CH 3 Lesson 3- Spanish
European Explorers and Conquerors

What were the goals of early Spanish explorers?

When Spanish explorers reached the Americas, natives told tales of gold, silver, and kingdoms wealthy beyond belief. The Spanish listened eagerly, and they traveled far and wide in search of these riches.

These explorers, known as conquistadors (kahn•KEES•tah•dohhrz), got encouragement from Spanish rulers. The rulers gave conquistadors the right to explore and create settlements in the Americas. In return, the conquistadors agreed to give Spain one-fifth of any treasure they found. This deal allowed Spanish rulers to explore the Americas with little risk. If a conquistador failed, he lost his own fortune. If he succeeded, both he and Spain gained wealth and glory.

The Conquest of Mexico and Peru

Although many of the tales of gold and riches proved to be false, some were true. Two wealthy empires—the Aztec in what is now Mexico and Central America and the Inca in South America—were among the richest prizes the conquistadors claimed.

In 1519 Hernán Cortés landed on the east coast of present-day Mexico. Within two years, Cortés conquered the Aztec Empire that had ruled the region. Huge amounts of Aztec gold made Cortés and Spain wealthy.

Cortés's success encouraged other conquistadors. Twelve years after the Aztec conquest, Francisco Pizarro led an army into the Inca capital in Cuzco, in present-day Peru. The Spanish arrested and later executed the Inca ruler. Without their leader, the Inca were not able to fight effectively. Pizarro soon controlled most of the vast and wealthy Inca Empire.

Skills Practice

Keep a list of words you hear often during class lessons and discussion. Use these words in class discussions.

Why Spain Won

The conquistadors' victories over the Aztec and Inca were quick and lasting. How did Cortés and Pizarro conquer such mighty empires with their small forces?

First, the Spanish had weapons and animals the Aztec and Inca had never seen. The Spanish had guns and cannons. They rode horses and had huge, ferocious dogs. To the Native Americans, the Spanish seemed almost like gods. One Aztec recalled the fear that spread at the soldiers' approach: "[T]heir weapons clashed and rattled... [T]hey terrified everyone who saw them." Cortés received help from some native people who disliked their harsh rulers and were happy to help overthrow them. Finally, disease played a large role. For many native groups, contact with the Europeans was deadly. With no immunity, or resistance, to European diseases, the Aztec and the Inca suffered terrible epidemics. Illnesses weakened them in their struggle against the Spanish.

Analyzing How were the Spanish able to defeat Native American empires?

Thinking Like a HISTORIAN

Analyzing Primary Sources

In 1519 Hernán Cortés prepared to leave Cuba for Mexico with 11 ships carrying about 550 Spanish soldiers and 16 horses. Before setting off, Cortés said to his men:
"I know in my heart that we shall take vast and wealthy lands, people such as have never before been seen. . . . If you do not abandon me, as I shall not abandon you, I shall make you in a very short time the richest of all men who have crossed the seas."

— from The Life of the Conqueror by His Secretary, trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson

Based on this quote, what inspired the conquistadors?

**Spain in North America**

**What did Spain hope to find in the Americas?**

Mexico and Peru were lands rich in silver and gold. Hoping to find similar wealth to the north, conquistadors explored the southeastern and southwestern parts of what is today the United States.

Juan Ponce de León (pahn•suh day lee•OHN) made the first Spanish landing on the east coast of present-day Florida in 1513. According to legend, Ponce de León was not looking only for gold. He also hoped to find the legendary fountain of youth. This had been described by a historian of that time as "a spring of running water of such marvelous virtue" that drinking it "makes old men young again." Ponce de León's exploration led to the first Spanish settlement in what is now the United States—a fort the Spanish built at St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565.

**The Seven Cities of Gold**

Still other conquistadors searched for quick riches, and several lost their lives in the process. Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca (cuh•BAY•suh duh VAH•cu huh) was part of a Spanish expedition to Florida in 1528. After coming into conflict with Native Americans in Florida, the expedition sailed south toward Mexico in November, led by Pánfilo de Narváez (nahr•VAH•ays). Three of its five boats were lost in a storm.

The two boats that made it through the storm became stuck on a beach on an island near present-day Texas. Within a few months, only a handful of the Spanish explorers were still alive. To survive among the Native Americans, de Vaca and an enslaved African named Estevanico (es•TAY•vahn•EE•koh) persuaded the Native Americans that they had healing powers. Cabeza de Vaca later wrote that their method of healing was "to bless the sick, breathing upon them," and to recite Latin prayers.

In 1533 the Spaniards set off on a long trek across the Southwest. While traveling, they often heard stories about seven rich cities in the region. When Cabeza de Vaca finally arrived in Mexico in 1536, he told eager listeners about the "Seven Cities of Cíbola"—seven cities of gold.

**De Soto Searches for Gold**

Excited by these stories, Hernando de Soto led an expedition to explore Florida and what is today the southeastern United States. For three years they traveled, following stories of gold. Their encounters with the native people often turned violent.

De Soto crossed the Mississippi River in 1541, describing it as "swift, and very deep." After traveling as far west as present-day Oklahoma, de Soto died of fever. His men buried him in the waters of the Mississippi.

**Coronado Takes Up the Search**

Another conquistador who searched for the Seven Cities of Cíbola was Francisco Vásquez de Coronado (kaw•rh•ohNAH•doh). His travels took him through northern Mexico and present-day Arizona and New Mexico, until his expedition reached a Zuni (ZOO•nee) settlement in 1540. Finally convinced that there was no gold, members of the expedition traveled west to the Colorado River and east into what is now Kansas. They found no gold—only "windswept plains" and strange "shaggy cows" (buffalo).

**Speculating** Why do you think the encounters between de Soto’s party and Native Americans were sometimes violent?
Life Under Spanish Rule

What effect did Spanish rule have on society?

Spanish law set up three kinds of settlements in the Americas—pueblos, missions, and presidios. Pueblos, or towns, were centers of trade. Missions were religious communities. They included a church, a small town, and fields for crops. A presidio was a type of fort and was usually built near a mission.

Juan de Oñate (day ohn•YAH•tay) traveled up from Mexico to establish a Spanish presence in the lands to the north. He was also assigned to convert the native people to Christianity.

In 1598 Oñate founded, or established, the province of New Mexico. He introduced cattle and horses to the Pueblo people. The first Spanish city in the southwest, Santa Fe, was established in 1607. Santa Fe became the capital of the province in 1610.

Spanish Colonial Society

There was a very clear class system in Spanish colonial society. The highest level of society was made up of the peninsulares, people who were born in Spain. They were the landowners, leaders of government, and heads of the Catholic Church. Next in rank were the Creoles, people born in the Americas whose parents were Spanish. The next level below were the mestizos (meh•STEE•zohs), people with one Spanish and one Native American parent. Still lower were the Native Americans, most of whom lived in great poverty, and enslaved Africans.

The Spanish government granted conquistadors who settled in the Americas the right to demand either taxes or labor from Native Americans living on the land. This system forced the Native Americans into a form of slavery.

For example, in the 1540s, when the Spanish discovered silver ore in northern Mexico, they set up mining camps. They then forced Native Americans to dig for silver. The damp mineshafts were a grueling environment in which to work. Many Native Americans died there from malnutrition and disease.

A Spanish priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas, spoke out against such cruel treatment of Native Americans and pleaded for laws to protect them. He claimed that millions had died because the Spanish "made gold their ultimate aim, seeking to load themselves with riches in the shortest possible time."

Las Casas's reports convinced Spanish leaders to pass the New Laws in 1542. These laws forbade enslaving Native Americans. Unfortunately, the laws were not always enforced.

The Plantation System

Not all Spaniards sought gold. Some found wealth shipping crops to Spain. In the West Indies, key exports were tobacco and sugarcane. The Spanish developed the plantation system to raise these crops. A plantation is a large farm.

The Spanish first used Native American labor to work their plantations. Las Casas suggested that they be replaced by enslaved Africans—a suggestion he bitterly regretted later. As a result, thousands of enslaved Africans were brought from West Africa to the Americas. Those who survived the brutal voyage were sold to plantation owners. By the late 1500s, slave labor was an essential part of the economy of the colonies.

Spanish Settlement in the Southwest

In the 1600s and 1700s, the Spanish, with much help from Native Americans, settled the Southwest, including present-day New Mexico, Texas, and California.

The Spanish explorer Juan Cabrillo (kuh•BREE•yoh) first sighted what is now California in 1542. However, for 200 years the Spanish had left the area alone. Around 1769, that policy changed. California was the northern frontier of the Spanish Empire in North America, and Spain needed a large number of colonists to solidify its hold on the region. Spain also wanted to convert more Native Americans to Christianity.

Spanish settlement in California consisted mostly of mission building. The Spaniards trained Native Americans who lived on the mission to be farmers. They learned how to grow crops, irrigate farmland, and perform other tasks
usually carried out on a ranch. Eventually, the missions became economically profitable enough to sell some of their goods, such as wine, olive oil, and leather.

**Effect on Native American Life**

California’s many Native American groups had well-ordered societies before the Spanish arrived. They hunted, fished, and gathered plants for food. The arrival of the Spanish disrupted this way of life. The Spanish forced native peoples to convert to Christianity and to live and work at the missions.

**Chapter 3 Lesson 4: French Colonies**

**Religious Rivalries**

*What were the religious motives behind the Age of Exploration?*

The Europeans who explored and settled in North America in the 1500s sought wealth. They also wanted to spread their Christian faith. The first to arrive were Roman Catholics—the only Christian church in the western part of Europe at that time. Not long after Columbus made his first voyage across the Atlantic, however, religious conflict shook Europe. New rivalries based on religious beliefs emerged.

**Luther and the Reformation**

In 1517 a German priest named Martin Luther nailed a list of complaints on the door of a local Catholic church, questioning the power and authority of Catholic leaders—including the pope, the head of the Catholic Church. Luther hoped to spark reform within the Church, but Pope Leo X rejected his ideas. Others agreed with Luther. His ideas helped launch a movement called the Reformation (reh•fuhr•MAY•shuhn). The movement led to a new form of Christianity called Protestantism (PRAH•tuhs•tuhn•tih•zuhm). Among the differences between Protestants and Catholics was that Protestants did not accept the leadership of the pope. The Reformation led to widespread conflict within and between the nations of Europe.

**Religious Rivalry in Europe**

In 1533 the English king, Henry VIII, left the Catholic Church. Later, during the rule of his daughter Elizabeth I, further reforms established England as a Protestant nation. At that time, it was common for kings and queens to insist that their subjects follow their religion. Subjects who did not could lose their lands and fortunes. In England, many people were unhappy about leaving the Catholic Church, but they had little power to resist.

England’s Protestantism caused conflict with Spain. Beginning in 1585, King Philip of Spain made plans to invade England. A successful invasion could mean the overthrow of Protestantism. In May 1588, Philip sent an armada (ahr•MAH•duh), or war fleet, of 132 ships to England. With 30,000 troops and more than 2,000 guns, the Spanish Armada was the mightiest naval force in the world. Yet the smaller, faster English ships quickly gained the upper hand.

The defeat of Spain’s armada marked the end of Spanish control of the seas. Now the way was clear for the English to start colonies in North America.

**Skills Practice**

Work with a partner. Take turns describing something. Ask one another questions about the details.

**Religious Rivalries in the Americas**

Catholics from Spain and France worked to spread their faith among the Native Americans. The Spanish settled in the southwestern and southeastern regions of North America, and the French settled in the northeast. Dutch and English Protestants set up colonies along the Atlantic coast between the French and the Spanish settlements. Religious differences contributed to the rivalries between these settlements.

**Search for a Northwest Passage**
In the 1500s and early 1600s, England, France, and the Netherlands sent explorers to map the coast of North America and, later, establish trade and colonies. Explorers also hoped to discover a Northwest Passage to Asia, a direct water route through the Americas.

England sent John Cabot, an Italian, to look for a northern sea route to Asia in 1497. Cabot probably landed on the coast of present-day Newfoundland. In 1524 France hired another Italian, Giovanni de Verrazano, to look for a northern route. Verrazano explored the coast of North America from present-day Nova Scotia down to the Carolinas.

In 1535 French explorer Jacques Cartier (kahr•tee•AY) sailed up the St. Lawrence River, hoping it would lead to the Pacific. Cartier did not make it to the Pacific, but he discovered a mountain peak that he named Mont-Royal, which means "royal mountain." This is the site of the present-day city of Montreal.

The Netherlands also wanted to find a passage through the Americas. The Dutch hired English sea explorer and navigator Henry Hudson to look for it. In 1609 he discovered the river that now bears his name. In his ship, the Half Moon, Hudson sailed north on the Hudson River as far as the site of present-day Albany, New York. Deciding that he had not found a passage to India, he turned back.

The following year England sent Hudson to try again. On this trip, Hudson discovered a huge bay—now called Hudson Bay. Thinking he had reached the Pacific, Hudson spent months looking for an outlet. His crew became impatient and rebelled. They set Hudson, his son, and a few sailors adrift in a small boat, never to be seen again.

Analyzing Why did nations want to find a Northwest Passage?

Thinking Like a HISTORIAN

Analyzing Primary Sources

In 1639 a French woman named Marie Guyard, or Marie of the Incarnation, arrived in Quebec, France’s first colony. Later, she wrote religious books in the languages of the native peoples she met there. In a letter, Guyard wrote:

"You will perhaps laugh that at the age of fifty years I am beginning to study a new tongue [language], but one must undertake all things for the service of God and the salvation of one’s neighbour."

— from Word From New France, by Marie Guyard

From her letter, what do you know about the person and character of Marie Guyard?

French and Dutch Settlements

How did French and Dutch settlements compare to the Spanish colonies?

French explorers and settlers trailed the Spanish by many years, but the French did establish settlements in North America. At first, the French were most interested in natural resources, including fish and furs. French trappers went far into the interior of North America and traded with Native Americans. France built forts to protect its trade. French missionaries followed the traders.

In 1663 New France became a royal colony. The new royal governor supported expanded exploration.

Exploring the Mississippi River

In the 1670s, two French explorers—a fur trader, Louis Joliet, and a priest, Jacques Marquette—traveled the Mississippi River by canoe. Joliet and Marquette hoped to find precious metals. They were also looking for a Northwest Passage. When they realized that the Mississippi flowed south into the Gulf of Mexico rather than west into the Pacific, they headed back upriver.

In 1682 Robert Cavelier de La Salle followed the Mississippi all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. He claimed the region for France, calling it Louisiana in honor of Louis XIV. In 1718 the French founded New Orleans. French explorers and missionaries traveled west to the Rocky Mountains and the Rio Grande.
New France and New Netherland

French settlement in North America advanced slowly. New France was made up of estates along the St. Lawrence River. Estate holders brought in settlers in exchange for land. These settlers became tenant farmers (TEH•nuhnt), who paid rent and worked for their lord for a set period each year.

The French got along well with the Native Americans. French trappers and missionaries lived among them, learned their languages, and respected their ways. The missionaries had come to convert Native Americans to Catholicism, but they did not try to change their customs. Because the French colony grew slowly, it did not seem to pose a threat to the Native Americans and their lands.

The Netherlands was a small country with few natural resources and limited farmland. This is why the Dutch were eager to set up a North American colony. After Hudson's voyage in 1609, the Dutch began to explore North America. The Netherlands also had a large fleet of trading ships that sailed all over the world. In 1621 the Netherlands created the Dutch West India Company to run its trade between the Americas and Africa. In 1623 the company took over control of the Dutch colony in North America, called "New Netherland."

The heart of the colony was New Amsterdam. The town was built on the tip of Manhattan Island. In 1626 governor Peter Minuit bought the island from the Manhattoes people for 60 Dutch guilders (about $24) worth of trade goods.

Chapter 4 Lesson 1: Success at Jamestown

Why did the Jamestown settlement succeed?

For a time, the failure at Roanoke discouraged the English from settling in North America. The idea emerged again in 1606. By then, England had a new king, James I. He wanted to renew England's quest for a colony in North America. Several merchants pressed him for a charter—a document that granted the right to form a colony.

The Virginia Company

The Virginia Company was a joint-stock company in which investors bought shares, or part ownership. Investors bought shares hoping the company would make money and that they would share in the profits. The plan was for the company's settlers to find gold and establish trade in fish and furs.

James I granted a charter to the Virginia Company of London. In December 1606, the company sent 144 settlers in three ships to build a new colony in North America. In April 1607, the ships entered Chesapeake Bay. They sailed up a river flowing into the bay. The colonists named the river the James and their new settlement Jamestown to honor their king.

Jamestown Survives

The colonists did not find gold or riches in Virginia. Instead they faced severe hardships, including disease and hunger. The colony survived its first two years in part because of 27-year-old Captain John Smith. Smith forced the settlers to work. He also built ties with—and got food from—the local Powhatan people and their chief, who was also named Powhatan.

In late 1609, Smith was injured and had to return to England. The colony struggled. The Powhatan stopped providing food. The winter of 1609-1610 was called "the starving time."

Somehow Jamestown survived this terrible time. More colonists arrived to replace those who had died. The colonists also found a way to make money for the investors. Using seeds from the West Indies, they began growing a type of tobacco. Soon planters all along the James River were raising this valuable crop.

Skills Practice

When you hear a new academic vocabulary word, be sure to use it. Include the word in sentences you write and in discussions with your classmates.

More Settlers Come to Virginia
The colony of Virginia began to expand. Relations with the Powhatan improved after a colonist, John Rolfe, married the chief's daughter, Pocahontas. The Virginia Company sent women to Jamestown. As a result, marriage and children became a part of life in the colony. The Virginia Company also began giving a headright (HEHD-RYT), or land grant, of 50 acres to settlers who paid their own way to the colony. The headright system helped the colony succeed. The chance to own land lured many settlers to Virginia and gave them a reason to work hard.

The Virginia Company also gave the colonists the right to take part in their own government. In 1619, land-owning male colonists cast ballots for burgesses (BUHR-juhs-hz), or representatives. The burgesses helped make laws for the colony. The House of Burgesses was the first legislature in North America elected by the people.

The Virginia Colony was growing in size, but it was not making any money for the shareholders of the Virginia Company. In fact, the company faced financial troubles. In 1624 King James took away the company's charter. Virginia became a royal colony, meaning it was directly under the control of the government in England.

Chapter 4 Lesson 2: Seeking Religious Freedom

Why did the Puritans settle in North America?

The Jamestown settlers had come to America in search of wealth. The next wave of English colonists arrived in search of religious freedom.

England had been a Protestant country since 1534 when King Henry VIII broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and formed the Anglican Church. Not everyone in England was happy with the new church. Many people dissented (dih-SEHNT-uhd), disagreeing with Anglican beliefs or practices. Some English people remained Catholic. Others were Protestants who wanted to reform the Anglican Church. The Protestants who wished to reform the Anglican Church were called Puritans. Some Puritans sought to set up their own churches and were known as Separatists.

The Separatists were persecuted (PUHR-sih-kyooht-uhd)—mistreated because of their beliefs—in England. Some fled to the Netherlands. There they found freedom to practice their religion but had difficulty finding work. They also worried that their children were losing their religious values and English way of life. To preserve their religious faith and English culture, some Separatists decided to move to America.

Skills Practice

Before you read challenging text, examine the illustrations, visuals, captions, headings, and key terms. What can you learn from them about the topic?

The Pilgrims Settle Plymouth

In 1620 a group of Separatists were able to get land grants from the Virginia Company. They received permission to settle in Virginia and to practice their religion freely. These Separatists became known as the Pilgrims. (A pilgrim is someone who undertakes a religious journey.) The Pilgrims boarded a ship called the Mayflower and set out for America to begin their new lives.

The Mayflower drifted off course on its journey across the Atlantic. The first land the Pilgrims sighted was Cape Cod, well north of their target. It was November, and winter was fast approaching. The colonists decided to drop anchor in Cape Cod Bay. They went ashore on a cold, bleak day in December at a place they called Plymouth. View the location of Plymouth on the map of the New England Colonies. New England was one of the first regions settled by those who set sail from England.

The Mayflower Compact

Plymouth was outside the territory of the Virginia Company and its laws. While they were still on board ship, the Pilgrims signed a document later called the Mayflower Compact. This document set up an organized, orderly government. Each signer promised to obey the laws passed “for the general good of the colony.” The Mayflower Compact was a key step in the development of representative, democratic government in America.
Native American Help

During their first winter in America, almost half the Pilgrims died. Illness, hunger, and cold took a terrible toll. In the spring, however, two Native Americans—Squanto and Samoset—befriended the colonists. They taught the Pilgrims to grow corn, beans, and pumpkins and showed the colonists where to hunt and fish. Without their help, the Pilgrims might not have survived.

Squanto and Samoset also helped the Pilgrims make peace with the Wampanoag people who lived in the area. For a time, the two groups lived together in harmony. In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims included their new Wampanoag friends in a feast of thanksgiving.