

FAMOUS EXPLORERS

Who are some famous explorers we should know?

- **Leif Ericsson**, born sometime around 1000 A.D.: Leif the Lucky was a Viking explorer who sailed to what may have been North America. He called it Vinland.
- **Marco Polo**, b. Venice 1254: He wrote *The Book of Marvels* about his travels. He described great cities in Asia. He described such riches as porcelain, coal, gunpowder, silk, and paper money.
- **Christopher Columbus**, b. 1451 Italy: He left Spain looking for a water route to India with three ships, Nina, Pinta, Santa Maria. In **1492** he landed in the Americas. He thought he had found a new route to India. He thought he had found a new route to India.



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- **Vasco da Gama**, b. Portugal 1469: He was the first European to sail from Europe to India by sea. He sailed around the Cape of Good Hope.
- **Ferdinand Magellan**, b. Portugal 1480: He was the first European to sail around the world. He sailed from Spain to the Philippines and back to Spain. He died in the Philippines but his ship, the Victoria, sailed around the world.
- **Hernando de Soto**, b. 1500 Spain: He left Spain looking for gold and jewels in the New Land. In 1541, he was the first European to see what we call the Mississippi River.
- **Juan Ponce de Leon**, b 1460: Left Spain looking for riches and a **Fountain of Youth**. He came to a "land of flowers" and named it La Florida, which he claimed for Spain.
- **Henry Hudson**, b. 1565 England: In his ship, the Half Moon, he sailed up the Hudson River in 1609 looking for a way to the Pacific. He also explored much of the Arctic Ocean.

- **Jacques Cartier**, b. 1491 France: Searching for a northwest passage to India, he discovered the **St. Lawrence River** and created French settlements in what is now Canada.



- **Robert Cavalier** b. 1643 France: He wanted to find a route across

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frontier and helped build the **Wilderness Road** to Kentucky in 1769.

- **Meriwether Lewis**, b. 1774 Virginia, and **William Clark**, b. 1770: In 1804, President Thomas Jefferson sent the Lewis and Clark expedition to the Louisiana Territory to learn about plants, animals, climate and geography as they searched for a waterway to the Pacific Ocean. Guided by Sacajawea, a Shoshone translator and peacemaker, they sailed up the Missouri River, rode over the Rocky Mountains, and sailed down the Columbia River to Oregon territory. They reached the Pacific in 1806.

- **Kit Carson**, b. 1809 Kentucky: He became a fur trapper and hunter in New Mexico. In 1845 he guided settlers to California.

- **Nat Palmer**, b. 1799: America's earliest Antarctic explorer.

- **Robert E. Peary**, b. 1856 and **Matthew Hensen**, b. 1866: They led the first expedition to the North Pole in 1909.
- **Roald Amundsen**, b. 1872 Norway: He used huskies to pull dogsleds and reached the South Pole on Dec. 14, 1911. He also flew over the North Pole in a blimp in 1926.
- **Jacques-Yves Cousteau**, b. 1910 France: He was an underwater explorer who invented the **aqualung** which supplied oxygen to divers. Captain of a research vessel, the Calypso, he explored the oceans and had a television show about the oceans.
- **Neil Armstrong**, b. 1930: First astronaut to **walk on the moon**, in 1969.



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- **Michael Collins**, b. 1930: The pilot of the Command Module for Apollo 11, he circled the moon while Armstrong and Aldrin explored it.

