

# Morison on The Great Explorers

## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

### Chapter 1, Section 2

Directions: Read the information below. Then answer the questions that follow.

In his book *The Great Explorers*, the historian Samuel Eliot Morison focuses on the explorers whose discoveries initiated the great migration of European peoples to the Americas. He wrote:

What made them do it? I wish I knew. Was it mere adventure and glory, or lust for gold or . . . a zeal to enlarge the Kingdom of the Cross? . . . One quality all these mariners had in common with the ancient Greeks was restlessness.

Following are Morison's comments on six explorers.

#### Prince Henry, 1394-1460

[Prince Henry] set up a sort of information service where shipmasters might consult the latest charts and pick up useful data about wind and currents. This was no "naval academy" or "astronomical observatory" as some of Prince Henry's more enthusiastic biographers have maintained, but he did encourage the bolder navigators and reward new discoveries.

#### Dias, 1488

Dias had rounded the southernmost cape of Africa—the Cape of Good Hope as the King named it—and sailed well up the east coast, when the men mutinied and forced him to turn back. But he had discovered a sea route to India.

#### Cortés, 1521

Almost every group of European intruders into Africa and America felt that to cement an alliance with the nearest tribe of natives they must deploy fire power against next-door enemies. . . . Cortés marched on Mexico City against Montezuma with more native rebels than Spanish soldiers.

#### Magellan, 1519-1522

Magellan brought with him a well-painted globe showing the entire world, and thereon traced the course he proposed to take, save that the strait was purposely left blank so that nobody could anticipate him.

#### Verrazano, 1523

By 1523, when he had attained the age of thirty-eight, Verrazano had an impeccable maritime record, and as an Italian he appealed to the king [of France]. . . . Verrazano borrowed *La Dauphine*, a ship of the royal French navy, and reported to the French king; but the Florentine bankers of Lyons and Rouen supplied most of the funds. . . . One thing is certain;

*La Dauphine* was favored by extraordinarily good luck in weather. To sail along the coast from South Carolina to New York, in the turbulent spring of the year, and anchor off shore without mishap, is an exploit that any merchant captain under sail . . . might well envy.

#### Cartier, 1535

Now the Captain and his party climbed to the top of Mount Royal, where they were rewarded by a magnificent view—the Laurentians on the north, outspurs of the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks to the south, and the Great River flowing through the picture from west to east like a long band of silver. To his dismay, Cartier saw, just above the point where he had left the boats, a series of rapids which no boat bigger than a canoe could pass.

#### Mastering Facts

1. Which merchant captain sailed from South Carolina to New York?

2. Did Prince Henry set up an astronomical observatory? Explain.

3. Summarize the European approach to cementing alliances as demonstrated by Cortés.

#### Developing a Hypothesis

4. Why might Dias's crew have mutinied after sailing around the Cape of Good Hope?

#### Listing Consequences

5. Name two major consequences of exploring the Americas.