



Study Guide

Chapter 2, Section 4

For use with textbook pages 58–62

EXPLORING NORTH AMERICA

KEY TERMS

mercantilism	Economic theory stating that a nation’s power is based on its wealth (page 59)
Columbian Exchange	Exchange of plants, animals, and diseases between hemispheres (page 60)
Northwest Passage	A more direct water route to Asia through the Americas (page 60)
coureur de bois	Fur trappers; “runners of the woods” (page 62)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Where do people explore today? What are these people searching for? What do we learn from these explorations? How are today’s explorations different from the explorations of the 1500s and 1600s?

In the last section, you read about the fall of the Aztec and Inca Empires and the empire built by the Spanish in the Americas. This section focuses on how religion and economic rivalries influenced the exploration of North America.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about how religious differences affected the exploration of North America.

A Divided Church in Western Europe	
Catholic Church	Protestant Reformation
↓	
A Divided America	
Catholics Settled in	Protestants Settled in

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READ TO LEARN

- **A Divided Church** (pages 58–59)

For hundreds of years, European countries were connected by the Catholic Church. Most western European countries had been Catholic. In 1517 a German priest named Martin Luther disagreed with some of the practices of the Church. He and his followers left the Catholic Church to start their own Christian churches. The Protestant Reformation began, becoming an important historical and religious movement.

In France John Calvin agreed with Luther that good deeds would *not* lead to salvation. He believed that God had already chosen those who would be saved. In England, King Henry VIII left the Catholic Church because the pope would not agree that his first marriage was not a real one. The king, along with the English government, declared himself the head of the Church of England.

These religious differences started a rivalry in Western Europe as people and countries started dividing into two groups, Catholics and Protestants. When the Europeans came to the Americas, their religious differences came with them. The Spanish Catholics settled in the southwestern and southeastern regions of North America. The French Catholics settled in the northeastern regions. Both Spanish and French Catholics introduced Native Americans to Catholicism, the teachings of the Catholic Church. Dutch and English Protestants settled along the eastern coast, between the Spanish and French Catholics.

1. How did the Protestant Reformation affect early North America?

- **Economic Rivalry** (pages 59–62)

Wealthy countries are powerful countries according to the economic theory of *mercantilism*. Europeans watched Spain become wealthy from its colonies. Other European countries wanted to improve their fortunes as well. They believed that they could do this by developing trade and acquiring gold and silver. Countries were not the only ones trying to find wealth. Individual merchants were, too. Countries competed for territory, or land, in the Americas.

As explorers and traders from Europe, Asia, and Africa came into contact with Native Americans and each other, they exchanged plants, animals, and diseases. This exchange between two hemispheres is called the *Columbian Exchange*.

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Chapter 2, Section 4 (continued)

England, France, and the Netherlands wanted to find an easier, more direct route through the Americas to Asia. They hoped to discover a *Northwest Passage*. The Treaty of Tordesillas had divided all unknown land between Spain and Portugal, denying claims by other countries. Ignoring the treaty, England, France, and the Netherlands sent explorers to chart the coast of North America in the 1500s and 1600s.

The following explorers were sent to search for a northern route to Asia:

- A.** In 1497 England sent an Italian, John Cabot, who probably landed on what is now Newfoundland.
- B.** In 1524 France sent an Italian, Giovanni de Verrazano, who explored the coast from present-day Nova Scotia to the Carolinas.
- C.** In 1535 a French explorer, Jacques Cartier, sailed up the St. Lawrence River, hoping to get to the Pacific Ocean. He came to a mountain that he named Mont-Royal, the site of the city that is now Montreal, Quebec, in Canada.

In 1609 Henry Hudson was sent by the Dutch (Netherlands) to look for a passage through the Americas. He discovered what is now called the Hudson River in present-day New York. In 1610 England sent Hudson to explore again. He discovered a huge bay now called the Hudson Bay, which he thought was the Pacific Ocean. His crew rebelled, set him adrift in a small boat with his son, John, and a few sailors. They were never seen again.

France was too busy with political and religious problems of its own to be interested in building an empire in the Americas. The French, however, were interested in making money from fishing and fur trading in North America. Beaver pelts were valuable, and furs were popular in Europe. French traders and Native Americans made an agreement to trade fur. Trading posts were built in Quebec and other parts of Canada. The Native Americans and French trappers, or *coureurs de bois* (“runners of the woods”) trapped and brought their catches to the trading posts. In 1608 Samuel de Champlain was sent to establish a settlement in Quebec, where he discovered Lake Champlain. In the early 1600s, the Dutch set up trading posts along the Hudson River. They were located in what is now Albany, New York, and New York City, originally called New Amsterdam.

- 2.** What were European countries competing for in North America?
