



Summary

Events in American History: Columbus and the Age of Explorers describes explorations made by Columbus and other explorers including what they set out to find and the hardships they faced along the way. The book also includes historical maps and time period artwork as well as excerpts from Christopher Columbus' log.

Vocabulary		Comprehension Strategy	Genre Study	Text Features	
Christianity	Indies	Determining important supporting details, Using graphic features, Asking questions	Text structure: Description, Use of supporting details	table of contents	headings
colony	legend			illustrations	photographs
conquistador	mutiny			maps	timeline
continent	natives			captions	text boxes
geography	navigation			biographies	glossary
Great Plains	Vikings			index	

Standards: Social Studies

- Understands geographic, economic, and religious reasons that brought the first explorers and settlers to a state or region
- Knows about the European explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries, their reasons for exploring, the information gained from their journeys, and what happened as a result of their travels
- Knows how to interpret data presented in timelines
- Uses historical documents such as maps to interpret information

Kendall, J. S., & Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Content knowledge: A compendium of standards and benchmarks for K-12 education*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Online database: www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Discussion Prompts Prior to Independent Reading

Vocabulary Building and Background Knowledge:

Read the title as students look at the cover. Ask students to talk about what they observe on the cover and what they already know about Columbus and other explorers. Scaffold a discussion that builds on the background knowledge of students. Introduce students to the vocabulary words by having them look at the glossary on page 47.

Discussion questions:

- What does the word *geography* mean? Do you think *geography* affected exploration?
- Read all the glossary words. Which words could be used when describing people?

Genre Study and Text Features:

State that **Events in American History: Columbus and the Age of Explorers** is an informational text. Ask students to look at the table of contents to determine how the information is organized. Then highlight genre characteristics and text features that will support

students in reading the text.

Highlight prompts:

- Look at pages 8 and 9. The main text is on page nine. Skim the text boxes and captions. What type of information is given? Do you think this information is stated in the text as well? Look through the rest of the book. Do you see other text boxes? When should you read the information in the captions and text boxes?
- Before reading an informational book, it often helps to read some of the text features the author provides to build your background knowledge and to help you think of questions that will support your reading. On pages 44 and 45 this author gives mini-biographies about different explorers. Take a few minutes to read each biography and write down a few questions.

Reading the Book:

Have students read the book independently or with a partner.

Comprehension Questions

After students have completed reading **Events in American History: Columbus and the Age of Explorers** gather students together for a discussion based on the questions below or assign students to answer the questions independently or with a partner.

- Why do you think Columbus is the best known explorer of his time? How did Columbus view the world at the time of his death?
- This book has a variety of text features such as maps, illustrations, and photographs. Point out one of the text features and tell what information it gives or how it supported your understanding of the text.

BLM: Extension Activity

Students may complete the Venn diagram on the next page to compare Christopher Columbus to an explorer they select.



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EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Events in American History: Columbus and the Age of Explorers

Name: _____

Date: _____

Christopher Columbus Comparison

Directions: Use the Venn diagram to compare Christopher Columbus to one of the explorers listed on pages 44 and 45 of your book. Write the explorer's name that you choose on the line above the circle on the right.

