

- Queen Isabella of Spain is most famous for approving Columbus's voyage after he had been rejected by the Portuguese king. Have students research the reign of Queen Isabella, discovering her accomplishments and missteps. Have students write profiles about Queen Isabella.
- In small groups, have your students create ten interview questions to ask an explorer. Then ask them to write a mock interview in the form of a newspaper article.

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columbus1.html)  
This Web site provides excellent excerpts from Columbus's journals.
- [www.mariner.org/age/index.html](http://www.mariner.org/age/index.html)  
The Mariners' Museum provides an expanse of information relating to the "Age of Exploration," including curriculum guides and activities.
- [www.ruf.rice.edu/~feegi/](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~feegi/)  
This site provides details about the science of navigation during the 15th century.
- [www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1519magellan.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1519magellan.html)  
This site is a good resource which provides information about Magellan's voyage around the world.
- [www.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/eurvoya/Trade.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/Trade.html)  
This site provides much information about the impact of the slave trade on the African continent.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Aczel, Anir D. *The Riddle of the Compass: The Invention That Changed the World*. Harcourt, Orlando, FL; 2002.
- Kleinman, Joseph & Eileen Kurtis-Kleinman. *Life on an African Slave Ship*. Gale Group, Farmington Hills, MI; 2001.
- Mann, Kenny. *Isabel, Ferdinand and Fifteenth Century Spain*. Marshall Cavendish; 2001.
- Reid, Struan. *Ferdinand Magellan*. Heinemann Library, Melbourne, Australia; 2001.
- Rutsala, David. *Sea Route to Asia*. Mason Crest Publishers, Philadelphia, PA; 2002.



## RENAISSANCE TRAVEL, TRADE & EXPLORATION

Grades 5–9

The Renaissance was a unique, distinctive time in European history. It was a time when people looked back to ancient Greek and Roman civilizations for inspiration, and in doing so ignited revolutions in science, technology, religion, medicine, politics, exploration and the arts. By looking at what was old, Renaissance scientists, artists, explorers and philosophers created something new. This synthesis of old and new, and the exchange and influence of ideas across disciplines is what made the Renaissance a time of great creative endeavors. In *The Renaissance for Students*, viewers will be introduced to some of the people who had the greatest impact on their time: Queen Isabella, Leonardo, Galileo, Shakespeare, Columbus and Luther. Students will also learn about the period's many astounding works of art, the impact of new inventions, like the printing press, on the spread of humanism far and wide, and the improvements in existing tools, like the telescope, which forever changed the way we perceive our world.

### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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### COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

- A HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE
- EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE RENAISSANCE
- RENAISSANCE ART, MUSIC & LITERATURE
- RENAISSANCE SCIENCE & INVENTION
- RENAISSANCE TRAVEL, TRADE & EXPLORATION

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## Program Summary

In a fervent quest for spices popular with the wealthy, Prince Henry the Navigator, Bartolomeu Dias, Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan led daring, dangerous and oft times deadly voyages into uncharted ocean waters. Spurred on by the necessity to find alternate trade routes to the East (since the Ottomans closed many of the land routes) and the prospect of becoming rich and famous, the aforementioned fellows set sail to seek their fortunes. Over a 40 year period in the 1400s, Prince Henry the Navigator planned, equipped and sent out expeditions that journeyed from Portugal down along the African coast. In 1488, Bartolomeu Dias made it around the tip of Africa and back. Ten years later, Vasco da Gama sailed from Portugal, around Africa and all the way to India! In an attempt to find greater riches farther east in China, Christopher Columbus convinced Queen Isabella of Spain to support his voyage to the East by traveling west. In the summer of 1492, he set sail, uncertain about what lay ahead. The voyages of Christopher Columbus joined the separate halves of the planet together. In 1519, the Portuguese sailor Ferdinand Magellan and his crew sailed farther and longer than anyone else had before this time. With a fleet of five ships, he commanded the first expedition that sailed around the world. Ironically, on a quest for spices, his men often ate wormy, rat infested food. Using new technology, like improved magnetic compasses and lateen sails, together with old technology, like the astrolabe used in new ways, the “Great Age of Exploration” brought an exchange of ideas and goods to some, but war, disease and slavery to others. And while all of these great explorers became famous, few became rich. One died penniless, one was murdered, and most never found the spices for which they were looking.

## Vocabulary

**Renaissance** — A period in European history extending roughly from the 1300s to the 1600s. The word “Renaissance” is derived from the French word for rebirth, as the period was characterized by a rebirth of interest in the ancient world. This period is also marked by great scientific and artistic achievements, especially in Italy.

**merchant** — A person who buys and sells goods for a profit.

**Ottoman Empire** — Spanning the 15th to the beginning of the 20th centuries, the Ottoman Empire was, at various times, comprised of most of southeastern Europe and parts of the Middle East.

**lateen** — A triangular sail designed to catch the wind at different angles.

**caravel** — A sturdy, light and fast ship designed to use interchangeable sails.

**trading post** — A facility established in a remote area where locally produced goods are traded.

**magnetic compass** — A device used for determining directions. It uses a needle which points to magnetic north.

**astrolabe** — A device used to determine the positions of celestial bodies, along with latitude.

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**league** — A nautical measurement equaling between two and four miles.

**Columbian Exchange** — The exchange of people, plants and animals between the Old and New Worlds.

**Strait of Magellan** — A narrow passage at Cape Horn which links the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Discuss with your students why they think exploration is a common human activity. Who are present day explorers? What places do students think contemporary explorers may journey to during their lifetimes?
- Have students think about the human cost of exploration. Is exploration (past or present) at any cost an ethical position?
- Have students think about the nature of exploration. Must exploration always involve travel? What things might one explore without traveling? How could you make these “journeys”?
- Have students speculate about the personalities and psychology of explorers. Given that death is always a possible outcome, and that they often have to endure great hardship, what kind of people do they think explorers are?

## Focus Questions

1. Name some of the important explorers of the Renaissance.
2. What kinds of navigational instruments did Renaissance explorers use?
3. What were the explorers trying to gain by making their journeys?
4. List some of the hardships that crewmen had to endure while on an expedition.
5. What were some of the negative outcomes of journeys to the New World?
6. Why were many of the explorers’ voyages considered failures?
7. Under what flag did Columbus make his first voyage?
8. What was Magellan’s fleet the first to do?
9. What is the connection between the Ottomans and the “Age of Exploration”?
10. Why were spices so desirable to wealthy people of the Renaissance?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Some European explorers considered the native peoples they encountered to be less than human because they were non-white and non-Christian. Discuss with your students the human tendency to disregard and disrespect people and cultures that are different than their own. Speculate about the possible causes of this stance. Do students see modern examples of this type of mind-set? What can human beings do to curb this tendency?

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- Discuss with students the idea that history is biased and therefore subjective. If they were to read African history books, what might they have to say about European exploration? Were the European explorers actually “discovering” anything?
- The Columbian Exchange was, in a way, the beginning of globalization. Discuss the concept of globalization with your students and encourage them to think of other discoveries, technologies, etc. that have made the world “smaller.”

## Follow-up Activities

- Divide your class into small groups to create an “Age of Exploration Time Line.” The time line should include the births and deaths of important explorers, the dates of their various journeys and any other relevant information. Useful resource: [www.bruce.ruiz.net/PanamaHistory/age\\_of\\_exploration\\_time\\_line.htm](http://www.bruce.ruiz.net/PanamaHistory/age_of_exploration_time_line.htm)
- Have small groups conduct research on the slave trade that arose as a consequence of exploration. Students should gather data and read narrative information about the slave trade. Their research should address the effect of the trade on both African and European cultures. Useful resource: [gropius.lib.virginia.edu/Slavery/index.html](http://gropius.lib.virginia.edu/Slavery/index.html)
- In groups of four, have students conduct research on one explorer. The role assignments in the group are:
  - The Cartographer — This student will be responsible for preparing a map of the route(s) taken by the explorer.
  - The Researcher — This student will find out the goals of the expeditions, types of ships used, and traveling speeds.
  - The Historian — This person will create a time line of the expeditions.
  - The Writer — This person will write a journal entry as the explorer.Students can then present their projects to the class.
- The spice trade was largely responsible for fueling the “Age of Exploration.” Have students investigate the reasons spices were so valuable, trace the spice trade routes from the Far East to Europe and learn how different spices grow. A good lesson plan including activity sheets is available at: [www.riverdeep.net/edconnect/lessons/the\\_spice\\_trade.jhtml;\\$sessionid\\$SGSJ3QVX](http://www.riverdeep.net/edconnect/lessons/the_spice_trade.jhtml;$sessionid$SGSJ3QVX)
- The compass was an important navigational tool that the explorers relied upon on their journeys. Have students explore the history of the compass and how it works. Students can then create their own compasses. Useful resource: [www.riverdeep.net/edconnect/lessons/create\\_a\\_compass.jhtml;\\$sessionid\\$SGSJ3Q](http://www.riverdeep.net/edconnect/lessons/create_a_compass.jhtml;$sessionid$SGSJ3Q)

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