

Exploring the Americas

Lesson 1 A Changing World

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do new ideas change the way people live?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *Where did the Renaissance take place?*
2. *What technological advancements paved the way for European voyages of exploration?*
3. *What were the most powerful empires in Africa?*

Terms to Know

Crusade one of a series of expeditions Europeans made to regain control of Christian holy sites in the Middle East from the A.D. 1000s to the 1200s

classical related to the culture of ancient Greece and Rome

Renaissance a reawakening of culture and intellectual curiosity in Europe from the 1300s to the 1600s

technology the use of scientific knowledge for practical purposes

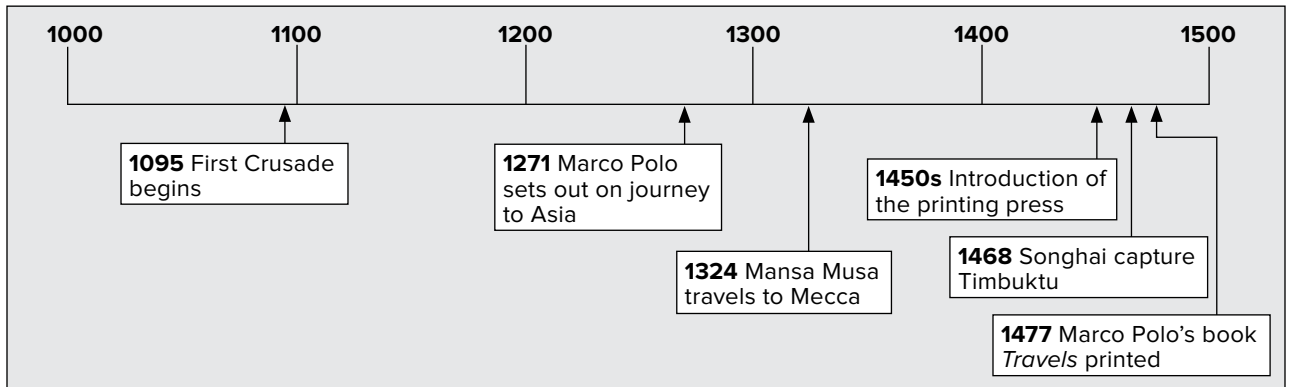
astrolabe an instrument used to plan a course, using the stars

compass an instrument that shows the direction of magnetic north

pilgrimage a journey to a holy place

mosque a Muslim house of worship

When did it happen?



What do you know?

In the first column, answer the questions based on what you know before you study. After this lesson, complete the last column.

Now...		Later...
	What church dominated Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire?	
	What countries in Europe became strong by the 1400s?	
	Which country developed the fastest ships during this period?	

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New Ideas, New Nations

The people of Western Europe were isolated for centuries after the Roman empire fell in A.D. 476. The area was dominated by the Catholic Church. In the early 600s, Islam began to spread across the Middle East and Africa. The rise of Islam led to the end of Europe's isolation.

In 1095 Europeans started the **Crusades**. These were expeditions to gain control of the Christian holy sites from Muslims in the Middle East. There, Europeans came in contact with Arab merchants. These merchants sold them spices, silks, and other goods from faraway China and India. Europeans became interested in Asia.

Interest in Asia grew after an explorer named Marco Polo returned from China. He wrote about his trip in a book called *Travels*. Many Europeans read the book.

Wealthy Europeans wanted silks and spices from Asia. Merchants bought these goods from Arab traders. They sent the goods by caravan to the Mediterranean Sea. They then sent them on to Italian cities like Pisa, Genoa, and Venice. These cities became centers of trade.

By the 1300s, trade with Asia had made Italian merchants wealthy. They became interested in science and in **classical** art and learning. Classical refers to the works of ancient Greece and Rome. This time of renewed interest in classical learning was known as the **Renaissance** (REH•nuh•SAHNTS). Over the next 200 years, it spread throughout Europe. It changed the way Europeans thought about the world. It promoted exploration and scientific discovery.

European merchants were interested in exploration. They wanted to find a way to buy goods directly from Asia. This would be less expensive than buying them from Arab merchants.

By the 1400s, strong kings and queens had come to power in several nations. They set up laws and national armies. They wanted to find ways to increase trade to make their countries richer. Soon, Spain, Portugal, England, and France were competing with the Italian cities which had become rich through trade. This competition encouraged a period of exploration.

Making Inferences

- How did the rise of Islam affect Western Europe during this period?

Reading Check

- What was the Renaissance?

Determining Cause and Effect

- Why were kings and queens interested in exploring trade with Asia?

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✓ Reading Check

4. What three things helped sailors figure out their location?

✎ Marking the Text

5. Underline the sentences that describe the advantages of the Portuguese caravel.

✓ Reading Check

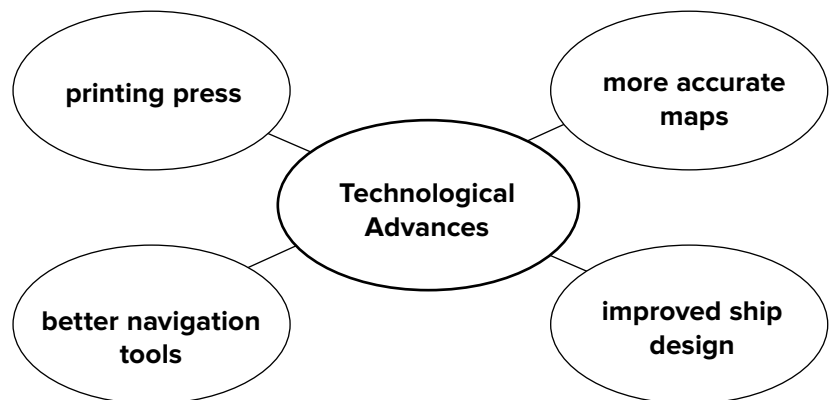
6. How did Islamic religion and culture come to West Africa?

The Effects of New Technology

Advances in **technology** helped pave the way for exploration. Technology is the use of scientific knowledge for practical purposes. The invention of the printing press in the 1450s made it possible for more people to read books and get information.

Mapmakers started to make better maps. They mapped the direction of the ocean currents. They also showed lines of latitude that measured the distance north and south of the Equator. The invention of new instruments helped sailors travel. The **astrolabe** measured the positions of stars. This helped sailors figure out their latitude while at sea. Europeans also began to use the magnetic **compass**, a Chinese invention. The compass helped sailors find their direction when they were far from land.

The design of ships also improved. Sailors were now able to make long ocean voyages. In the late 1400s, the Portuguese created the caravel. It had three masts and could sail into the wind. This ship sailed faster than other ships. It could carry more goods. All of these inventions helped start a new time of exploration. Countries like Portugal began searching for sea routes to Asia. Portugal started by sending ships south along the west coast of Africa.



Kingdoms and Empires in Africa

Between A.D. 400 and 1600, several powerful kingdoms prospered in Africa. They became powerful through mining and trade. Arab traders traveled along Africa’s east coast. West Africans traded with societies in North Africa. This trade brought wealth and Islamic religion and culture to West Africa. The Portuguese set up trading posts along the west coast of Africa in the mid-1400s.

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Ghana was a trading empire in West Africa. Caravans with gold and other goods from Ghana crossed the Sahara to North Africa. There, Muslim traders loaded the caravans with salt, cloth, and other goods to take back to Ghana. Ghana grew wealthy from the taxes it collected on this trade.

In 1076 people from North Africa attacked Ghana. Trade slowed down. New trade routes were set up that did not go through Ghana. Ghana then began to lose power.

Another powerful kingdom, called Mali, developed in the same region. Like Ghana, it developed trade routes across the desert to North Africa. Mali's greatest king was Mansa Musa. He made Mali famous. In 1324 Musa made a grand **pilgrimage** to the Muslim holy city of Mecca. A pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place. Musa returned to Mali with an Arab architect who built great **mosques** in Timbuktu, the Mali capital. Mosques are Muslim houses of worship. Timbuktu became an important center of Islamic learning.

In 1468 the Songhai (sawng • GEYE) people rose up against Mali rule and captured Timbuktu. Under Askiya Muhammad, the Songhai Empire became strong. Askiya divided Songhai into provinces. Each province had its own officials. He also set up laws for Songhai. These laws were based on Islamic teaching. In the late 1500s, Songhai was attacked and defeated by the kingdom of Morocco.

//////////////////// Glue Foldable here //////////////////////

Check for Understanding

What was the religion of the Mali and Songhai Empires?

What role did the Renaissance play in encouraging new technology and exploration?



- Place a one-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Draw a large circle on the tab and label it *A Changing World*. Draw two smaller circles inside the large circle. Label the small circles *Marco Polo* and *African Empires*. Use the space inside the circles to list words or short phrases that explain why both were important to the changing world. Use the reverse side to write additional information. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.