

The Era of the First Global Age and Revolution

Kathy Sammis



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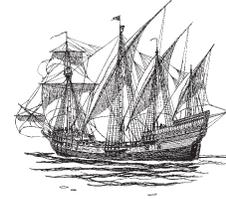
Name _____ Date _____

Atlantic Region

(For use with Unit 1, Worksheets 1 and 7)



UNIT 1



TEACHER'S GUIDE

Sea Routes Link the Globe

The objective of this unit is to help students understand the changes that occurred in the world after transoceanic links were forged across the Atlantic in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Many aspects of European life in the 1400s encouraged global outreach, including the desire for trade goods from the East, strong and stable central governments, the Renaissance thirst for new discoveries, missionary fervor, and advances in sailing technology. Portugal's exploratory voyages down and around Africa forged the direct sea link between Europe and Asia. (The effects of that global link are explored in detail in Units 3 and 5.) Spain, through Christopher Columbus, initiated European contact with the

Americas, and England, France, and the Netherlands soon followed. The Spanish quickly established control over Central and South America, while the British, Dutch, and French concentrated their efforts on North America and the Caribbean. The need for labor on colonial American plantations soon led to the development of the extensive and tragic Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans. The linking of Europe, Africa, and the Americas gave rise to the Columbian Exchange, a sharing of foods, plants, and animals among the three continents. The activities of this unit are designed to draw students into a better understanding of these early years of cross-Atlantic linkages.

Student Activities

Worksheet 1, Voyages of Discovery, uses mapping to show the routes and years of explorers' voyages from various European nations down and across the Atlantic from 1487 to 1610. The Extra Challenge asks students to identify areas of the Americas colonized by the different European nations, use their math skills to calculate the length of the voyages, and identify the nationalities of the explorers involved.

Worksheet 2, The Portuguese Caravel, underscores, visually and in writing, the importance of improvements in boat design to the age of exploration. Students' answers to questions about features of the caravel will reveal the ships' navigational advantages and a disadvantage. The Extra Challenge invites students to assemble an informational display of images of the improved navigational tools that made cross-oceanic exploration possible.

Worksheet 3, Amerindians As Columbus Saw Them, presents excerpts from a letter that Columbus wrote in which he described the Amerindians he encountered on his first voyage of discovery. Students first imagine themselves as one of those Amerindians and describe the arrival of the strange new people from over the sea. Then they describe how relations between the Spanish and the Amerindians were likely to proceed, as indicated by Columbus's words.

Worksheet 4, American Fauna, underscores the newness of the American life forms to Europeans, with a list of real American fauna and creatures that Europeans imagined to exist. Students sort out the real from the imaginary, and name each creature described.

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Worksheet 5, The Aztec View, presents excerpts from Aztec narratives about the arrival of the Spanish. Students interpret these, guided by an accompanying series of questions. The Extra Challenge invites students to role-play a discussion among Montezuma's advisors on how to deal with the Spanish strangers.

Worksheet 6, The Columbian Exchange, asks students to develop banquet menus, first using only foods available before contact with the Americas and then incorporating foods that became available after such contact. The Extra Challenge invites students to trace some of the listed foods from their region of origin to a different region where they became dietary staples.

Worksheet 7, The African Slave Trade, is a mapping exercise in which students trace journeys of different African peoples from their homelands to an African port and then on to a destination in the Americas or North Africa. The Extra Challenge invites students to read firsthand narratives of people who were involved in the slave trade (a list is provided in the answer section) and then write their own firsthand narrative as one of the African peoples described on the activity sheet.

Worksheet 8, African Slavery, uses an excerpt from the memoirs of Olaudah Equiano, a native of Nigeria and former American slave, to describe the system of slavery as practiced in Africa. Students identify the major features of this system by answering the questions that follow the excerpt.

Worksheet 9, Graphing the Population Shift, presents a pie chart to compare numbers of slaves imported to different regions of the Americas. Students interpret the information presented on the chart to learn more about the nature of the Atlantic slave trade.

Worksheet 10, Plantation Life, presents a scene of slaves working on a plantation. Students study the image and then write two first-person descriptions of the scene, one from the white overseer/owner's point of view, the other from a slave's point of view. The Extra Challenge invites students to identify the type of plantation shown, as revealed by details in the picture.

Worksheet 11, The Pro-Slavery Case, presents slave traders' arguments in favor of the trade, from a 1734 first-person account. Students refute the slave trader's case point by point, in one of a suggested variety of formats.

Worksheet 12, The Triangular Trade, presents an ironic verse written by William Cowper as an introduction to an exercise in mapping the triangular Atlantic connection among African slaves, sugar, and rum.

Worksheet 13, Colonial Societies, has students identify colonial regions based on descriptions of the life of ten different hypothetical American people.

Worksheet 14, The Spanish and the Indians, presents two opposing views of Spanish treatment of Amerindians in its colonies. The questions draw students into analyzing the historic debate that went on among influential people in Spain and the Americas over this issue.



North Wind Picture Archives

Sea Routes Link the Globe

Since ancient times, sea trade routes linked diverse regions of the world. In the years between 1000 and the late 1400s, the sea trade network grew ever more busy. Ships laden with trade goods linked Asia, Europe, and North and East Africa. But two important connections were as yet missing. Ships from Europe had no direct route to Asia. North and South America had no links to any other continents. Ships from Portugal and Spain forged these missing links beginning in the late 1400s. This marked the start of Europe's "age of exploration."

Many aspects of European life in the 1400s encouraged global outreach:

- **Trade:** The people of Europe wanted luxury goods from the East—above all, spices. Merchants wanted a direct sea route to East Asia's source of these profitable items.
- **Strong central governments** supported trade, fleets of ships, and armies. They looked across the seas to new sources of wealth and power.
- **The Renaissance** changed the way Europeans thought. (See Unit 2 for more on the Renaissance.) People wanted to know more about the world, based on facts and new discoveries.
- **Religious fervor:** Many people in Europe had a deep desire to spread their Christian religion to "heathen" and "infidel" people across the globe.

The Crusades of the previous era were a series of wars against the Muslims of the Middle East. They inspired Europeans with a continuing desire to spread Christianity. They also fired a desire for adventure and conquest.

Sailing technology had advanced greatly by the late 1400s:

The astrolabe and the sextant measured the angle of the sun or stars. This revealed the latitude of the ship's current location.

The magnetic compass got a floating needle, for use on ships. It showed the direction in which a ship was sailing.

A new type of ship, the **caravel**, used triangular sails. It could sail more directly into the wind.



Astrolabe

Portugal started the age of exploration. It sponsored a series of voyages down the west coast of Africa during the 1400s. The goal was to find a sea route around the southern tip of Africa. Then Portuguese ships could sail directly to India and the Far East. Bartolomeu Dias finally achieved the goal. In 1488, he battled his ships through a fierce storm and rounded Africa's southern tip.

Portugal's Prince Henry promoted the exploration policy and founded a school of navigation. For this, he is known as Henry the Navigator.

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Sea Routes Link the Globe *(continued)*

Spain watched Portugal's progress down Africa with envy and alarm. The Spanish **monarchs**, Isabella and Ferdinand, wanted a sea route to the East for their country too. They agreed to back the proposal of an Italian sea captain. Christopher Columbus sailed a fleet of four ships west across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492. He thought he could sail west across this "Ocean Sea" directly to Japan and the East Indies, or Spice Islands.

The Italian Amerigo Vespucci explored the Americas in 1499 and 1501. Many people in Europe read what he wrote about his voyages. A German mapmaker labeled these "New World" lands *America*, a Latin version of Vespucci's first name.

Columbus did cross the Atlantic, and he did find many islands. He died believing that he had reached the East Indies, which is why he called the natives of the region *Indians*. In reality, Columbus had arrived in the Americas.

Other nations of Europe soon sent out their own voyages. Explorers for England, France, and the Netherlands sailed up and down North America in the 1500s and 1600s.



Christopher
Columbus

The Spanish Empire in the Americas

Spanish explorers came to the Americas in the 1500s looking for gold. They found it in the central valley of Mexico and the Andes highlands of Peru. These areas were ruled by the powerful Aztec and Inca **empires**.

In 1519, Hernán Cortés marched his Spanish army to the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán. (Its size and sophistication astounded Cortés and his men.) The Aztec empire crumbled quickly, taken down by Spanish gunpowder weapons, horses, and disease.

The Aztec account of the Spanish conquest relates that 240,000 Aztecs were killed in the siege of Tenochtitlán. "There were alive only a few lords and knights and the little children."

The same fate overcame the great Inca empire. Francisco Pizarro heard about Inca riches and marched a small army to the Andes in 1532. The Incas fell swiftly to a mix of gunpowder weapons, trickery, and Incan political infighting.

The Spanish quickly colonized the lands they had conquered. They wanted the riches of gold and silver for themselves and their home country. They also wanted to spread Christianity. In Mexico and Peru, the Spanish set up silver mines and forced conquered Indians to work in them under harsh conditions. In other areas, Spanish nobles received grants of land. Indians who lived on the land had to pay tribute, including forced labor. Most of the Spanish settlers were men. So marriage between Spanish men and Indian women soon became common.

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Repro

Sea Routes Link the Globe *(continued)*

This created a large mixed population of offspring called **mestizos**.

Explorer and adventurer Bernal Díaz del Castillo explained quite simply why the Spanish came to the Americas: "To bring light to those in darkness, and also to get rich."

Colonizing in North America

Patterns of setting up colonies in North America were different from the Spanish model.

- French explorers delved into the heart of North America, following its great waterways. Most French people who then came to these lands were either fur traders or priests, not settlers.
- Most English people came to North America to set up farms and build towns. The earliest English colonies were founded in Jamestown, Virginia, and Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The French and Indian War was part of a larger conflict between Britain and France, the Seven Years' War of 1756 to 1763. These rival nations fought that war in Europe and the West Indies.

England and France soon came into conflict in North America. The English colonies had a growing population, and they wanted more land. Thinly populated lands claimed by the French seemed ideal to them. This clash resulted in the French and Indian War of 1754–1763. British colonists and the British army

defeated the French and their Indian allies. As a result, control of almost all of North America east of the Mississippi River passed to England.

The Atlantic Slave Trade

One tragic outcome of the new global links was the development of the Atlantic slave trade. Slavery had been common all around the world since ancient times. In African and Muslim lands, prisoners of war commonly were sold as slaves. They mostly worked as household servants and often were regarded as part of the family. They had some legal rights and could work their way out of slavery. Their children were not born as slaves.

Europeans in the Americas developed a different form of slavery. To extract wealth from the Americas, Europeans set up mines and plantations. They forced Indians to do the mining and farming work. But disease killed off most of the Indians. So the European colonists turned to Africa for a source of forced labor. Africans could withstand European diseases, and they had farming skills. Also, it was hard for them to escape and hide in a strange land.



Northwind Picture Archives
Slave auction

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Sea Routes Link the Globe *(continued)*

West African ports were the hubs of the slave trade. Europeans set up forts along the coast. African merchants and rulers brought captives there from the inland areas and sold them. Slave ships transported the captives across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas. Most African slaves labored in gold and silver mines and on plantations in Spanish America and the Caribbean islands. Over time, they numbered in the millions.

The slave trade caused havoc among Africans. West African life was badly disrupted by constant slave raids and the loss of generations of its fittest population. Many captured Africans did not survive. Some died resisting capture, others on the forced march to the coast. Most deadly was the voyage across the Atlantic—the “**middle passage**”—in inhumanely crowded conditions. Waves of captives died from disease, suffocation, suicide, rebellion, starvation, and brutality. Those who made it to the Americas lived a harsh life and were often worked or beaten to death.

Outcomes for Native Americans

Contact among Europeans, Americans, and Africans changed every society it touched. Plants, foods, animals, and elements of **cultures** were exchanged among the three continents. This interaction is called the **Columbian Exchange**.

Contact with Europeans, though, had many negative results for Native Americans. In North America, English settlers pushed Indians out of their ancestral lands. In Central and South America, Europeans subjected Indians to forced labor and slavery. Disease—another element of the Columbian Exchange—had the most tragic impact. Native Americans had no immunity to many common European diseases. Indians in the Americas—**Amerindians**—died, in astounding numbers, of diseases such as measles, influenza (flu), chicken pox, and smallpox.

Africans did have immunity to Europe's diseases. Europeans and Africans had been in contact all through history. American Indians and Europeans had always been separated.



Voyages of Discovery

Directions: Explorers in the late 1400s and early 1500s found new sea routes to link Europe with Africa and Asia. They also forged links between Europe and the “new world” of the Americas. On your map of the Atlantic region, trace the listed explorations. (Don’t mark the return voyages.) Use a different color for each country’s voyages. Use different-looking lines for voyages marked in the same color, to make your map easier to read. On the map, label the countries of Europe that the voyages started from. Also label the following items on the map.

Island Group

West Indies

Empires

Songhay

Incan

Aztec

For Portugal

Bartolomeu Dias, 1487–88

Vasco da Gama, 1497–99

Pedro Alvares Cabral, 1500–01

Amerigo Vespucci, 1499–1500

For Spain

Christopher Columbus, 1492–93

For England

John Cabot, 1497

Henry Hudson, 1610

For France

Giovanni da Verrazano, 1524

Jacques Cartier, 1534–35

For the Netherlands

Henry Hudson, 1609

Extra Challenge

1. Using different colors for different colonial powers, shade in the European land claims in the Americas in about 1700 on your map.
2. Calculate the length in miles/kilometers of some of the voyages listed above, one-way and/or round-trip.
3. Identify the nationality of any explorers listed above who sailed for a foreign country.