

During the Middle Ages, the Crusaders, or Christian soldiers who fought the Muslims in the Middle East, learned of spices and brought them back to Europe. The Europeans started to use spices such as cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and most of all, salt and pepper to spice and preserve meat. The chief source of spices was the Moluccas, an island chain located in modern-day Indonesia. During this time period, Europeans called Indonesia the Spice Islands.

In the late Middle Ages, Asian trade funneled through Constantinople, which was the crossroads among Europe, Africa, and Asia. When Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, European nations needed new ways to reach the rich Asian markets. Trading over land was expensive and dangerous for Europeans because they were traveling in foreign territories. At that time, Muslim and Italian sailors controlled the Mediterranean Sea, so the dominant European sailing powers, Spain and Portugal, sent explorers to the south Atlantic to find a new maritime trade route to Asia around Africa.



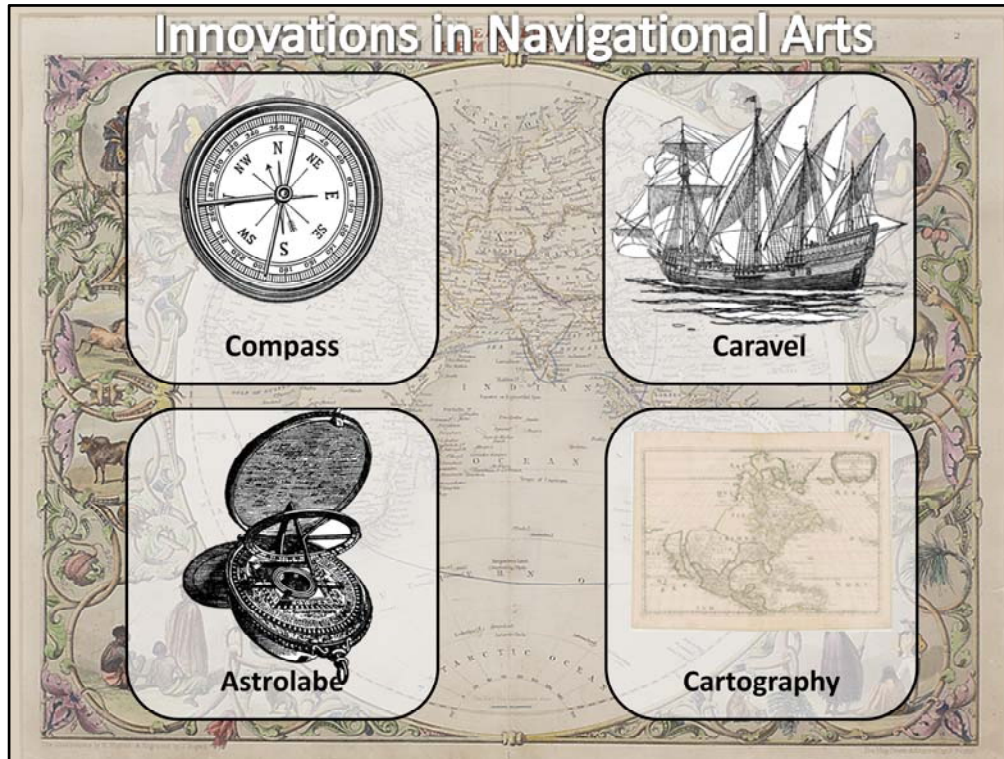
Why did all of the major European powers become heavily involved in exploration and expansion around the same time?

One way to explain this phenomenon is through the three “G’s” theory of exploration.

The first “G” is gold. Europeans not only searched for gold, they wanted spices for trade and profit. As European economies expanded, and trade with Asia increased, Europeans sought new raw materials that they could trade for profit.

The second “G” is glory. European empires promoted exploration as a means to glorify their rulers and compete with other powers. These empires increased their territories and wealth by exploring and conquering new lands and peoples.

The third “G” is God. The desire to spread Christianity to new regions was also an important reason for exploration. Although England and The Netherlands sought to convert people to Protestantism, while Spain, Portugal, and France sought to convert them to Catholicism, the goal was essentially the same – to use Christianity as a moral justification for the conquest of new territories.



There were a number of technological innovations which enabled the Europeans to engage in ocean exploration.

Europeans mastered the use of the compass and the astrolabe as navigation tools. The astrolabe was an instrument used to determine latitude at sea. It was developed by the Greeks and mastered by the Muslims.

Europeans started to use the caravel, a ship that combined European body styles with Muslim triangular sails and Chinese rudders. These innovations made the ships much faster and able to travel farther distances.

Finally, Europeans mastered the art of cartography, or mapmaking. Cartographers created much better maps and charts of the ocean currents. Europeans used these maps to explore and create other maps of newly discovered lands.

## Prince Henry the Navigator

Established navigation school in Portugal to teach new navigational techniques, map making, and ship building.

Financed and sponsored early explorations



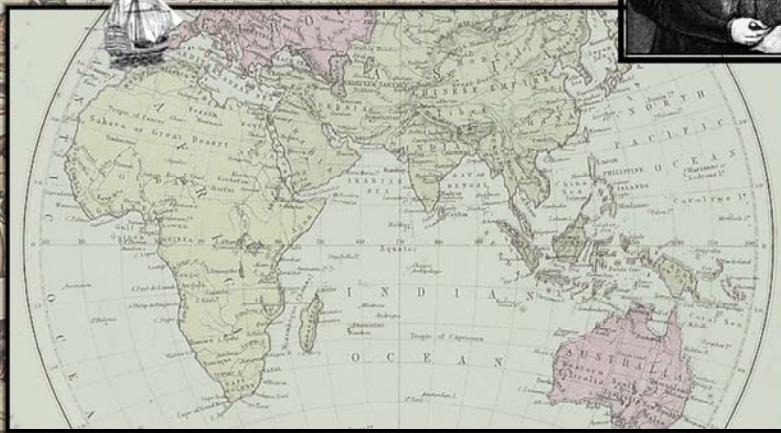
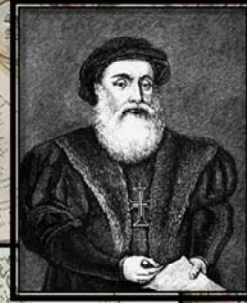
By the 1400s, Portugal was strong enough to expand into Muslim-controlled North Africa. Prince Henry, known as Henry the Navigator, sought to spread Christianity to Africa and find a source of gold.

He began a school for cartographers, sailors and captains at Sagres, where captains and crews prepared for long voyages. Then, Prince Henry sent out ships that slowly worked their way south along the African coast toward the southern tip.

## Portugal – Vasco da Gama

Sailed around the tip of Africa (Cape of Good Hope) becoming the first European to reach India via a maritime route.

As a result of Da Gama's voyages Portugal setup a trading posts along the India's coastline



In 1497, Vasco da Gama led four ships around the southern tip of Africa, and on his next voyage, made it to the port of Calicut in western India. The spices he brought back sold for a three thousand percent profit.

His sailors paid a heavy price when they fell victim to scurvy, which was a new disease to Europeans. This disease was caused by a lack of Vitamin C in the diets of sailors who were out at sea for months. The discovery of the cause of scurvy allowed sailors to prevent this illness and survive at sea for long periods of time.

Review

Question 1 of 3

Point Value: 10

What were the European's motives for exploration?

- Gold
- Glory
- God
- Guns



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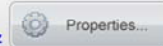
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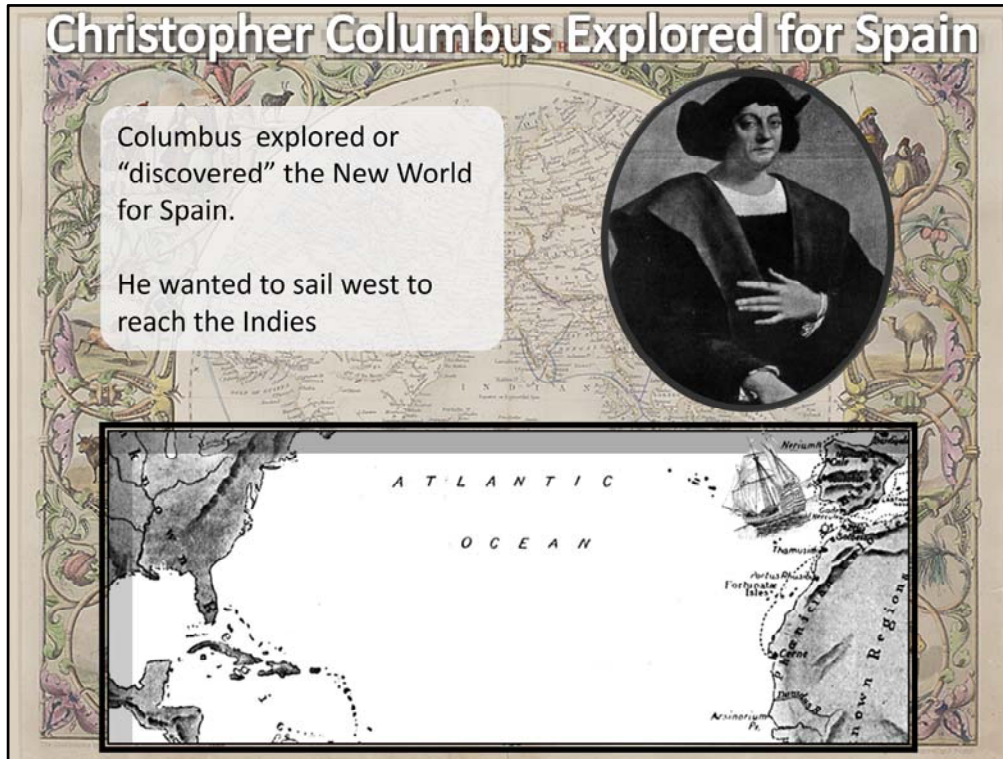
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An Italian sailor from Genoa wished to sail for Portugal. At this time, the concept that the earth was round was relatively new. Believing in this idea, this sailor proposed that, if he sailed westward, he would reach India faster. His name was Christopher Columbus. The King of Portugal refused to sponsor him, so he turned to the Spanish King Ferdinand and his wife Isabella, who were famous for expelling the Muslim Moors from Spain.

Christopher Columbus made two huge errors in planning his voyage. First, he underestimated the size of the world. Next, he didn't foresee the two continents that were in his path. Columbus had three ships under his command: the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. He sailed west from Spain and ran into the Caribbean islands of Hispaniola and Cuba. Since he thought he was in the Indies or Indonesia, he called the people he found there “Indians.”

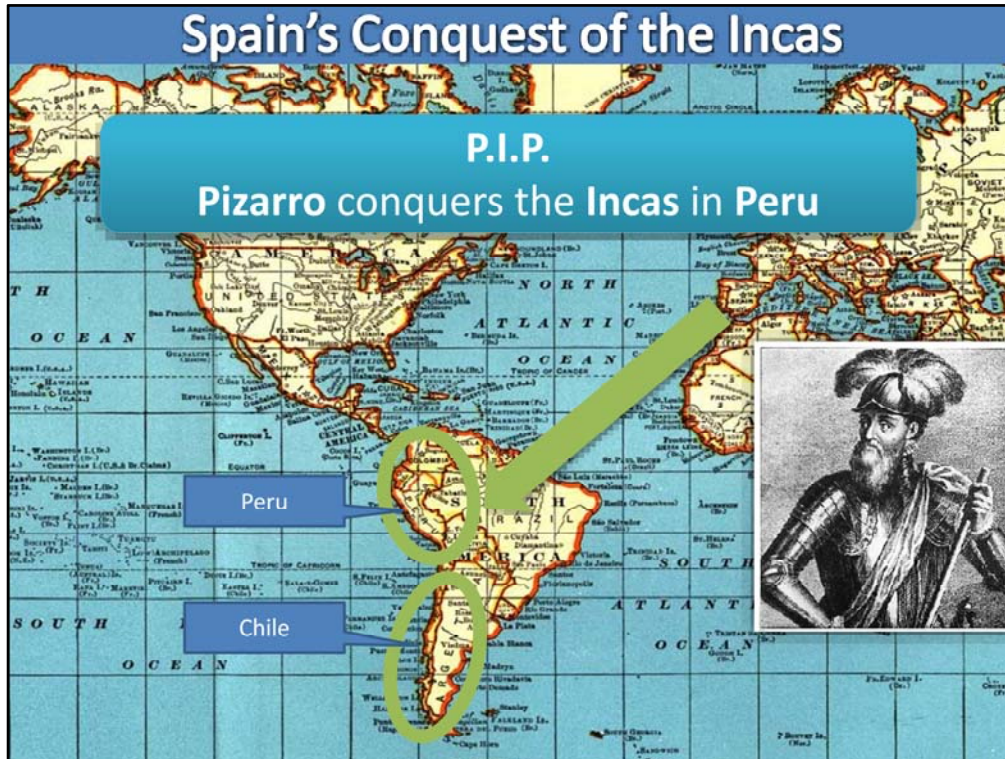
In 1492, a German cartographer read reports of a “new world” written by an Italian sailor named Amerigo Vespucci. He labeled the region “America” after Vespucci. The region that Columbus found became known as the West Indies, which is located in what we now know as the Caribbean



In 1520, the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez and his conquistadors went to the “new world” in search of gold. They found the Aztec Empire in what is modern-day Mexico. Through gun violence and the introduction of new diseases, like smallpox, the Conquistadors almost completely eliminated the Aztecs.

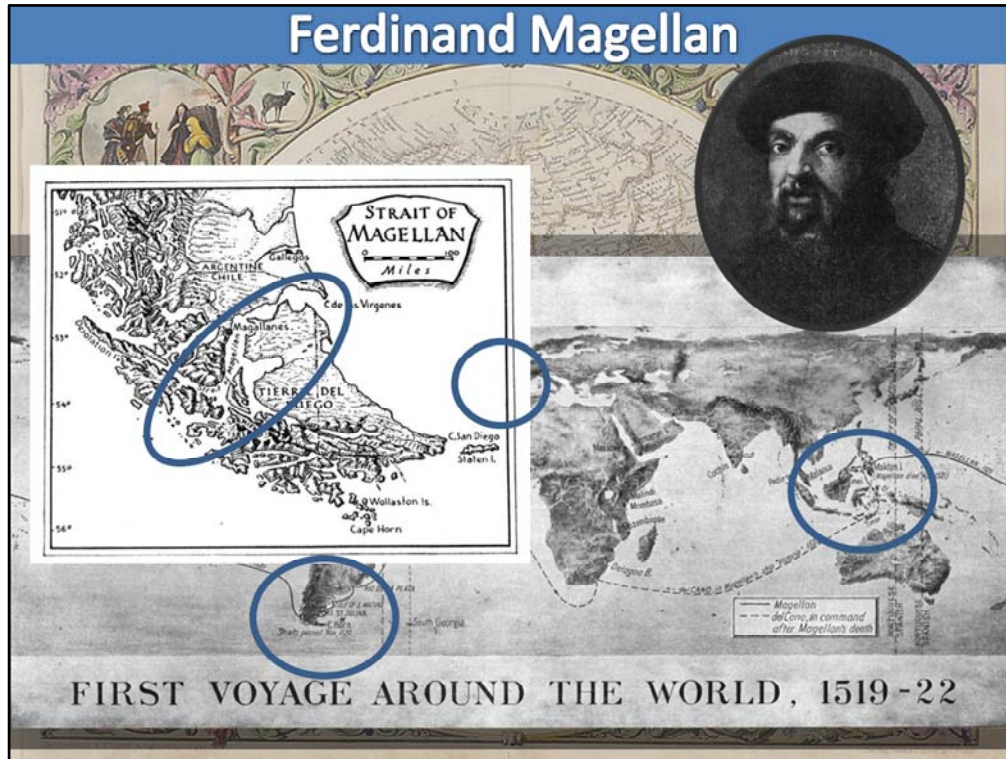
One way to remember Cortez’s conquest is through the acronym C.A.M., which stands for Cortez conquers Aztecs in Mexico.





Soon after Cortez encountered the Aztecs, Francisco Pizarro travelled to the New World. He ventured to South America to what is now Peru and Chile and destroyed the Incan culture for their gold. Spain sent ships back and forth to the new world to take the gold home and, in the process, became the richest nation in the world. These ships came to be known as the Spanish Armada.

One way to remember Pizarro's conquests is by the acronym P.I.P., which stands for Pizarro conquers the Incas in modern-day Peru.

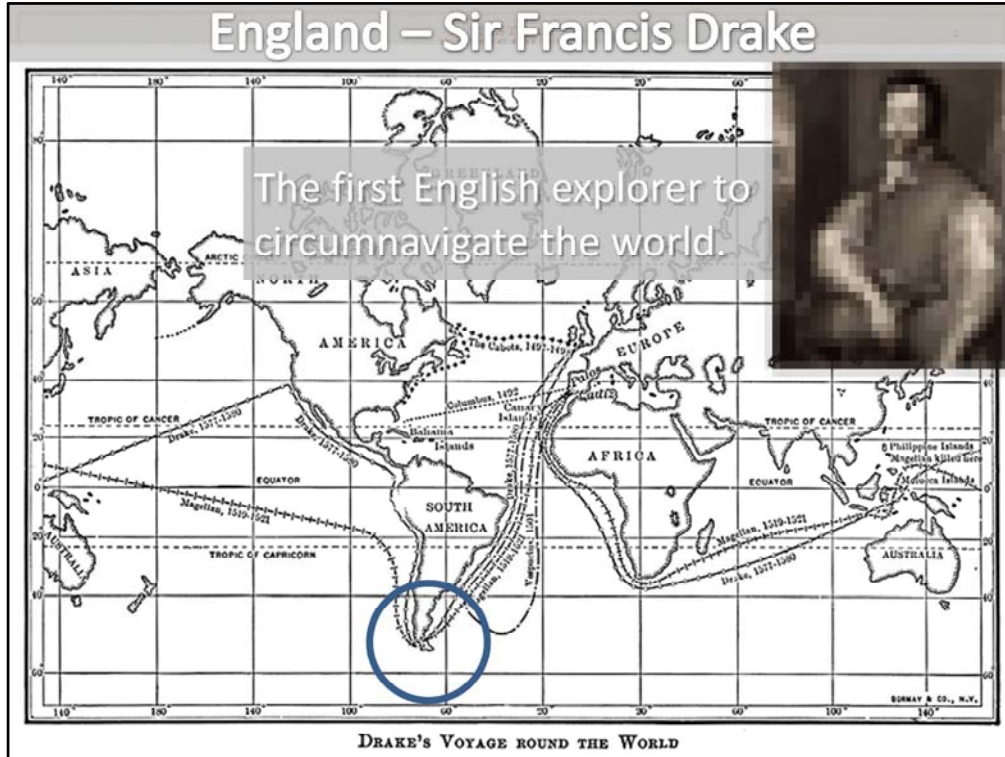


In 1519, a minor Portuguese noble named Ferdinand Magellan set out from Spain with five ships and 276 men.

He discovered the Strait of Magellan at the tip of South America. His journey through the Strait of Magellan took him three weeks because the group ran into countless storms. When he finally sailed into what is now the Pacific Ocean, he named it Pacific which means peaceful.

He faced several mutinies as he crossed the Pacific because his crew was starving during the long journey across the ocean. In 1521, he reached the Philippines where he was killed in a conflict with Philippine islanders. On September 8, 1522, one ship and 18 sailors returned to Spain, and were credited with being the first to sail all the way around, or circumnavigate, the world.

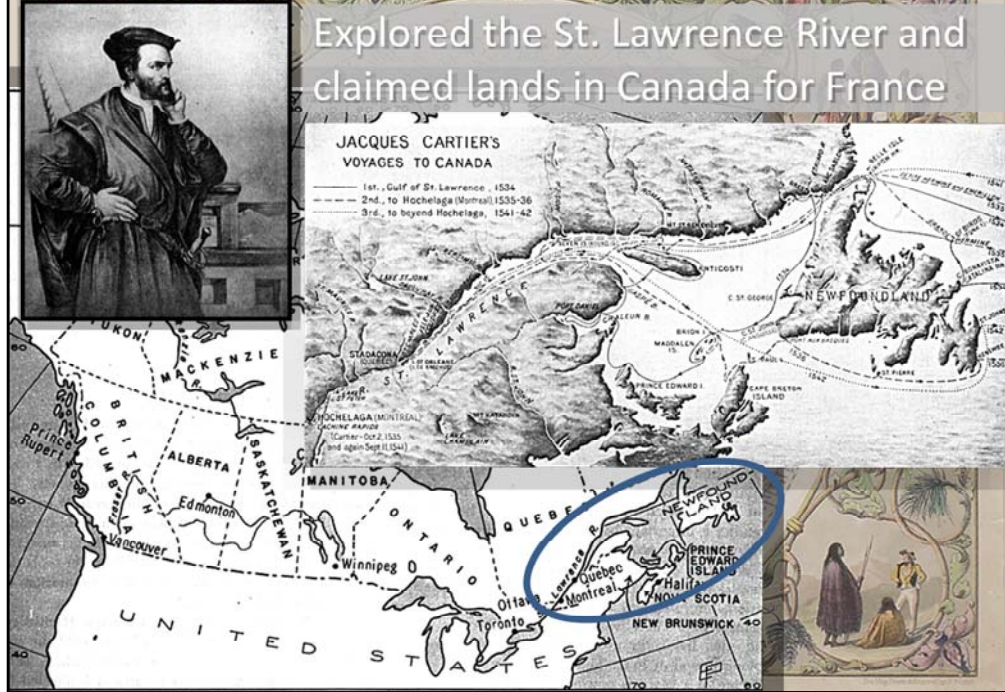
## England – Sir Francis Drake



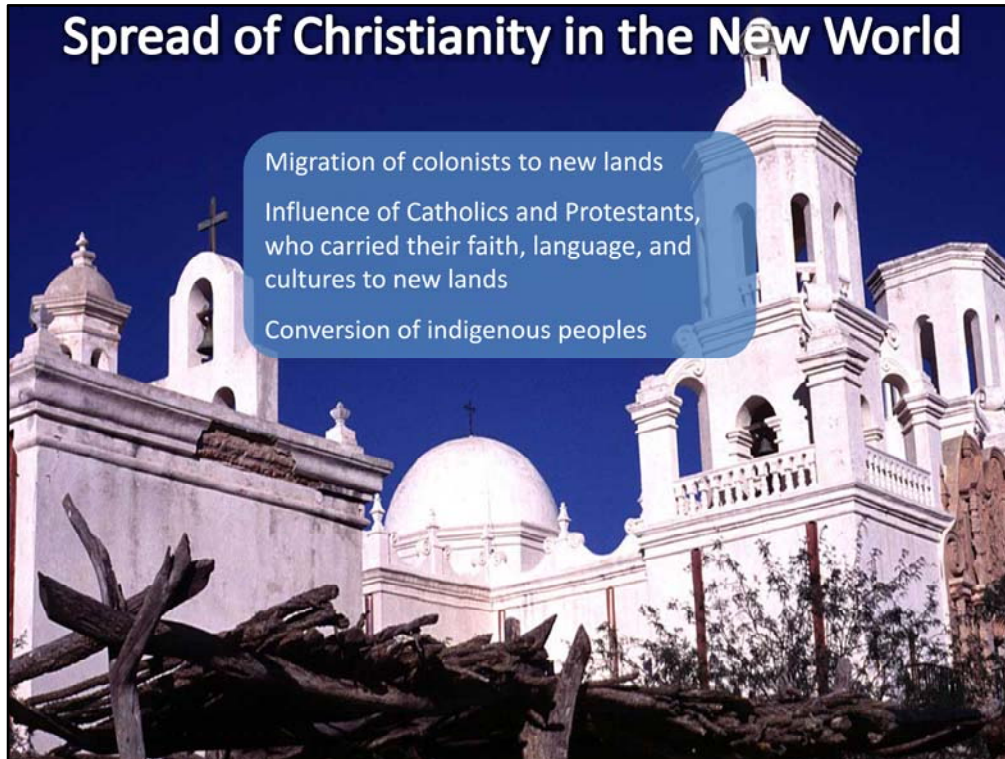
Sir Francis Drake was a privateer who was commissioned by Queen Elizabeth of England to raid and plunder Spanish ships and colonies in the Americas. He never planned on sailing around the world; however, he became caught in a violent storm in the Straits of Magellan which forced him to round the tip of South America. In the Pacific, Spanish settlements were unguarded. Drake plundered one Spanish settlement and captured two of Spain's treasure ships. As a result, Queen Elizabeth ended up with a great deal of Spanish treasure, and the Spanish ended up with a hatred of England.

## France – Jacques Cartier

Explored the St. Lawrence River and claimed lands in Canada for France



French Captain Jacques Cartier explored the St. Lawrence River and established the area in Canada now known as Quebec.



As a result of the Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English explorations, these powers established colonies in the New World. These territories were rooted in the mother countries' cultures, architecture, religions, and languages. One common belief of all of these colonies was that they should convert Native Americans to Christianity.

In the Spanish colonies, the Catholic Church played a pivotal role in the conversion process. The Church established universities to educate priests for this role. The University of Mexico was established in 1551, just 31 years after Cortez's conquest. In the Plymouth Colony in North America, Puritans attempted to convert the indigenous populations to Protestantism. Meanwhile, in French Canada, Jesuit missionaries baptized thousands of people, converting them to Catholicism.

## Review

Question 1 of 4

Point Value: 10

Who conquered the Aztec civilization?

- Vasco de Gama
- Christopher Columbus
- Hernan Cortez
- Prince Henry

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