sailing technology.

The smooth, rounded hull handled high seas well.

The large center rudder made quick turns possible.

Triangular sails enabled the caravel to sail into the wind.

What features made the caravel an excellent sailing ship?
In the 1400s Portuguese sailors traveled south along the coast of Africa, setting up trading posts along the way.

In 1497 a Portuguese expedition led by Vasco da Gama sailed around the southern tip of Africa and reached India.

These successful voyages had a number of effects, both positive and negative.

- Portugal’s wealth and power increased.
- These travels eventually led to the spread of the slave trade.
- Other European nations soon began looking for their own sea routes to Asia.
Causes and Effects of the Discovery of a Sea Route to Asia

Several factors led to the discovery of a sea route from Europe to Asia.

**Causes**

- Financial backing from Prince Henry the Navigator
- New technology (caravel and mariner’s astrolabe)
- Seeking trade with Asia and financial gain
- Converting people to Christianity
- Curiosity

**Effects**

- Discovery of a sea route to Asia
- Face-to-face contact with traders in distant lands
- Awareness of different cultures and ways of life
Europeans, Africans, and Asians had traded with each other for centuries using land and sea routes. Native American groups also knew of each other through trade routes. Although sailors often explored new areas, before 1492 the two worlds had no communication with each other.
COLUMBUS SAILS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

• **Christopher Columbus**, a sailor from Genoa, Italy, believed that he could reach Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean.

• Sailing with three ships, Columbus reached an island in the Bahamas in 1492.

• The voyages of Columbus changed the way Europeans saw the world and also created conflict between European nations.

• In 1493 the pope issued a decree that created the **Line of Demarcation**-imaginary boundary divided the Atlantic Ocean between Spain and Portugal.
1. Place  Where did Columbus first land?

2. Human-Environment Interaction  Why do you think Columbus saw only the coastal area of Mesoamerica?
• In 1501 Amerigo Vespucci became convinced that he had not reached Asia but had discovered a “new world.”

• A German mapmaker labeled the continents across the ocean as America in his honor.

• In 1519 Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan sailed around the southern tip of South America and into the Pacific.

• Although Magellan was killed in the Philippine Islands, one ship from his expedition was the first to circumnavigate, or go all the way around, the globe.
Columbian Exchange

- European explorers and settlers took plants and animals with them to America and brought back American plants and animals.
- This transfer was called the **Columbian Exchange** because it started with the explorations of Columbus.
- Over time a trading pattern developed, involving the exchange of raw materials, manufactured products, and slaves among Europe, Africa, and the Americas.
Building Background: Spain sent many expeditions to the Americas. Like explorers from other countries, Spanish explorers claimed the land they found for their country. Much of this land was already filled with Native American communities, however.
The Spanish sent **conquistadors** to the Americas on military expeditions.

Conquistador **Hernán Cortés** went to present-day Mexico in 1519. He had heard of land to the west ruled by Moctezuma II, the king of the Aztec empire. The Spaniards believed the Aztec lands were a rich source of gold and silver.

They also wanted to convert the Aztec to Christianity. Although they were greatly outnumbered, the conquistadors had superior weapons and formed alliances with enemies of the Aztec. Cortés took control of the Aztec capital and killed Montezuma. Smallpox and other European diseases sped up the fall of the Aztec empire.
Armored Warfare

The armor of the Spanish conquistadors helped them defeat the Aztec and Inca. Spanish soldiers and their horses wore armor made of steel. The steel protected the soldiers from enemy weapons but was heavy and hard to wear. Armored weapons of today's soldiers include tanks and other large vehicles. Inside these vehicles, soldiers are safer from enemy gunfire.

1. Why did armor need to be heavy?
2. Why do modern armies still use armor?
Montezuma vs. Cortes

- **Montezuma**: the Aztec emperor
- **Cortes**: lead the Spanish conquerors (conquistadors)
EXPLORING THE BORDERLANDS OF NEW SPAIN

- Regions claimed by the Spanish explorers included the island of Puerto Rico, the coast of present-day Florida, and the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico.
- The Spanish also explored what is now the southwestern United States, looking for cities of gold that were rumored to exist there.
- They traveled through unclaimed areas of Texas, Oklahoma, and as far north as Kansas.
• California was among the last borderlands settled by the Spanish.
• To pay back settlers for their work, Spain established the **encomienda system**.
• It gave settlers the right to tax Native Americans and make them work.
• Most of the workers were treated as slaves and forced to work on plantations in New Spain.
• Many Native Americans died of disease and exhaustion.
**Building Background**  During the 1400s, the Catholic Church was one of the most powerful institutions in Europe. Not everyone agreed with all of its teachings, however. Disagreement, and sometimes violence, led some people to search for new places to settle.
In 1517 a priest named Martin Luther launched the **Protestant Reformation**, his followers were called Protestants.

King Philip II of Spain, a Catholic ruler, put together a large fleet called the **Spanish Armada** to defeat the Protestant nation of England.

England had fewer ships, but they were quick. In July 1588 the English navy defeated the Armada.
Dextra Excelsi fecit salutem.

The Invincible Armada in 88.

F.H.
European nations wanted to find a **Northwest Passage** in North America that would allow ships to sail from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

- Early searches explored the coast from Canada to North Carolina.
- **Jacques Cartier** explored the Saint Lawrence River and claimed lands for France.
- The Northwest Passage was not found, but the voyages led to more interest in North America.
Spain and Portugal claimed much of South and Central America but left most of North America unexplored.

In the late 1500s Sir Walter Raleigh of England received a charter to found a colony in present-day Virginia.

The first colonists did not stay, and when Raleigh sent more colonists they disappeared.
Beginnings of Slavery in the Americas

Chapter 2 Section 5

**Building Background** European settlers in the Americas relied on support from their home countries to establish trade and provide protection. In return, the colonies were expected to produce money for the home country. Many colonies did this through plantations, mines, and other ventures that required a large labor force.
Now the European colonists needed a new workforce for their plantations.

As Africans had already developed some immunity to European diseases, the colonists decided that slaves from West Africa could be the solution to the labor problem.
• In 1510 the Spanish government legalized the sale of slaves in its colonies

• Enslaved people were often captured in the interior of Africa, chained, and forced to march up to 1,000 miles to the coast.

• They were then chained together and packed as cargo in the lower decks of ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

• This voyage was known as the **Middle Passage**
SLAVE CULTURE IN THE AMERICAS

- Slaves in America came from many parts of Africa.
- They spoke different languages and had different cultural backgrounds, but they also shared many customs and viewpoints.
- Families were a key part of slave culture, but slave families faced many challenges.
- A family was often broken apart when members were sold to different owners.
- Religion was a refuge for slaves.
- Slave religion was primarily Christian, but it also included traditional elements from African religions.
Early Exploration and Settlement

**Effects**
- Destruction of Native American empires
- Columbian Exchange
- Colonies in the Americas
- Slavery in the Americas

**Causes**
- Competition between nations
- Desire for wealth
- Spread of Christianity