



Sample — *TruthQuest History: American History for Young Students I (Exploration-1800)*

Enjoy this sample! How does it work? *Easily! Naturally!* Just as you discuss life with your kids as an innate part of parenting, simply gather on the couch and together read aloud the commentary which begins each lesson. It won't ask kids to “passively” accept a worldview “download;” rather, the commentary's subtle hints at biblical principles will have them “actively” hunting for truth—little by little, lesson by lesson. By the end of each guide, the lightbulb will be full-on! The kids *will* absorb innumerable brain-facts; but more importantly, they'll develop spiritual eyes to seek God's powerful truths at work in history. This will show convincing proof that He is, and always has been, real *and* right! They will no longer think (as we were taught) of “history” as merely human names and dates (utterly devoid of culture-healing power), but will instead relish the engaging, eternal, worthwhile, inspiring, life-changing, unforgettable heart-story of God and mankind!

After the commentary has been read and discussed, each child is ready to dig into the historical event/personage being studied by enjoying a great book for their age level (from our lists here, or whatever resources are at your library). Thanks to your “priming” time in the commentary, they can probe almost any book and find surpassing lessons. Alternatively, you may wish to read aloud a single book for all to enjoy. Too, Dad can launch a great historical-fiction read-aloud at evening time—the older book gems are especially thrilling adventures—for everyone's enjoyment and his participation in the kids' learning/thinking/believing. (*Starred books were in-print at time of writing, but the older the book, the better, usually.)

Some lessons include a (strategically-placed) *ThinkWrite* exercise, deepening spiritual insights through writing. Most lessons have them simply talk, read, and think...for these require time, peace, and relationship. Because “out of the heart the mouth speaks,” you'll hear their learning bubble up in conversation, play, etc. Hands-on activity resources are cited at many junctures. Feel free to use them, or not, as desired. You may also enjoy the companion notebooks/lapbooks/timelines created for *TruthQuest History* by AJTL, but all are optional. Walking and talking together, reading God's word: this is how Jesus taught the disciples the most important truths of all times, and enabled them to turn the world upside down. That's good enough for us! He created families as the place for teaching the young, and He authored the ultimate Book. So, family discussions and riveting reading are the heart of the matter!

1. Journey!

You and your children are about to embark on a fascinating journey! America's story is so miraculous and so personal! To know that God had a hand in the forming of this nation gives us all—young and old—a special reason for loving America, learning about her, and caring what happens. And as with the study of all history, so many aspects of God's

wonderful character and blessed principles are revealed. This guide is designed for the youngest students, so we will keep things light, but your children *will* glean meaningful insights.

This study will provide your family with a unique opportunity to enjoy some of the very best children's literature ever written! You can't help but have fun. Well, actually you can. Especially with your littlest students, a worried parent who tries to make this endeavor "just like what I did when I was in school" will squeeze the life and joy out of it for herself and her children.

So, here is how you do *TruthQuest History*: gather your young'uns and snuggle on the couch. Begin by reading aloud the commentary that heads the first section, and then enjoy a couple of the many yummy books recommended for further exploration of that topic! When you're done with the first topic, go on to the next! It's that simple. You will need to read aloud to your pre-readers, but you may want your older children to enjoy the books on their own. Just be certain to read aloud the commentary which begins each new section.

You must avoid one temptation—to read every book on every list. Your goal should be twofold: to provide your children with their first sense of God's hand in history, and to create a lifelong interest in America's story and in wonderful literature. Your goal should *not* be that your students recall every fact about every explorer and battle.

Instead, allow your children to 'feed' on wonderful books, talk about the principles illuminated in this guide, and let the ideas percolate in their minds. Soon they will be *telling you* about them (Charlotte Mason's *narration*) and pretending with their siblings that their three beds are Columbus's ships far out at sea! Leave time for that. Don't make history a dull grind. Let them find the joy of God's involvement in this world! They can have fun, if you'd like, making a notebook or a timeline. They can dress up and do skits! Learning about God is so much fun! What a precious gift!

2. Discover the Discovery!

Let's begin with the discovery of America! Right away, we find something interesting: Leif Ericson bumped into North America around AD 1000. Some folks think a guy or two did the same even sooner, but nothing much came of it. No one moved here. Life didn't change for the native people. Hmmmm.

Then, all of a sudden, Christopher Columbus ran smack into this big chunk of land while seeking China in 1492, almost five hundred years *after* Leif first set foot here, and soon the place was swarming with explorers! It makes me wonder if there was a certain time when the Lord 'lifted the curtain' on this continent, for we know God is the Maker of this world, and Whoever made it, is master of it. A sparrow, the Bible says, doesn't fall without Him noticing, so you can bet that whole continents aren't stumbled onto unless He is involved. And since He is a good God, we can know His plans are for good! Yeah!

As we said, there were already people living here; we will meet them a bit later. But let's first look at the wave of exploration that would change their lives, and also the lives of the tired, suffering folks on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, in Europe (home to all these explorers), which became the 'Old World' once this 'New World' was discovered. When you get older, you will learn that many important things were happening in Europe at the very same time the curtain was lifting on America. *One thing is certain, the Lord has His hand on every person and every place...so He had a plan for the land and people that would become America!*

There are several explorers to 'explore' here, so you parents can decide how many you'd like to meet. This *TruthQuest History* guide (since it is for youngsters) focuses only on those who keyed into American discovery. (Do *ThinkWrite 1* as you study explorers.) All American children should get to know Leif Ericson and Christopher Columbus, but you needn't cover *all* the others. You may choose to highlight a couple, or focus on those who explored your area. Indeed, it can confuse young children to work through a long list of various explorers, so take that into account. The goal is for the children to see the explorers' sacrifices, endurance, mistakes, contributions, etc.

ThinkWrite 1:

"Lifting the curtain..."

A wonderful way to deepen learning is to write about your reading. It helps us think more profoundly. Children who are old enough can be asked to write about how God seems to have "lifted the curtain" on the New World. Or, you may want your child to write a fictional diary, as if they were an explorer. Younger children can draw pictures, do a play, or possibly make a map. Be creative and have fun.

We mention here the "mistakes" of the explorers, many of which hurt the native inhabitants. This wrongdoing is grievous, but it is also complicated, especially in light of the modern world's treatment of the subject now, so it is dealt with more extensively in the *TruthQuest History: Age of Revolution I* guide covering the same period for older students. Parents, you must carefully discern the underlying worldview in modern children's books about Columbus and other explorers, which can often be strongly anti-Christian, as if it were Christianity which caused abuse, not the ignoring of Christian principles! Also, such books usually idealize the lives and religions of native inhabitants, which is the secular philosophy of the "noble savage." Please be careful! (Parents, if you'd like an example of the need to discern an author's worldview, check: *Encounter*, by Jane Yolen.)

Anyway, you can learn about these explorers in two different ways. You can discerningly enjoy books that cover the whole history of early American discovery (Section 2a). Or, you may choose to read the special biographies and delightful stories that focus on specific explorers, listed individually (the remaining items in Section 2). It is not necessary to do both, but I think you'd enjoy books of both types. Remember, you don't need to locate the same books as those listed here, but I do try to mention special ones in case they *are* on your library's shelves. But use whatever is available to you on these topics; this should not be a source of stress. Your library probably has oodles of good books because once America had been *really* discovered, the race was on! European nations were *hurrying* to send explorers who would 'claim' sections of the New World! Let's dig into some good books now (see below)!

2a General history of American discovery

- **Child's History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 47, 59, 60 Gr. 1-4
- America Begins*, by Alice Dalgliesh Gr. 1-5
- And There Was America*, by Roger Duvoisin Gr. 1-5
This is *so* wonderful, but is very rare.
- **Discovery of the Americas*, by Betsy & Giulio Maestro Gr. 2-5
A beautiful book, but these authors sometimes have a subtle anti-settler undertone.
- **History News: Explorers*, by Michael Johnstone Gr. 2-5
Zany 'newspaper reports' cover entire history of discovery. If you use this just-for-fun resource, you need focus only on the 'articles' pertaining to this time period.
- **Land Ho!* by Nancy Winslow Parker Gr. 2-5
- **Explorers in a New World*, by Edith McCall (Frontiers of America) Gr. 2-6
- First Book of New World Explorers*, by Louise Dickinson Rich (First Books) Gr. 3-6
- **Great Atlas of Discovery*, by Neil Grant Gr. 4-9
Use 'Table of Contents' to focus on pertinent topics.

Remember! The asterisk before a book title does *not* mean it's a favorite! Rather, it means the book was deemed as in-print at the time of this writing. Some newer books are unfamiliar to me, but folks were asking for more recent book references. Please use caution, as always.

2b Activities

- **Exploration of North America Coloring Book*, by Dover Various

2c Leif Ericson (c. AD 1000)

- **Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. IV-V Gr. 3-7
- **This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 1 Gr. 3-8

- **Leif the Lucky*, by Ingri & Edgar d'Aulaire Gr. K-3
What a fabulous book! Take note of Leif's character qualities, and the change which Christianity eventually makes in his beliefs.

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| <i>Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky</i> , by Barbara Schiller | Gr. K-3 |
| * <i>Child's History of the World</i> , by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 47 | Gr. 1-4 |
| * <i>Leif's Saga</i> , by Jonathan Hunt Gorgeous illustrations! | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>Leif the Lucky: Discoverer of America</i> , by Erick Berry (Garrard Discovery) | Gr. 1-5 |
| <i>Leif Ericson, Explorer</i> , by Ruth Weir (Makers of America) | Gr. 2-6 |
| <i>Story of Leif Ericson</i> , by William O. Steele (Signature) | Gr. 3-8 |
| <i>The Viking Explorers</i> , by Walter Buehr | Gr. 3-8 |
| * <i>The Vikings</i> , by Elizabeth Janeway (Landmark) | Gr. 4-8 |

Fiction/Historical Fiction

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| <i>Viking Adventure</i> , by Clyde Robert Bulla Don't miss this charming, exciting story of a Viking boy and his explorations! | Gr. 1-6 |
| <i>Door to the North</i> , by Elizabeth Coatsworth (Land of the Free) A story of the Vikings in North America. | Gr. 4-12 |

2d Christopher Columbus made his great discovery in 1492

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| * <i>Light and the Glory for Children</i> , by Marshall & Manuel, Ch. 1-2 | Gr. 1-5 |
| * <i>Story of the Thirteen Colonies</i> , by H.A. Guerber, Ch. VI-XIV | Gr. 3-7 |
| * <i>This Country of Ours</i> , by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 2-4 | Gr. 3-8 |

(Parents educating themselves as they follow along may wish to read one or more of the following books, which we will incrementally cite throughout: **Basic History of the United States: Volume 1*, by Clarence Carson, Ch. 1-2; **The Light and the Glory*, by Marshall & Manuel, Ch. 1 & 2; and/or **The Story of Liberty*, by Coffin, Ch. I-VI. We will later cite the sequels.)

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| * <i>Picture Book of Christopher Columbus</i> , by David Adler | Gr. K-2 |
| * <i>Columbus</i> , by Ingri & Edgar d'Aulaire You will love this book! | Gr. K-3 |
| * <i>In 1492</i> , by Jean Marzollo | Gr. K-3 |
| * <i>Meet Christopher Columbus</i> , by James DeKay (Step-Up Books) | Gr. K-3 |

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| * <i>Follow the Dream: Christopher Columbus</i> , by Peter Sis | Gr. 1-3 |
| * <i>Child's History of the World</i> , by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 59 | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>Columbus Day</i> , by Paul Showers (Crowell Holiday book) | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>Columbus Story</i> , by Alice Dalgliesh | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>I, Columbus</i> , by Lisl Weil | Gr. 1-4 |
| * <i>Log of Christopher Columbus</i> , by Columbus, edited by Steve Lowe Very easy adaptation of Columbus's own log. | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>The Value of Curiosity: Columbus</i> , by Spencer Johnson (ValueTales) | Gr. 1-4 |
| <i>Christopher Columbus</i> , by M. Kaufman (Garrard World Explorer) | Gr. 1-5 |
| <i>The Egg of Columbus</i> , by Cyriel Verleyen (Tales from History) | Gr. 2-4 |
| <i>Christopher Columbus</i> , by Piero Ventura | Gr. 2-5 |
| <i>Columbus: Finder of the New World</i> , by Ronald Syme | Gr. 2-5 |
| <i>1492: Year of Columbus</i> , by Genevieve Foster Details the key events of that year, including accomplishments of Columbus. | Gr. 2-6 |
| <i>Christopher Columbus: Sailor and Dreamer</i> , by Bernadine Bailey (Piper) | Gr. 2-6 |
| * <i>Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus?</i> by Jean Fritz | Gr. 2-6 |
| <i>Christopher Columbus, Discoverer</i> , by A. Graham (Makers of America) | Gr. 3-7 |
| <i>I, Columbus</i> , by Peter & Connie Roop Easy adaptation of Columbus's own journal. | Gr. 3-8 |
| <i>Story of Christopher Columbus</i> , by Nina Brown Baker (Signature) | Gr. 3-8 |
| * <i>Voyages of Christopher Columbus</i> , edited by John Clare (Living History) This interesting series shows costumed re-enactors. | Gr. 3-8 |
| <i>Voyages of Christopher Columbus</i> , by Armstrong Sperry (Landmark) | Gr. 3-8 |
| <i>Christopher Columbus and His Brothers</i> , by Amy Hogeboom | Gr. 3-10 |
| * <i>World of Columbus and Sons</i> , by Genevieve Foster This book looks not only at the life of Columbus, but also at other key people and events of his day, almost all of them European. Some folks enjoy these books a | Gr. 4-9 |

great deal; others feel they ‘steal the thunder’ of their later studies when they want to probe into the various individual people and events. It’s your call!

**Christopher Columbus*, by Janet & Geoff Benge (Heroes of History) Gr. 4-12
This is from a distinctly Christian biography series formerly called ‘Christian Heroes.’

Columbus and the New World, by A. Derleth (Vision) Gr. 4-12

**Christopher Columbus: How He Did It*, by Charlotte & David Yue Gr. 5-12
This book is not a biography of Columbus; it explains his navigational feats and how he operated the ships. This one’s for a budding sailor.

Quest of Columbus, by Robert Meredith & E. Brooks Smith Gr. 5-12
An edited version of the journal of Columbus’s son.

☞ *Jean Fritz has written a related book, “The World in 1492,” but it has an anti-Christian bias, in my opinion.*

Fiction/Historical Fiction

Noko, Captive of Columbus, by Wilma Pitchford Hays Gr. 1-4
Based on actual diaries; the son of an Indian chief was taken captive.

I Discover Columbus, by Robert Lawson Gr. 3-9
Columbus’s parrot reveals that *he* was the brain behind the operation! Funny!

**He Went with Columbus*, by Louise Kent Gr. 4-12
This has just been reprinted.

Audio/Video

**Christopher Columbus*, a wholesome old film starring Frederic March

**Your Story Hour, Volume 6*

2e Amerigo Vespucci—America is named for an explorer

Do you wonder how America was named? Good question! ‘Amerigo’ was actually the first name of an explorer—Amerigo Vespucci—who explored South America. His friend, a mapmaker, wrote his name on this general area...and the name stuck! Since he didn’t explore the land in our nation, we won’t cover him deeply.

**Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XV Gr. 3-7

**This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 5 Gr. 3-8

2f John Cabot got a foothold for the English in North America (1497)

- *This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 6 Gr. 3-8
(Parents: *The Story of Liberty*, by Coffin, Ch. VII)

John Cabot and Son, by David Goodnough Gr. 1-4
**Child's History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 60 Gr. 1-4
John Cabot and His Son, Sebastian, by Ronald Syme Gr. 2-5
**John Cabot*, by Tanya Larkin (Famous Explorers) Gr. 3-6
**(Tell Me About) John Cabot*, by John Malam Unknown
**Cabot*, by Robin Doak (Exploring the World) Unknown
**Travels of John and Sebastian Cabot*, by Joanne Mattern (Explorers...) Unknown

2g Ponce de Leon discovered Florida (1513) giving Spain an American foothold

- *Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XVI Gr. 3-7

Ponce de Leon, by Wyatt Blassingame (Garrard World Explorer) Gr. 1-5
**Ponce de León*, by Trish Kline Gr. 2-4
Juan Ponce de Leon: First in the Land, by Bernadine Bailey (Piper) Gr. 2-7
Juan Ponce de Leon, by Nina Brown Baker Gr. 2-7
**Juan Ponce de León*, by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers) Gr. 3-6
**Ponce de Leon*, by Ann Heinrichs (Exploring the World) Unknown
**Travels of Juan Ponce de Leon*, by Deborah Crisfield (Explorers and...) Unknown

2h Hernando de Soto used Florida as a starting point to explore the southeastern portion of America and find the Mississippi River, claiming all for Spain (1541)

- Hernando de Soto*, by Elizabeth Montgomery (Garr. World Explorer) Gr. 1-5
De Soto: Finder of the Mississippi, by Ronald Syme Gr. 2-5

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| * <i>Hernando De Soto</i> , by Tanya Larkin (Famous Explorers) | Gr. 3-6 |
| <i>De Soto: Child of the Sun</i> , by William O. Steele | Gr. 3-9 |
| <i>Exploring the Great River</i> , by R. Meredith & E. Brooks Smith, Sect. 1 | Gr. 3-9 |
| * <i>De Soto</i> , by Ann Heinrichs (Exploring the World) | Unknown |
| * <i>Hernando De Soto</i> , by Jim Whiting | Unknown |
| * <i>Hernando De Soto: A Search for Gold and Glory</i> , by Faye Gibbons | Unknown |

2i Balboa did not set foot into what is now America, but children may want to meet the European man who first sighted the Pacific Ocean (1513)

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| <i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa</i> , by F. Knoop (Garrard World Explorer) | Gr. 1-5 |
| <i>Balboa: Finder of the Pacific</i> , by Ronald Syme | Gr. 2-5 |
| <i>Balboa</i> , by Felix Riesenbergr (Landmark) | Gr. 3-9 |
| <i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa</i> , by Emma Gelders Sterne | Gr. 4-10 |
| <i>Balboa: Discover of the Pacific</i> , by Jeannette Mirsky | Gr. 5-12 |
| * <i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa...</i> , by Hal Marcowitz | Unknown |

2j Francisco de Coronado

Since the Spanish already held Mexico, Spanish explorers pressed from there up into what is now the Great Southwest of the United States. The Mexican Indians spoke of the Seven Cities of Gold. It was only a fable, but men like Coronado (1540-1542) searched the Southwest for them. Few people think about this early exploration of America; indeed, Santa Fe, New Mexico was a military outpost in 1605, two years before Jamestown! Spanish priests would later build Catholic missions; we'll cover them later.

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| * <i>Story of the Thirteen Colonies</i> , by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XIX-XX This talks about the Santa Fe area. | Gr. 3-7 |
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| <i>Francisco Coronado</i> , by Faith Knoop (Garrard World Explorer) | Gr. 1-5 |
| * <i>Francisco Vasquez De Coronado</i> , by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers) | Gr. 3-6 |
| <i>Spanish Conquistadores in North America</i> , by Walter Buehr, Ch. 7 | Gr. 3-9 |

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| <i>Coronado and His Captains</i> , by Camilla Campbell | Gr. 4-8 |
| <i>Francisco Coronado and the Seven Cities of Gold</i> , by Ronald Syme | Gr. 4-12 |
| * <i>Coronado</i> , by Robin Doak (Exploring the World) | Unknown |
| * <i>Travels of Francisco de Coronado</i> , by Deborah Heinrichs (Explorers...) | Unknown |

Fiction/Historical Fiction

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| <i>Conquista!</i> by Clyde Robert Bulla An Indian boy sees a horse which escaped from Coronado's party. | Gr. 2-6 |
| <i>The King's Fifth</i> , by Scott O'Dell I'm rather nervous about including this (I don't know its tone) especially when the students are just beginning their study of history. It may be too overwhelming as it discusses the treatment of the Indians in the hunt for gold. | Gr. 5-12 |

2k French explorers

You should also know that French explorers, such as Cartier and Champlain, were probing the area that would become Canada; they did sometimes touch on land that would be America. (Even before these explorers, though, the French had been crossing the Atlantic Ocean to fish the rich cod banks near the Gulf of St. Lawrence.) But the French explorers went deep inland, and when their hopes of finding gold and diamonds were squashed, they eventually developed a very rich fur trade. You can read about Cartier and Champlain if you'd like, but their history is mostly tied with Canada's history. Feel free to see what your library has on the topic. (We will cite one of the 'spine' book some families are following, though.)

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| * <i>Story of the World: Vol. 3</i> , by Susan Wise Bauer, Ch. 4a Some families enjoy this book's scope, and ask us to cite it; others concerned about worldview; so, parental decision. | Gr. 3-6 |
| * <i>Story of the Thirteen Colonies</i> , by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XVIII | Gr. 3-7 |

2l Henry Hudson

Let's jump a bit in time to mention an English explorer, Henry Hudson, who travelled around the area that would be New York State and who found the Hudson River (1609); his explorations furthered England's hold on the main land of America.

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| * <i>Story of the World: Vol. 3</i> , by Susan Wise Bauer, Ch. 4b Some families enjoy this book's scope, and ask us to cite it; others concerned about worldview; so, parental decision. | Gr. 3-6 |
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| * <i>Story of the Thirteen Colonies</i> , by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XXVII | Gr. 3-7 |
| (Parents: * <i>The Story of Liberty</i> , by Coffin, Ch. XXX) | |
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| <i>Henry Hudson</i> , by Carl Carmer (Garrard Discovery) | Gr. 1-5 |
| * <i>Henry Hudson</i> , by Trish Kline | Gr. 2-4 |
| <i>Henry Hudson: Explorer of the North</i> , by Dorothea Snowe (Piper) | Gr. 2-7 |
| This older series is wonderfully readable! | |
| * <i>Henry Hudson</i> , by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers) | Gr. 3-6 |
| <i>Henry Hudson</i> , by Ronald Syme | Gr. 3-7 |
| Syme's biographies are usually immensely adventurous! | |
| <i>Story of Henry Hudson</i> , by Eric Weiner (Dell Yearling) | Gr. 3-7 |
| <i>The Voyages of Henry Hudson</i> , by Eugene Rachlis (Landmark) | Gr. 3-8 |
| * <i>Beyond the Sea of Ice: The Voyages of Henry Hudson</i> , by Joan Goodman | Gr. 4-9 |
| I've not seen this new book. | |
| * <i>Hudson</i> , by Robin Doak (Exploring the World) | Unknown |
| * <i>Travels of Henry Hudson</i> , by Joanne Mattern (Explorers and...) | Unknown |
| * <i>Voyage of the <u>Half Moon</u></i> , by Tracey West (Stories of the States) | Unknown |

2m Summary

Think back on what you've learned about these explorers! If you made a map, look at it! What do you notice? The French mostly held the northern area of Canada (they would later move down from Canada into the Great Lakes area). The Spanish held the southern areas of Florida and the lands close to Spanish Mexico. And the English had the land in the middle (at least along the Atlantic Coast), the land that would mostly become early America. Do you see? It was like a sandwich! Three distinct layers! Do you get the picture? You may be interested, then, in this: while things were *very far* from perfect in England, at least England had a little more religious and political freedom than either France or Spain, and that is *very, very, very* important! HmMMMM.

At this point, the explorers were tramping around what was to become America. They came and went; none settled down. Their stories, though, would spread across Europe. There, people strangled by religious, political, and economic misery came to think of life in the New World as a great hope. And many would come. This

would mightily change life for the people already living in the New World, the Native Americans of many tribes. Because we cannot fully grasp those changes until we see the waves of colonists which would soon come, we will meet these Indians after we've seen the settlement begins. Please note that the Indians are important in their own right, but we want to see them in the context of the changing world in which they were living at the time, so we'll explore their cultures in an upcoming section.

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