



Early Americas and Exploration U.S. History Unit Companion

Directions

- Complete the Prepare section before you begin a unit.
- Complete the Lesson Summaries and Guided Notes section as you work through each lesson.
- Complete the Unit Review sections before you take the cumulative assessment.

NOTE: Your teacher may require that you complete and submit this unit companion.

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Prepare

Throughout the Early Americas and Exploration unit, you will explore the following Essential Questions.



Unit Essential Questions

- How were the cultural characteristics of American Indians in North America similar and different before European contact?
- What influenced the development of trade and world exploration in Europe?
- How did West African societies change during the age of European exploration?
- How were the routes, rivalries, and motivations of Spanish and Portuguese explorations similar and different?
- How were the motivations of English, French, and Dutch explorations similar and different?
- How did the labor systems and economic policy of mercantilism that Europeans used in the Americas affect the New World?
- What was the impact of the Columbian Exchange on Europeans, Africans, and Americans?

You will learn about the following topics in the Early Americas and Exploration unit:

- cultural characteristics of American Indian groups of North America
- the development of European trade and world exploration
- West African societies and slavery before and during the age of exploration
- the motivations of European exploration, including Spain, Portugal, England, France, and the Netherlands
- the different labor systems Europeans used in the Americas and the effect of mercantilism
- the impact of mercantilism and of the Columbian Exchange

You will take a cumulative quiz and test over the content in this unit.



Lesson Summaries and Guided Notes

Each lesson is summarized on the following pages. Read the summary before a lesson to preview the most important information, including people, places, and events. Read the summary after a lesson to review the lesson content without rereading every word. As you

complete each lesson, record information in the Guided Notes section. Some questions have been provided for you. You may also take notes on other important lesson information.

Native Americans Before Exploration Summary

Historians theorize that the first native peoples migrated via a land bridge that formed between Asia and North America during the last Ice Age. Paleo-Indian cultures developed, relying on the resources in their environment to live. Over time, new cultures developed, sharing some similar characteristics but also developing unique aspects depending on their location and resources. Many groups formed their beliefs based on the natural world as their environment was key to their survival. Social, political, and economic systems became more sophisticated through interactions with other groups, such as trade and war. Many groups were spiritual and shared the land.

Native Americans Before Exploration Guided Notes	
Why do historians think that Paleo-Indians crossed a land bridge to North America from Asia? (Slide 2)	Historians think that Paleo-Indians were following animals to hunt, such as mammoths, which were crossing the land bridge.
How did agriculture change the ways of life of Paleo-Indians? (Slides 2–3)	
Where did the Pueblo cultures develop, and how did they adapt to their environment? (Slide 4)	
How did the Mound Builders get their name, and what was unique about their culture? (Slide 5)	
How were the Native American culture groups of the West similar to and different from each other? (Slide 6)	

Native Americans Before Exploration Guided Notes

How were the Native American culture groups of the Northeast similar to and different from each other? (Slide 7)	
How were the Native American culture groups of the Southeast similar to and different from each other? (Slide 8)	
What characteristics did many Native American culture groups of North America share? (Slide 8)	

The Causes of European Exploration Summary

The Christian Church was central to life in medieval Europe, and a series of wars called the Crusades were fought to stop the spread of Islam into the Holy Land. These wars revealed new sights and experiences for what had largely been an inward European society that was based on the feudal system. Crusaders were exposed to luxury items, spices, and new ideas as they fought to protect their Christian lands. Travels by others, such as Marco Polo and early expeditions funded by Portugal's Prince Henry, motivated people and countries to explore the world. God, gold, and glory became the motivations of many European leaders and explorers to venture into the open sea, equipped with the latest navigation tools and maps.

Europeans faced big setbacks when the Black Death was introduced onto the continent. Europe's population was greatly reduced, but eventually towns and trade grew. Some of this rejuvenation was caused by new ideas and learning from the Renaissance and new inventions, spurring interest in world exploration.

The Causes of European Exploration Guided Notes	
Why did the feudal system develop? (Slide 2)	The feudal system developed because people wanted protection and safety.
Why did the Christian Church have so much power during the Middle Ages? (Slide 3)	
Why did Pope Urban II launch the Crusades? (Slide 4)	
What were the causes and effects of the Black Death? (Slide 5)	
What effects did new ideas and the printing press have on Europeans? (Slide 6)	
Why did Prince Henry of Portugal fund expeditions and the training of sailors? (Slide 7)	

The Causes of European Exploration Guided Notes

What effect did Marco Polo's book *Travels* have on Europeans? (Slide 8)

West Africa and Slavery Summary

African cultures were thriving before European contact. Rich and diverse, they developed based on traditions, geographic location, and interactions, such as trade. The gold and salt trade brought great wealth and power to several West African kingdoms, such as Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. The internal African slave trade was also important. Yet after European contact, the slave trade changed. Europeans thought of themselves as superior to Africans and indigenous peoples in the Americas. The slave trade became race-based as it grew and expanded to accommodate European exploration.

Europeans forced millions of Africans to cross the Atlantic under horrible conditions to work on plantations in the Americas. Europeans made huge profits from the slave trade and cash crops that slaves cultivated on plantations.

West Africa and Slavery Guided Notes	
How did sub-Saharan African cultures develop before European contact? (Slide 2)	They lived in extended families and settled near rivers, adapting their ways of life to their environment.
How did the empire of Ghana become rich and powerful? (Slide 3)	
What effect did Mansa Musa's pilgrimage to Mecca have on Europeans? (Slide 4)	
How was chattel slavery different from the slave trade that existed in Africa before European exploration? (Slide 5)	
Why did the slave trade expand during and after European exploration? (Slide 6)	
Why did enslaved West Africans replace enslaved indigenous peoples in the Americas? (Slide 7)	

West Africa and Slavery Guided Notes

How did slavery change the lives of Africans that were brought to the Americas? (Slide 8)

Spanish and Portuguese Exploration Summary

When Prince Henry of Portugal started to finance expeditions to explore the coast of Africa and beyond and stories were circulating about riches to be found, the Spanish started to become interested in world exploration, too. The Portuguese continued to explore to expand trade, which included getting involved in the West African slave trade.

Since Spain and Portugal were big rivals already, world exploration was just another battlefield of sorts. But Spain had other motivations. The Spanish wanted to spread Christianity, especially during a time when new ideas and beliefs started to make people think for themselves. This rivalry and the interest in spreading Christianity, as well as finding gold and a western sea route to the Far East, pushed Spain to explore. Because they had success with the conquering of the Aztecs and the Inca, the Spanish were even more motivated to colonize.

Spanish and Portuguese Exploration Guided Notes	
What characteristics about the Aztec Empire reveal that it was a thriving civilization? (Slide 2)	The Aztec built complex structures and a well-planned city. They had a labor force and a very large population.
How were the Inca and Aztec Empires similar and different? (Slide 3)	
What system did the Portuguese set up in the Americas that made it wealthy? (Slide 4)	
What motivations did Spain and Christopher Columbus have in sailing westward? (Slide 6)	
How did Europeans respond to Christopher Columbus's "discovery" of the Americas? (Slide 7)	

Spanish and Portuguese Exploration Guided Notes

Why did Cortés and Pizarro want to conquer Mesoamerican and South American empires? (Slide 8)

What motivated other explorers, such as Vázquez de Coronado, to explore? (Slide 9)

British, French, and Dutch Exploration Summary

The English, French, and Dutch were all motivated to explore the Americas, but they had different reasons. While the Spanish tried to spread Catholicism to native peoples in the Americas, English Protestants were looking for a place where they could practice their religion freely since England was divided between the two faiths. The English were rivals with the Spanish and wanted to catch up with them in their quest for colonies and resources in North America.

All three countries established colonies. The English tried but failed with Roanoke Colony but then had success with Jamestown and Plymouth Colonies. The French were big rivals with England; therefore, they were motivated to explore, get resources, and form colonies. Yet their main purpose was to expand trade, which flourished with the fur trade. They started New France and took islands in the West Indies as Spain weakened. Like France, the Dutch were interested in expanding trade, which included colonization through the Dutch East India Company. The Dutch also wanted to find riches and resources, but their source of great wealth in exploration was trade.

British, French, and Dutch Exploration Guided Notes	
Why did the English establish Roanoke? (Slide 2)	They were looking to expand trade and gain resources.
How did joint-stock companies help start colonies? (Slide 3)	
Why did some English colonists want religious freedom? (Slide 4)	
What were the effects of French colonization of the Americas? (Slide 5)	
Why was fur trading big business? (Slide 6)	

British, French, and Dutch Exploration Guided Notes

How did the Dutch become a great sea power? (Slide 7)

Columbian Exchange Summary

The English, Spanish, and Dutch all used different types of labor systems in the Americas to meet their needs and to support mercantilism. The encomienda system enabled the Spanish to reward conquistadors for their successes, to have a labor supply to work the land, and to Christianize the native peoples. Because some Europeans could not afford to pay for their voyages to the Americas, the system of indentured servants and the patroon system allowed them to repay wealthy landlords the costs of their voyages in exchange for years of working the land.

The Columbian Exchange, the result of European exploration and contact with the Americas, brought many foods, ideas, peoples, and diseases to the Americas. The exchange also sent foods from the Americas to Europe and Africa, which caused a change in diets for people around the world. The exchange also led to many deaths of native peoples in the Americas due to new viruses introduced. As the native population of the Americas dwindled, Europeans expanded the African slave trade to replace them.

Columbian Exchange Guided Notes	
What were some items that were carried across the Atlantic in the Columbian Exchange? (Slide 1)	Foods, like potatoes, corn, and squash, were brought from the Americas to Europe and Africa. Foods, like wheat and barley; livestock, like horses and cattle; and diseases were brought from Europe to the Americas.
How did the use of encomiendas help the Spanish carry out their plan in the Americas? (Slide 2)	
How was the system of indentured servitude used in English colonies in North America? (Slide 3)	
Why did slavery become more common in the 1500s? (Slide 4)	
Why was mercantilism effective in the Americas? (Slide 5)	

Columbian Exchange Guided Notes

Why was sugar such an important cash crop?
(Slide 6)

How did European diseases affect the native peoples of North America?
(Slide 7)



Unit Review – Key Words

Describe the following key words from the Early Americas and Exploration unit. Your descriptions should be as detailed as possible. Include names, dates, and relevant facts related to each key word. Be sure to explain why each person or term is important.

Remember to download and save this PDF before writing.

Native Americans Before Exploration

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Description</i>
Beringia	Beringia is a land bridge that existed between Asia and North America thousands of years ago. Historians theorize that humans crossed from Asia to North America over this land bridge.
Mound Builders	
Paleo-Indians	
Pueblo Indians	

The Causes of European Exploration

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Description</i>
feudal society	

West Africa and Slavery

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Description</i>
chattel slavery	

Spanish and Portuguese Exploration

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Description</i>
Christopher Columbus	
globalization	
Henry the Navigator	

British, French, and Dutch Exploration

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Description</i>
Dutch East India Company	
joint-stock company	
Pilgrims	
Roanoke	
Samuel de Champlain	

Columbian Exchange

Key Word	Description
Columbian Exchange	
commodification	
encomienda	
mercantilism	



Unit Review – Key Questions

Before the unit assessment, answer the following key questions. Each question contains a tip to help you locate the material in the course. Remember that some content may be presented in a multimedia presentation, graphic, or other resource. Refer to the transcripts or text versions for written versions of that content. You may want to add your own note about the location of the information. Write the answers in your own words, and test your memory of each answer by covering the answer column while quizzing yourself.

Key Question/Location	Answer in your own words
How were the cultural characteristics of American Indians in North America similar and different before European contact? (Native Americans Before Exploration)	American Indians of North America had complex cultures that shared some similar characteristics but also had unique features. Their lifestyles were often based on their environment, climate, and resources. They held religious beliefs that were largely based on the natural world; traded with other American Indian groups ; farmed, hunted, and gathered; and often had spiritual leaders or chiefs.
What influenced the development of trade and world exploration in Europe? (The Causes of European Exploration)	
How did West African societies change during the age of European exploration? (West Africa and Slavery)	
How were the routes, rivalries, and motivations of Spanish and Portuguese explorations similar and different? (Spanish and Portuguese Exploration)	

Key Question/Location	Answer in your own words
How were the motivations of English, French, and Dutch explorations similar and different? (British, French, and Dutch Exploration)	
How did the labor systems and economic policy of mercantilism that Europeans used in the Americas affect the New World? (British, French, and Dutch Exploration and Columbian Exchange)	
What was the impact of the Columbian Exchange on Europeans, Africans, and Americans? (Columbian Exchange)	