

Expansion, Exploration, and Encounters**Lesson 4**

Spain Builds an American Empire

Key Terms and People

Christopher Columbus Italian explorer, sailing for Spain, who landed in the Americas

colony land controlled by another nation

Hernando Cortés conquistador who defeated the Aztec Empire, conquering Mexico

conquistadors Spanish explorers who conquered the Americas in the 16th century

Francisco Pizarro conquistador who defeated the Incan Empire, conquering Peru

Atahualpa last Incan emperor, defeated and killed by the Spanish

mestizo person with mixed Spanish and Native American blood

encomienda system of mining and farming using natives as slave labor

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about China and Japan's development.

In this lesson, you will read about the Spanish and Portuguese exploration of the Americas.

As You Read

Use a timeline to trace the major events in the establishment of Spain's empire in the Americas.

THE VOYAGES OF COLUMBUS

How did the voyage of Columbus change the Americas?

In 1492, **Christopher Columbus**, an Italian sailor, led a voyage for Spain. He sailed west hoping to reach Asia. Instead, he landed in the Americas. Columbus thought that he had reached the East Indies in Asia. He misnamed the natives he met there, calling them Indians. He claimed the land for Spain. From then on, Spain began to create **colonies**. Colonies are lands controlled by another nation.

In 1500, a Portuguese explorer claimed Brazil. In 1501, Amerigo Vespucci explored the eastern coast of South America. He said that these lands were a new world. Soon after, a mapmaker showed the lands as a separate continent. He named them America after Vespucci.

Other voyages gave Europeans more knowledge about the world. Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa reached the Pacific Ocean. Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan sailed completely around the world.

Lesson 4, *continued*

1. Which voyages gave Europeans new knowledge of the world?

2. Give two examples of conquistadors and explain what they did.

**SPANISH CONQUESTS IN MEXICO;
SPANISH CONQUESTS IN PERU**
How did Spain build an empire?

Hernando Cortés was one of the Spanish **conquistadors**, or conquerors. In the 16th century, they began to explore the lands of the Americas. They were seeking great riches. In 1519, Cortés came to Mexico and defeated the powerful Aztec Empire led by Montezuma II.

About 15 years later, **Francisco Pizarro** led another Spanish force. It conquered the mighty Inca Empire of South America, led by **Atahualpa**, the last of the Incan emperors. Once again, the Spanish found gold and silver. By the mid-1500s, Spain had formed an American empire that stretched from modern-day Mexico to Peru.

The Spanish lived among the people they conquered. Spanish men married native women. Their children and descendants were called **mestizo**—people with mixed Spanish and Native American blood. The Spanish also formed large farms and mines that used natives as slave labor. This system was known as *encomienda*.

One large area of the Americas—Brazil—was the possession of Portugal. In the 1530s, colonists began to settle there. Colonists built huge farms called plantations to grow sugar, which was in demand in Europe.

SPAIN’S INFLUENCE EXPANDS
Where did Spain hope to gain more power?

Soon Spain began to want even more power in the Americas. It started to look at land that is now part of the United States. Explorers like Coronado led expeditions to the area. Catholic priests went along and converted some of the Native Americans.

3. What area did Coronado explore?

OPPOSITION TO SPANISH RULE
Who opposed Spanish rule?

As Spanish priests worked to convert the natives, they began to make some protests about their treatment. One thing they criticized was the *encomienda* system. A monk named Bartolomé de Las Casas and others successfully called for the end of the system.

Native Americans also resisted new or continued Spanish rule. One of the most serious rebellions occurred in New Mexico. A Pueblo leader named Popé led the effort. It involved about 17,000 warriors and drove the Spanish back into New Spain for 12 years.

4. What challenges to their power did the Spanish face?

Lesson 4, *continued*

As you read about the empire Spain built in the Americas, take notes to answer questions about the timeline below.

1492	Christopher Columbus sails westward from Spain, hoping to reach Asia.	→	1. What was the significance of Columbus's voyages?
1519	Ferdinand Magellan sets sail on a voyage that rounds the southern tip of South America.	↗	2. Magellan himself died in the Philippines. What was the importance of the voyage his crew completed?
1521	Hernando Cortés conquers the Aztec.	→	3. What factors helped the Spanish defeat the Aztec?
1533	Francisco Pizarro conquers the Inca Empire.	↗	4. How did the Spanish treat the peoples they conquered?
1540	Francisco Vásquez de Coronado explores the Southwest.	↗	5. What was unique about the Spanish colonization of the lands of New Mexico?
1542	Spain abolishes the <i>encomienda</i> system.	↗	6. What was the long-term consequence of this action?