

Age of discovery final



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The period between 15th and 16th century was of great discoveries. Explorers and conquerors from Europe set out to discover new spheres of influence and sources of wealth. Among the most famous explorers of the period were Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan . The age of discovery was necessitated by advances in cartography, navigation, ship building and search for trading goods . The discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 was a significant mark in the history of the world.

DEFINITIONS

Mesoamerica – the term Mesoamerica implies Middle America which comprises of a region in the mid latitude of America where a substantial population of the pre-Columbian societies thrived before the Spanish colonization of the Americas. Territories within this region exhibit increasing socio-economic-cultural and linguistic integration.

Cahokia – this was an ancient city built in the northern side of Mexico before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America. It then became part of U S on 5th July 1778 in the present day Illinois

Leif Eric son – An Icelandic explorer and the first European to land in N. America. Commonly regarded as, the first Norwegian with world wide recognition.

Christopher Columbus – Virtually regarded by many as one of the greatest mariners in history. He was a navigator and a colonialist considered among the first Europeans since the Viking to discover America.

Conquistadores – Refers to the Spanish explorers, adventurers and soldiers who conquered the Americas and Asian Pacific in the period between 15th - 19th century immediately after Christopher Columbus, bringing them under Spanish colonial rule.

Henry VIII -He was the second monarch of the house of Tudor who succeeded his father, Henry VII . He established the king as the supreme head of the church in England.

Amerigo Vespucci – an explorer and cartographer who in his voyage named the new continent ‘ America’.

The Asian nomads were the first people to inhabit the Americas . who with time spread to other parts of the continent . to some historians the exact date of their arrival is believed to be in the 6th century . They entirely depended on hunting and gathering for their livelihoods . they also practiced agriculture and semi-nomadism.

Corn as a major agricultural product in the Americas enhanced farming system within the American society . It also strengthened cultural ties due to increased exchange of the commodity.

There was loss of land, emergence of diseases, introduction of guns; horses and alcohol . Many were converted to Christianity . the Europeans introduced laws to curtail the activities of the natives.

The policies and attitudes of the Spanish, French and English towards the Native Americans were quite varied . one such policy was the language policy where the English introduced campaigns to give English official status . this endangered the encroachment of other tongues.

The factors for the discovery and exploration of America range from personal ambitions to improved technology. But more important is the advancement in cartography, navigation, shipbuilding and firepower. The invention of the carrack and the caravel made sailing from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic safe.

The search for trade goods e. g. silver, spices and gold, desire for conquest, religious beliefs and the need to establish trade routes can be cited as key factors for European adventure.

Leif Eriksson has been regarded as the man who discovered America long before Christopher Columbus. He is regarded by many as the predecessor of Columbus and a Viking. However, many scholars view Leif accounts as lacking historical accuracy and therefore unreliable.

Christopher Columbus' main aim of exploration was to discover possible trade routes to the west, spread Christianity, search for gold and silks from Far East.

Vespucci Amerigo, during his voyages produced a world map on which he named the new world ' America' i. e. after his first name ' Amerigo'.

Colonization -Colonization simply means to inhabit a territory.

The protestant reformation created awareness to the many Americans who had been held captive under the European rule. Key figures emerged to resist the English acquisition of colonies. They realized that reformation was the key to liberty. This made it hard for the English people to advance their agenda in the vast America land.

The English colonial system has been described as ruthless and inhuman. They perfected the system of divide and rule to acquire as many colonies as possible. French colonial administration was characterized by direct rule; the traditional authorities were largely ignored.

They emphasized and believed in the policies of assimilation and association. To the Spanish, the conquistador's officers acquired much land and wealth. They came up with several systems of government including the lieutenants and governor generals.