

Explorers 1400-1600: Navigators, Merchants, and Sea Dogs
Humanities 8

The University of British Columbia
Faculty of Education
Professor Mike Denos

Gordon Yong
78269990
Dec. 10, 2004

Unit Topic: The age of Exploration: 1400-1600

Unit Question: How was the world changed by naval technology and exploration in the 15th to 17th Century? Do those changes still affect and impact society today?

Suggested Class time: 75 minutes

Prescribed Learning Outcomes: It is expected that students will:

1. Interpret and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources.
2. Assess a variety of positions on controversial issues.
3. Plan, revise, and deliver written and oral presentations.
4. Describe how societies preserve identity, transmit culture, and adapt to change.
5. Assess the impact of contact, conflict, and conquest on civilizations.
6. Describe the impact of technological innovation and science on political, social, and economic structures.
7. Locate and describe major world landforms, bodies of water, and political boundaries on maps.
8. Describe how physical geography influenced patterns of settlement, trade, and exploration.

Unit Goals: Students will be able to:

1. Understand why Europe became the global leader in exploration.
2. Identify the countries, kingdoms, and figures involved in exploration, and the significance of what they did.
3. Identify and explain how and what sorts of technological innovations made exploration possible.
4. Identify the political, social, and economic reasons behind exploration.
5. Compare and contrast the different European nations that were involved in exploration.
6. Interact with their peers through discussions, group work, projects and role playing.
7. Identify and understand how physical geography played a part in shaping exploration.
8. Understand the impacts that explorers had in their represented nations and the people and places that they discovered.

Rationale:

This unit will focus primarily on the age of exploration that came out of the European Renaissance from 1400CE to 1600CE. The unit will cover the required elements of the Social Studies 8 curriculum. This unit will address the question of how this age of exploration had permanently impacted the course of history and global events. Students will have the opportunity to view this period through a variety of perspectives and deduce their own critical opinions. Students will study a variety of fields in the social sciences in order to gain a deeper understanding of just how important the age of exploration was to the areas of history, political science, international relations, economics, geography and sociology. By the end of this unit, students will have the opportunity to see the complexity and liveliness of exploration from 1400 to 1600.

The unit will focus specifically on explorers from different nations and kingdoms and their contributions and atrocities to world history. The unit will also explore how technology and geography impacted and were affected by exploration. By the end of the unit, it is hoped that the students will realize just how interconnected the world was in the 15th to 17th century and how the age of exploration initiated a change in global relations that still affects us today.

Lesson #1: Age of Exploration: Introduction and Geography

Essential Question: How has the Renaissance affected the age of exploration?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Make the connections between the Renaissance and the explorers
- 2) Understand the political, economic, technological, and social issues that caused Europe to start exploring the rest of the world.
- 3) Understand the usage and meaning of longitude and latitude.

Introduction: Show a clip from *Pocahontas*, the part where the British land in North America and begin to dig for gold. Afterwards, ask the students what they thought about the British explorers and observe whether there was a mix response of positive and negative views towards them. Continue to discuss with the students about the British and their goals for coming to North America and how the First Nations viewed the whole experience. **(15 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Let the students know that before the British landed in North America around the time of Pocahontas that there had already been many explorers who had sailed thousands of miles in search of all sorts of wonders and goods. It began around the same time as the Renaissance, and talk about the social, economic and political reasons for Europeans to begin to explore outside of Europe. **(20 min)**
- 2) Then talk about how technology and new knowledge around that time allowed for vast improvements in naval technology such as the compass, boats, and maps. Then talk about one specific sort of mapping and navigational knowledge, longitude and latitude. Explain to the students what it is and how it is used. Use the *Pathways* textbook on page 253 to help students understand the concept. There will also be a worksheet the students can work on. **(30 min)**

Closure: Wrap up the class by stressing the connection of the Renaissance to the Age of Exploration, and reiterate how political, social, economic and technological improvements made all this possible. Then tell the students that in the next class you will introduce to them a project that they will be working on throughout the rest of the unit. **(10 min)**

Assessment: No homework, except for the worksheet if students have not completed it. Gauge how well students understand longitude and latitude by looking over their worksheets, and their understanding of the lecture through questions directed towards the class and questions students asked.

Resources:

Pathways, p. 253.

Worksheet 1 provided by teacher.

Lesson #2: The Non-European Explorers from 1400-1600

Essential Question: Why did Europe become the centre for Exploration and not Asia?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Identify the reasons why other continents did not see a surge in naval exploration like that experienced by Europe.
- 2) Work together and come to a consensus and defend their position to the rest of the class.
- 3) Think critically and discuss multiple perspectives before reaching a decision.

Introduction: Show a picture of a Chinese junk on the overhead. Ask the class questions like what they thought the picture showed and when the picture was drawn. Then tell the students what the picture is and then let them know that Europe was not the only continent that had a presence on the high seas, but that Asia had already established an intricate naval trading system by the time Europe started to explore the world. **(10 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Continue to talk to students about Asian traders such as Zheng He and Ibn Batutta. Start with Ibn Batutta, talk about how trade in the Middle East was important and lucrative because trade between East Asia and Europe had to go through the Middle East before the Europeans began to look for their own passages. **(15 min)**
- 2) Go into detail about Zheng He's voyages; describe the dimensions of the ships he used and the goods he traded. Talk about how the Ming Dynasty eventually decided to stop these grand voyages and ask the students why they think the voyages were stopped. Before asking this question, make sure the students have enough background information about the views and perceptions of the Ming Dynasty. Have the class separated into separate roles. Make sure there are the following groups:
 - 4) One emperor
 - 5) Five imperial advisors
 - 6) One admiral (Zheng He)
 - 7) Five officers under Zheng He's command
 - 8) Six scholars
 - 9) Six Merchants
 - 10) Six Farmers

Have the class become the Chinese Imperial Court of the Ming Dynasty and ask them to come up with a decision to continue further Chinese naval exploration or to halt it. The emperor and his advisors will be one group, Zheng He and his officers will be the second group, the six scholars will

be the third group, the merchants will be the fourth group and the farmers will be the fifth group. Give each group some information about their historical, social, political, and economic context at the time. Ex. Emperor is concerned with the safety of the Empire. Zheng He is interested in continuing his voyages of trade and discovery. The Scholars are the intellectuals who think about the issue and decide which side to choose. The merchants want new markets and new good to sell and will be in favour of the voyages, while the farmers are against the voyages because they feel the royal treasury can be utilized in more beneficial ways like fixing the dykes of the major rivers in China. Let each group discuss their arguments and then allow the class to come together and give each group a turn to speak before turning the discussion loose. Then at the end of the discussion have the emperor give his final decision. **(35 min)**

Closure: After the discussion discuss why the emperor came to the conclusion that he did. Re-emphasize the fact that Europe was not the only continent that had a strong naval presence. Go over the reasons why empires such as the Ming Dynasty stopped their voyages of discovery and how that worked to the advantage of Europeans. When they reached these new places and found an absence of naval presence, it gave the Europeans naval superiority right from the onset. Afterwards, hand out the major performance assessment for this unit and ask the students to read it at home and come prepared to work on it the next class. Go over briefly what the assignment is about. Tell them when the parts will be due and go over the rubric. Also hand out the marking rubric so the students know what is being marked. **(10 min)**

Assessment: The homework is to have students read over the performance assessment handout. Students will be assessed on how well they work together in their discussion groups and whether they addressed multiple perspectives when discussing their side of the issue.

Resources:

Picture of Chinese junk.

Handout of major performance assessment provided by teacher.

Lesson #3: The Portuguese start the Age of Exploration

Essential Question: Why were the Portuguese the first nation to start exploring?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Work together in groups to come up with a convincing argument for their proposal.
- 2) Use time effectively when working together in groups.
- 3) Explore the reasons that allowed Portugal to become one of the first countries to get involved with naval exploration.

Introduction: Put up a flag of Portugal on the overhead and ask the students to identify what country the flag represented. Wait until the students guess the right country. Might have to hint that the unit is on European exploration and so the flag will be from a European country. When the class finally guesses the right country, tell them that Portugal was one of the first countries in Europe that got into exploration and ask the students why that was. Get a few opinions before moving on. **(10 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Bring up the reasons that led Portugal to look towards the seas instead of towards Europe at this time. Bring up the social, political, economic and technological reasons. Then bring up some famous explorers that sailed the open seas for Portugal during this period. Talk about Prince Henry, Bartholomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama. Talk about the routes they took, what they discovered and what they achieved during their voyage. Use figure 8-8 on p. 255 in *Pathways* to help illustrate the routes that these Portuguese explorers took. **(15 min)**
- 2) Then break the class up into groups of six and have them work on Part I. (The performance assessment handed out in lesson #2). Before letting them loose, make sure to go over the expectations for the project with them. Read over the instructions and the rubric since some students take auditory directions better than individual reading. Make sure there is time for questions. When they are working on their proposal in groups, walk around and make sure each group is on task and each individual is somehow contributing to the group. **(40 min)**

Closure: Collect the work done by the students so far and conclude by asking the students what the reasons were for Portugal to look towards the seas. Add any reasons the students may have left out and remind them that they need to finish Part I. If they have not finished it, they have to come in together as a group after class or at lunchtime to finish it. Tell them it is a group effort so that they will not be allowed to take it home since that probably means one student will end up doing it. Let them know that they will be studying the Spanish explorers next class. **(10 min)**

Assessment: Students will be informally assessed by how they work in their groups and their knowledge will be gauged by the Part I that will be handing in. Students will also be assessed on their understanding through the questions asked in the conclusion of the lesson and see how much they still retained from the lecture.

Resources:

Flag of Portugal

Pathways textbook, figure 8-8, p. 255.

A copy of the major performance assessment provided in lesson #2.

Lesson #4: The Spanish Explorers and Conquistadors Part I

Essential Question: What were the contributions of Spanish explorers to the Age of Exploration?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Interpret bias and gain a deeper understanding on how it affects their learning.
- 2) Identify the contributions that Spanish explorers gave to Europe and the rest of the world.

Introduction: Put up a quote about Christopher Columbus and his adventures in the Caribbean. Ask the students what they thought about the quote and which explorer the quote was referring to. Eventually they should guess Christopher Columbus. Go over the quote again and ask the students whether they thought the description of the natives and the Spaniards were biased in any way. Tell the class that the quote came from a book that could be found in most elementary school libraries and reveal to the class just how bias can affect the views of people even at a very young age. Remind the students to be critical of what they read, even if they are books found in the school library. **(15 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Talk about the explorers who sailed for Spain but were not Spanish. Examples are Columbus (Italian), Magellan (Portugal), and Vespucci (Florence). Bring up the contributions that these three explorers brought to Europe and how their voyages also affected the rest of the world. Talk about the vast improvements in science, navigation and geography. **(15 min)**
- 2) Have them watch a video on Christopher Columbus, and give them a worksheet they have to fill out after watching the video. **(25 min)**
- 3) Give them time to fill out the worksheet and then debrief the video and go over the answers that students had come up with. **(15 min)**

Closure: Re-emphasize the importance of seeing bias and knowing how to view the content on television critically. Go over Part II and tell the class they should be meeting up outside of class to discuss their presentations. Let them know they will have a bit of class time later in the unit to polish it up, but that most of the work should be done outside of class. The teacher will stay after class to give students a place to meet to discuss their presentation. The teacher can also suggest the students go to the school library as well. Collect the worksheets and dismiss the class. **(5 min)**

Assessment: Students will be assessed on their understanding of bias and personal opinions through their perception of the quote and the worksheet that submitted.

Resources:

Quote from a book on Christopher Columbus

Video: The Age of Exploration.

Worksheet 2 provided by teacher.

Lesson #5: The Spanish Explorers and Conquistadors Part II

Essential Question: How did the Spanish Conquistadors affect the native populations of the New World?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Understand why the Spanish were able to conquer such powerful and prosperous empires with only a handful of men.
- 2) Work efficiently and effectively in groups.
- 3) Compare different views on the same topic.

Introduction: Put up pictures of the Inca city of Machu Picchu, and ask the students if they knew what the picture were and where it was located. If the students do not know where it is, tell them and explain to them how advanced and complex the empires of the New World were before the Spanish Conquistadors arrived. Most people believed that the natives of the New World were primitive and savage before the arrival of the Spanish, but emphasize that the Europeans who needed a legitimate their conquest of these empires formulated such a view. **(10 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Show a video about the conquest of the Inca Empire. **(25 min)**
- 2) Debrief and discuss the video. Find out what the students thought of the video and have them deconstruct it like they had the previous video. How does the video's representation of the conquistadors different and similar to the quote about Columbus? **(10 min)**
- 3) Give the students the rest of the class to work on Part II of their major performance assessment. Make sure to walk around the class to help with questions and concerns and to provide advice and encouragement. **(30 min)**

Closure: Tell the students they will have time in next class to work on Part II of the project, but that they should be spending time outside of class time working on it. **(5 min)**

Assessment: Watch how the students are working in their project groups to see whether they are cooperating and coming to a consensus and staying on task. Observe the opinions and questions of students after watching the video to see whether they picked up on biases and multiple perspectives, which was taught in the previous class and whether they were able to make connections.

Resources:

Pictures of the Inca fortress of Machu Picchu

Video: History's Turning Points: The Conquest of the Incas.

Lesson #6: The British, French and Dutch Explorers

Essential Question: Why did the British, French and Dutch interested in joining the exploration frenzy?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Understand the importance of other European nations getting involved in exploration.
- 2) Work effectively and efficiently in their project groups knowing they will be presenting next class or the class after.
- 3) Identify the differences and similarities between the Southern European explorers and the Northern European explorers.

Introduction: Show a clip from the movie, *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*. Show the scene near the beginning of the movie after the dream sequence so that students get a sense of explorers and the European presence in the Caribbean. Remind them that the movie is situated in a historical context a century and a half after the time period the unit is covering and that it is a Hollywood film. Tell the students that Hollywood films can sometimes be very beneficial to learn from, but needs to be viewed critically because most of the time it is not historically accurate and most of the characters are fictional, but the visual component of the movie is worth viewing. There is no better way to get a sense of what life was like short of being there at the time. **(15 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Talk about the reasons why the British, French and Dutch decided to join the exploration race. Mention renowned British explorers such as Drake, Baffin, Davis and Frobisher. Let the class know that most of the towns and islands in Northern Canada are named after these explorers because that is where most of the British explorers ventured. Talk about the reasons why the British decided to sail in that direction. Talk about the French and Dutch contributions to exploration and navigation. **(20 min)**
- 2) Have the class then break up into groups of four and have them discuss the differences and similarities between the Portuguese and Spanish explorers to the British, French and Dutch explorers. Ask the students to look at issues such as politics, economics, social underpinnings, religious reasons, etc. Then have them come to a consensus, as a group of what they thought was the biggest difference and the closest similarity between the two groups and have them explain why they chose their choices. **(25 min)**

Closure: Bring the class together again and discuss with them their choices point out anything that certain groups may have misinterpreted or mistakenly thought was a difference or similarity. Give the last few minutes of the class to students to get together one last time before they have to present their Part II the next class. **(15 min)**

Assessment: Evaluate whether the students understand the differences and similarities between the Spanish and Portuguese and the British, French and Dutch from their contributions at the end of their discussions. Observe the interactions between the students as they discuss. Gauge whether students understood why other European nations

got involved in exploration by their usage of their knowledge to support their argument of what they thought was the largest difference and closest similarity between the explorers of Northern and Southern Europe.

Resources:

Video: *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*

Lesson #7: Student Presentations

Essential Question: Is there respect among students for their colleagues?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Effectively listen and observe the presentations of their classmates.
- 2) Showcase their presentations in a thoughtful and creative, but also an accurate manner with attention to content and detail.

Introduction: Announce to the students that there will be presentations from three of the five groups today and pass out chips and cookies to the class. **(5 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Three groups will present their presentations this lesson. Draw the order out of a hat. Remind the students that if they are not attentive and respectful of their classmates, then they will not have the attention and respect of their classmates when they present. Do not mention that there will be penalties until it is absolutely necessary. **(60 min)**

Closure: Ask the groups who presented to clean up and the rest of the class to clean up the classroom if there were crumbs and chips on around the classroom. Then tell them the last two groups will present next class and talk to them about Part III of the assignment. **(10 min)**

Assessment: Observe whether the students are paying attention to their classmates. Observe and mark the presentations to see whether the students are depicting and re-enacting the explorers critically, accurately, and creatively.

Resources:

Chips and cookies

A copy of the major performance assessment

Lesson #8: Student Presentations and Conclusion

Essential Question: How has the Age of Exploration affected world history and why is it relevant today?

Objectives: (Students will be able to)

- 1) Understand the impact of the Age of Exploration on History and other social science subjects.
- 2) Identify ways in which the Age of Exploration is relevant and still affecting the world today.

Introduction: Get the class settled and started quickly. Announce to the class the last two groups will be presenting today. **(5 min)**

Activities:

- 1) Finish off the last two student presentations. **(40 min)**
- 2) After the presentations, ask the students why they thought learning this unit were important. This time make sure every student has a chance to speak, but that they can also pass if they really do not feel like sharing. Share with the students your own thoughts about why you thought learning about the Age of Exploration from 1400 to 1600 was a turning point in world history. Talk about the effects it had on Europe, the devastation it caused to the new world and the subjugation of peoples in Asia and Africa. Bring up the driving forces in the political, social, economic and religious realms and how these forces were also affected by exploration. Ask the class to list some issues and consequences that still exist today due to the Age of Exploration. Again, make sure each student gets a chance to speak if they want to. **(25 min)**

Closure: Go over Part III of the project and ask if there are questions and concerns. Remind them that this last part of the project is due four classes from today. **(5 min)**

Assessment: Listen to what each student had to say about what they thought during the discussion and gauge whether they understood the impacts and relevance and were able to make connection between the two time periods of exploration and today. Watch the last two presentations to see whether these two groups were able to present their project creatively, critically and accurately.

Resources:

Copies of the performance assessment rubric to mark the last two groups.

Explorers 1400-1600: Navigators, Merchants, and Sea Dogs
Humanities 8
Resources and Reference List

The University of British Columbia
Faculty of Education
Professor Mike Denos

Gordon Yong
78269990
Dec. 10, 2004

Lesson #2:

Picture of Chinese Junk, can be downloaded from the website:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sultan/explorers.html>



Major Performance Assessment Handout:

Humanities 8 – Navigators and Sea Dogs Project

For this project, every student in the class will have the chance to experience the life and times of an explorer from 1400CE to 1600CE. There are three parts to the project. When the class is split into five groups, each group will have the chance to choose which country or empire they would like to represent from the following list:

Countries: **Portugal, Spain, Britain, France, Netherlands or China.**

Part I: When your group has decided on a country, you will then as a group write a letter to the king or emperor of that country. When writing this letter, you want to convince the

monarch of your country to give you the necessary funds to go on an expedition. You have heard of the great voyages of explorers from your country (Zheng-He, Da Gamma, Magellan, Columbus, etc.) and wish to follow in their footsteps. Make sure to include in your letter the goals of your trip and why your trip will help your country. Take into consideration the **prestige, economic, cultural, social, scientific, and religious benefits** such a trip could bring to your king and country. The letter should be at least two pages, typed, and double-spaced.

Part II: After the king has given you all the money you need to go on the voyage, your group will then have to re-enact a five minute scene of the voyage. Each group member will choose to become different members of a ship's crew. You can choose from a variety of positions such as the captain, a midshipmen, the chef, an officer, a slave, a gunmen, etc. When your group is re-enacting a scene from your voyage, remember to take into consideration the **nationality** your group has chosen and how that may play into the re-enactment (what is happening in that country around that time and what does that country hope to achieve with this voyage?). Other things to watch out for are the roles of each member of the crew and how the **relationships** between each of them differ. For example, how does the captain of the ship treat a lower officer and how would he treat midshipmen? Try to make the play as believable and valid as possible. Make sure your group researches your country around that time well to give as accurate a portrayal. Presentations should be 15-20 minutes long.

Part III: After coming back from the voyage, the king asks that each member of your crew submit their journals for record keeping of this glorious expedition. Each member in your group will have to write five entries to submit to the king. They may be consecutive entries or dispersed over several weeks. Remember to stay with the role you took in the re-enactment. If you were a captain, then you would write a captain's log. If you were a slave, you would write about your experiences as a slave. When writing the entries, take into consideration where your voyage took you and what kind of encounters you may have had during that voyage. For example, if you traveled west from Portugal you would have reached the new world and not Africa. Remember to talk about what kind of people you met, what was traded? How did they live? What kind of cultural exchanges took place? What did they believe and cherish? Did they understand what you valued? Also, how did you see the people of the newly discovered lands? Make sure the entries are **realistic and accurate**. Each entry should be at least one page, written and double-spaced.

Navigators and Sea Dogs Assessment

Part I:

Names: _____, _____
_____, _____
_____, _____

Letter:

Persuasiveness	/5
Grammar and syntax	/5
Content	/10
	/20

Part II:

Presentation:

Creativity	/10
Use of Props/costumes/visuals, etc.	/5
Participation of all members	/10
Accuracy	/10
Voice projection and eye contact	/5
	/40

Part III:

Journal Entries:

Creativity	/10
Grammar and Syntax	/10
Content	/15
Realistic and accurate	/5
	/40

Total /100

Additional Comments:

Lesson #3:

Flag of Portugal:

The picture of the flag can be downloaded from:
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/flags/po-flag.html>



Textbook: Cranny, Michael. Pathways: Civilizations Through Time. Toronto: Prentice Hall (1998), p. 255.

A copy of the performance assessment provided in lesson #2 of this resource guide.

Lesson #4:

Quote:

Latham, Ronald. Columbus: Admiral of the Ocean Sea. London: Macdonald Educational (1979), p. 32.

“On this second voyage, they acted on information given by their Indian guides and headed more towards the south. They first sighted land in what are now called the Leeward Islands. Here, in the island of Guadaloupe, they came across a tribe of whom they had learned the most horrifying tales. These were the Caribs, who lived by fighting. In fact the staple food of the Caribs was the flesh of their enemies. In this island they met no Carib warriors; the men were apparently all away raiding another island. But they were sickened by the sight of grisly human remains, besides finding captive Arawak women and children who were being fattened for the pot and were thankful to be taken on board the Spaniards’ ships. The nicest things in the island were the strange fruit called ananas – we know them better as pineapples. This experience came as a shock to those who had pictured the islanders as simple, peace-loving people. Europeans had thought it was only fairytale giants who ate human flesh.”

Video: The Age of Exploration. Redale, Ont.: McIntyre Media (1993).
The video can be found in the UBC Education Library.

Worksheet 2:

The Age of Exploration Video Worksheet
Humanities 8

Watch the film, *The Age of Exploration* and answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper after the film is finished.

- 1) What are the filmmaker's attitudes towards Christopher Columbus? How does the film portray Columbus? Does the film make it seem like he was a hero or simply an explorer who failed to find a passage to the Orient?
- 2) How are the people of the New World portrayed? Does the film show them as gentle, peace-loving natives or are they seen as hostile and violent towards the explorers?
- 3) Do you think the film portrayed Christopher Columbus accurately and truthfully? Why or why not?
- 4) Would you recommend that this film be shown to future classes? Why or why not?

Lesson #5:

Pictures of Machu Picchu, can be downloaded from:

<http://www.raingod.com/angus/Gallery/Photos/SouthAmerica/Peru/IncaTrail/MachuPicchu1.html>





Video: *History's Turning Points: The Conquest of the Incas*. New York: Ambrose Video Publishing (1995).

A copy of the video can be found in the UBC Education Library.

Lesson #6:

Video: *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*. Disney (2003).

The video can be found in most video rental stores and department stores that sell movies.

Lesson #7:

Bring chips and cookies so that the students will have something to do while they are watching their classmates present.

6 copies of the performance assessment rubric will be needed to mark the groups presenting Part II. Rubric is provided in lesson #2 of the resource package.

Lesson #8:

Copies of the performance assessment rubric to mark the last two groups, provided in lesson #2 of the resource package.