

Routes Across Oceans

How motives, knowledge, and tools changed ocean travel

9.10a "Various motives, new knowledge, and technological innovations influenced exploration and the development of European transoceanic trade routes."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline motives for voyages. Circle knowledge or tools that supported travel. Mark E beside effects of the voyages.

Seeking New Sea Routes

- ① In the fifteenth century, European rulers and merchants sought profitable access to Asian goods such as spices and silk. They wanted alternatives to established routes and opportunities to gain wealth and political influence. Portuguese rulers also promoted Christianity. Voyages along Africa's Atlantic coast combined these motives with practical learning. Mariners recorded coastlines, ports, winds, and currents. They drew on knowledge and inventions developed across several societies, rather than creating every tool themselves.
- ② Compasses helped sailors keep a heading beyond sight of land. Instruments such as the mariner's astrolabe helped estimate latitude from the Sun or stars. Caravels combined useful sailing qualities with relatively small size. Navigators also learned to use Atlantic wind patterns. Returning from parts of the African coast could require sailing away from the coast into the Atlantic, then northward to winds carrying ships east toward Europe. Such routes varied by starting point and season. Equipment worked with experience; neither eliminated danger.
- ③ In 1492, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon supported Columbus's westward voyage in hopes of reaching Asia and gaining trade advantages. He reached inhabited Caribbean islands instead. Sustained European contact and colonization followed. Portuguese voyages around Africa reached the Indian Ocean. Ocean routes linked markets across continents, but expansion also brought conquest, forced labor, enslavement, and devastating disease to Indigenous communities. Explaining the voyages requires connecting motives, navigational knowledge, and technology with their far-reaching consequences.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What were three motives that encouraged Portuguese rulers and merchants to support exploration?

2 How did knowledge of winds and currents help Portuguese ships return to Europe from waters near West Africa?

3 Name two navigation tools or ship innovations in the passage. Explain how each one helped sailors.

4 How did Isabella and Ferdinand's support of Columbus connect a trade goal to a major historical result?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences recommending an ocean voyage to a European ruler in the fifteenth century. Include one motive, one specific piece of knowledge or innovation, and one likely result for trade routes.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline motives for voyages. Circle knowledge or tools that supported travel. Mark E beside effects of the voyages. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What were three motives that encouraged Portuguese rulers and merchants to support exploration?	They wanted direct access to Asian goods, wealth and influence, and opportunities to spread Christianity.
2	How did knowledge of winds and currents help Portuguese ships return to Europe from waters near West Africa?	Sailors could head away from the coast and then north to winds that carried ships east toward Europe; the route depended on their starting point and season.
3	Name two navigation tools or ship innovations in the passage. Explain how each one helped sailors.	The magnetic compass helped sailors keep a heading out of sight of land. The astrolabe helped sailors estimate latitude. Caravels could sail effectively in several wind conditions.
4	How did Isabella and Ferdinand's support of Columbus connect a trade goal to a major historical result?	They supported a westward voyage to reach Asia and gain trade advantages. Columbus reached Caribbean islands instead, beginning sustained contact between Europeans and peoples of the Americas.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A ruler could fund an Atlantic voyage to seek direct access to Asian goods. Captains could use a compass, an astrolabe, and knowledge of winds and currents to plan travel beyond sight of land. A successful voyage could create a more reliable sea route and connect trade networks.

Accept equivalent motives, tools, and cause-and-effect explanations that are supported by the passage. For the open response, look for all three required elements and a historically reasonable connection between them.