

# Adventure in the Americas

By Barbara Fifer

## Summary

In the late 1400s much of the world was a mystery for people living in Europe. Their maps stopped at northern Africa, and no one knew about the Americas. To travel by land to India and China and back took three years. People wanted to sail around the globe a faster way. First, they needed explorers to go to the unknown places and draw maps. They could then send traders to get spices, gold and silver, and other things Europe did not have and start colonies in the new lands.

## Before Reading

### Building Background

Build background for the book by allowing students to observe the book's art and predict what some of the topics covered will be. Make sure students are familiar with the key vocabulary and concepts. Encourage students to discuss and share what they may already know about explorers of the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.

### Vocabulary

explorer, colonies, fleet, cargo, conquer, strait

### Comprehension Skill: Cause and Effect

A **cause** is why something happened. An **effect** is what happened. A cause can have more than one effect. An effect can have more than one cause. Sometimes clue words such as *reason*, *because*, *so*, *since*, and *as a result* help you figure out what happened and why. As you read, look for causes and effects about explorers in the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.

## During Reading

### Think Critically

1. Cartier explored the St. Lawrence River in today's Canada. How did that affect today's United States? (Later French explorers followed Cartier's route along the St. Lawrence River. Still later, French explorers turned south and went into the United States by land.)
2. Why did the first explorers from Europe decide to go along the coast of Africa? (They already knew its north coast, and from there they could follow the land without going far out to sea.)

3. Why would a country want to create faraway colonies? (To get raw materials from it, to sell its products from home, and to have safe places for its ships to stop for repairs.)
4. What countries started colonies in the future United States? (Spain, France, England, the Netherlands, Sweden)

## After Reading

### Writing

Explorers go to far away places and discover new things. Is there a place that you would like to explore? Why? Write two paragraphs about your ideas. Write your paragraphs on a separate sheet of paper.

### Organize Information

*Graphic Organizer: Cause and Effect Chart.*

Have students use the Cause and Effect Chart to list three causes and effects about explorers in the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**List three causes and effects about explorers in the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.**

- ✓ List three causes and effects about explorers in the 1400s, 1500s, and 1600s.
- ✓ In the “Cause” boxes, list the causes.
- ✓ In the “Effect” boxes, list the effects.

## Cause and Effect

**Cause**

**Effect**



In the Americas with David Yetman undertakes a new approach to travel and adventure. Award-winning cinematographer, Dan Duncan, and the In the America™s team uncover the geographic and cultural diversity of the Americas. From Japanese immigrants in the Amazon to descendants of poor Italians in Chile, from Mayan temples in Guatemala to ancient fortresses in Mexico, from the glacier-carved frigid barrens of northern Canada to the timeless villages of the Altiplano in Peru, we showcase the Americas in an intimate and distinct way. We approach volcanoes in Hawaii, Chile, and Alaska, ride rafts, boats, ferries, horses, and motorcycles.