

The Age of Exploration

Week 16 • Monday • Setting Sail into the Unknown

This Week's Goals

This week you will learn:

- Why explorers set sail across the oceans
- What ships like caravels were like
- The tools navigators used, like the compass
- What life was like for a sailor at sea

Reading Time

About 500 years ago, people in Europe wanted spices, silk, and gold from faraway lands. Traveling over land took years and was dangerous. So brave sailors asked: could we get there by sea?

This began the **Age of Exploration**. Explorers sailed in wooden ships across huge oceans, with no maps of where they were going! Countries like Portugal and Spain sent many **voyages** — that means long journeys by sea.

Some explorers found new sea routes. Some found lands they never knew existed — lands where millions of people already lived. The world was about to change forever. All aboard — this week we sail with them!

Reading Questions

1. What did people in Europe want from faraway lands?

2. Why did sailors try going by sea?

3. What is a voyage?

4. Were the new lands really empty? Who lived there?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

explorer

voyage

ocean

spices

route

sailor

Explorer Timeline

Year	What happened
1400s	Portugal begins sailing down the coast of Africa
1492	Columbus sails west across the Atlantic Ocean
1498	Vasco da Gama reaches India by sea
1519	Magellan's crew begins sailing around the whole world

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ The Age of Exploration began about 500 years ago.
- ☐ Explorers wanted spices, silk, and gold.
- ☐ Sailors had perfect maps of everywhere they went.
- ☐ A voyage is a long journey by sea.
- ☐ Portugal and Spain sent many voyages.
- ☐ The lands explorers found were empty of people.

Draw a Ship at Sea

Draw a wooden sailing ship on a big ocean. Add waves, wind in the sails, and a sailor looking out for land.



Coming Up Next

Tomorrow we climb aboard! We will explore the ships called caravels and the amazing tools — like the compass and astrolabe — that helped sailors find their way with no road signs at all.