

- By the late 15th century, Portuguese captains started the practice of claiming land with stone markers during their voyages along the African coast. However, African people already lived in many of these areas. Discuss with students the success of this exploration from the perspective of the Portuguese and African people. How was it possible for the Portuguese to claim land already inhabited by others?
- The Portuguese were fairly brutal in their treatment of the Arab and Indian merchants in attempting to gain control over the spice and silk trade. Encourage students to generate less violent options from which the Portuguese might have chosen in order to expand their nation's trade.

Follow-up Activities

- Ask students to research the improved navigational tools and technological inventions that the Portuguese put to such good use in their voyages of exploration. See www.ruf.rice.edu/~feegi/ for more information about navigational technology used during the Age of Exploration.
- Have students conduct research on the actual spices that Europeans were so interested in obtaining during the 15th century. What did these spices actually look and smell like? How were they cultivated and prepared? What uses did each spice have? How are these same spices used today?
- Prince Henry developed a "think tank" for navigation and exploration. Have students develop a similar think tank to present options for the solution of some relevant school or community problem, using many different fields of study and professionals from various vocations to help them form options.
- Divide students into small groups, each representing a group of people with an interest in Indian Ocean sea trade during the 15th century (i.e., Arabs, Indians, Spice Islanders, Portuguese). Have each group research their position on the sea trade problem. Based upon their research, each group can come together at a mock diplomatic convention with the goal of settling the trade disputes among the parties involved. Have the differing groups find a solution to their mutual problems.
- Visit the "Illustrious Portuguese Navigators" Web site (www.geocities.com/SoHo/3808/navega_e.html) with your students. This site features postage stamps of famous Portuguese explorers with poems honoring each of them. Students can then choose a Portuguese explorer to compose an original poem about.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/portuguese.html
University of Calgary's "European Voyages of Exploration" site contains facts about Portugal and its explorers with an emphasis on the contributions of Prince Henry.

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- www.mariner.org/educationalad/ageofex/
The Mariner's Museum has an online curriculum guide for the Age of Exploration that features information about Portuguese explorers, including Prince Henry and Vasco da Gama.
- www.kyes-world.com/quadindex.htm
This "Event Inventor" Web page provides instructions for creating a quadrant, directions for use and suggestions for projects that use a quadrant.

Suggested Print Resources

- Gallagher, Jim. *Vasco da Gama and the Portuguese Explorers*. Chelsea House Publishers, New York, NY; 2000.
- Rutsala, David. *Sea Route to Asia*. Mason Crest Publishers, Broomall, PA; 2002.

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PORTUGUESE EXPLORERS

Grades 5–8

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting programs in the video series *Explorers of the World*.

Before Viewing: Give students an introduction to the program by relaying aspects of the historical overview to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.

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Historical Overview

During the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal, despite its small size, became the first European nation to achieve international status as a commercial and trading power, due to the vision of its leaders, the support of its royal family and the commitment of its explorers. Portugal succeeded in finding a passage around the continent of Africa to India and the Spice Islands of Southeast Asia. Using this route, Portugal was able to develop extensive commercial ties with many rich and exotic markets. For the first time, a European nation cut out the middlemen of Italy and the Middle East, and traded directly with previously inaccessible areas of the world.

The success of Portuguese exploration would not have been realized without the influence of Prince Henry the Navigator. Prince Henry, having established a center for navigational studies, inspired a host of Portuguese explorers to make significant strides in discovering trade routes for Portugal. Despite the superstitions of the time, adventurers like Gil Eanes sailed beyond the equator to explore the African coast. Bartolomeu Dias rounded the southern tip of Africa, providing Vasco da Gama with the opportunity to extend Dias' path and head towards India. These brave Portuguese explorers not only debunked the superstitions of the day, they also redefined trading during the Age of Exploration.

Timeline

- 1415** — Prince Henry the Navigator conquers Ceuta, an Arab trading port in North Africa.
- 1434** — Gil Eanes crosses the equator and sails along the African coast past Cape Bojador.
- 1444** — Gil Eanes brings the first Africans to Portugal to be sold as slaves.
- 1460** — Prince Henry dies at Sagres.
- 1487** — Bartolomeu Dias makes his voyage around the Cape of Good Hope, discovering the southern tip of Africa.
- 1497** — Vasco da Gama makes his first voyage to India.
- 1500** — Pedro Álvares Cabral departs on his voyage to India, discovering Brazil on the trip.
- 1502** — Vasco da Gama makes his second trip to India.
- 1524** — Vasco da Gama makes his third and final trip to India.

Vocabulary

exploration — The process of investigating in search of a goal, such as wealth, information or colonization.

Ceuta — A port city on the coast of Morocco in North Africa. In 1415, Prince Henry attacked the Arab stronghold at Ceuta.

caravans — While traveling across isolated areas of the globe, various merchants would join together for protection and convenience in taking their goods to distant markets. *(Continued)*

Sagres — A city in the southwestern part of Portugal on Cape St. Vincent. In the 15th century, Prince Henry established an observatory and a center for navigational studies at Sagres.

quadrant — An instrument used in navigation to measure the altitude of the sun and stars. After using the quadrant to determine the altitude of a celestial body, a navigator could consult a star chart to discover the current latitude of his position.

observatory — A building that is equipped for careful study of astronomy, including observation of the moon, stars and planets.

caravel — A hardy, stable ship with a large cargo hold and lateen sails that permitted ships to fill their sails and make progress at sea even when the wind did not blow from behind. These ships proved to be the ideal technology for relatively safe exploration of distant areas, and were primarily used by the Portuguese and Spanish from the 15th through the 17th centuries.

Cape Bojador — An area located on the western coast of Africa. Gil Eanes sailed past this cape on his journey in 1434.

slavery — A form of exploitation in which human beings are "owned" by others and treated as property, deprived of their right to freedom.

padrões — Stone markers placed by Portuguese captains to mark land discovered along the coast of Africa in order to claim it for Portugal.

Calicut — A port city on the southwestern coast of India. Vasco da Gama arrived in Calicut on his voyage in 1497.

monopoly — An economic situation in which only one interest, be it an individual, organization or country, has a controlling grasp on the financial operations of a commercial market.

viceroi — A title of power and influence that enables a person to effectively rule in the place of royalty particularly when great distances are involved.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Have students discuss the importance of geography and its role in the actions of a nation such as Portugal during the Age of Exploration. After looking at the size and location of Portugal on a map, have students brainstorm some of the advantages and disadvantages that geography provided to Portugal in its quest for exploration.
- Prince Henry the Navigator possessed a vision for the future of Portuguese exploration. With your students, generate a list of other influential men and women in the history of the world who have had an impact on its development. Discuss their respective accomplishments and visions for the future.
- In 1444, the first Africans were brought to Portugal to be sold as slaves. Discuss the long-term ramifications of this event with your students.

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- During the 16th century, the Portuguese used their power to disrupt shipping and commercial dealings in the East, often utilizing violent methods of attack and seizure of goods. Ask students if they feel that this use of power was immoral or unjust. Does "might make right"? Prompt your students to imagine themselves as the rulers of the small nation of Portugal, and ask them to provide explanations for their decisions about the use of force.

Focus Questions

1. What role did Prince Henry the Navigator play in Portuguese exploration?
2. Why were trading routes significant in the development of Portuguese exploration?
3. Why didn't the capture of the port of Ceuta lead the Portuguese to the wealth and riches that they had expected?
4. Why did Portugal become the first European nation to sail down the west coast of Africa in exploration?
5. What effect did the book *The Travels of Marco Polo* have on Portuguese exploration?
6. What were some of the principal tools used by Prince Henry's navigators and explorers to reach India?
7. How was Cape Bojador finally passed by Portuguese sailors?
8. Why did the Portuguese capture Africans along the West African coast and sell them into slavery?
9. How did Bartolomeu Dias come to realize he had passed the tip of Africa and had reached its eastern coast?
10. How did the news of Bartolomeu Dias' success in reaching the Indian Ocean affect Columbus?
11. How did the Portuguese interact with the Arab and Indian merchants they encountered when they reached India?
12. How was Brazil discovered by the Portuguese?

Follow-up Discussion

- Discuss with students why Portugal brought slaves back from Africa to sell on the European market. Why did the development of slavery convince many Portuguese citizens of the success of Prince Henry's navigational efforts?
- In the 1400s, many Portuguese sailors believed that the sea boiled at the equator because it appeared that the Earth and sun came together at this point. They also believed that such unknown waters must contain rare and dangerous sea creatures that would destroy their ships and kill them all. We know today, as the Portuguese eventually discovered, that such beliefs were unfounded. Have the students discuss some 20th-century theories that have proven to be as incorrect as those of the Portuguese in 1424. *(Continued)*