

Across the Atlantic

Read how European goals shaped early voyages to the Americas.

5.3a "Europeans traveled to the Americas in search of new trade routes, including a northwest passage, and resources. They hoped to gain wealth, power, and glory."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline phrases that tell why Europeans explored. In the margin, write 1 by evidence about routes, 2 by resources, 3 by wealth, 4 by power, and 5 by glory.

Why Europeans Set Sail

- ① In the late 1400s, European rulers and merchants wanted new ways to reach Asia. Overland trade routes could be long, costly, and controlled by other powers. Explorers sailed west across the Atlantic, hoping to find a sea route to Asian markets. Christopher Columbus, sailing for Spain in 1492, reached islands in the Caribbean instead of Asia. His voyage increased Spain's interest in lands across the ocean.
- ② European explorers also searched for a northwest passage, a hoped-for water route through or around North America to Asia. John Cabot sailed from England in 1497 and explored the coast of northeastern North America while looking for a route west. France later sent Jacques Cartier to explore the St. Lawrence River. These voyages did not find a passage to Asia, but they gave European countries information and claims to land. Indigenous peoples already lived on these lands and had their own societies.
- ③ Besides routes, explorers sought resources that could bring wealth. European leaders wanted gold, silver, valuable crops, and trade goods. Control of overseas lands could give rulers more resources and trade, increasing their power compared with rivals. Explorers and rulers hoped for glory, or fame and honor, from successful voyages and discoveries. These goals, wealth, power, and glory, helped drive European exploration of the Americas.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did European rulers and merchants want new routes to Asia?

2 What was the northwest passage that explorers hoped to find?

3 What did John Cabot explore, and what was he looking for?

4 How could control of overseas lands help a European country gain power?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine you advise a European ruler who is deciding whether to fund a voyage west. Write 3 sentences that name one route or resource the voyage might seek and explain how the voyage could bring wealth, power, or glory.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline phrases that tell why Europeans explored. In the margin, write 1 by evidence about routes, 2 by resources, 3 by wealth, 4 by power, and 5 by glory. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did European rulers and merchants want new routes to Asia?	Overland trade routes could be long, costly, and controlled by other powers.
2	What was the northwest passage that explorers hoped to find?	It was a hoped-for water route through or around North America to Asia.
3	What did John Cabot explore, and what was he looking for?	He explored the coast of northeastern North America while looking for a westward route to Asia.
4	How could control of overseas lands help a European country gain power?	It could give rulers more resources and trade, increasing their power compared with rivals.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Your ships could search for a water route to Asian markets. If they find valuable trade goods, our country could gain wealth. Claiming new overseas land could also give our ruler more power and glory.

Accept equivalent evidence-based answers to the questions. In Part 3, accept a realistic voyage plan that names a route or resource and clearly explains at least one of the goals, wealth, power, or glory.