


EXPLORING THE AMERICAS

CHAPTER 2

The background of the slide is a quilted border with a red and white checkered outer edge and a blue inner band containing white stars.

SPAIN IN AMERICA

LESSON 2

CONTENT VOCABULARY

1. conquistador— Spanish explorer
2. immunity— resistance
3. pueblo— a town center of trade in Spanish America
4. mission— a Spanish community for the religious conversion and training of Native Americans
5. presidio— a fort in Spanish America
6. plantation— a large farm

EUROPEAN EXPLORERS AND CONQUERORS

- When Spanish explorers reached the Americas, natives told tales of gold, silver, and wealthy kingdoms.
- Spanish rulers encouraged these **conquistadors**, giving them the right to explore and create settlements in the Americas in return for one-fifth of whatever treasure they found.

EUROPEAN EXPLORERS AND CONQUERORS

- Although most of these tales were not true, there were two exceptions: the **Aztec** and the **Inca**.
- In 1519, **Hernán Cortés** landed on the east coast of present-day Mexico, and within two years, had conquered the Aztec empire, earning much gold and riches for Spain and himself.
- Encouraged by Cortés' success, twelve years later, **Francisco Pizarro** led an army into the Incan capital in Cuzco, Peru. The Spanish captured and executed the Incan leader. Without their leader, the Inca couldn't fight effectively, and Pizarro soon controlled their empire.

EUROPEAN EXPLORERS AND CONQUERORS

But, how did the small Spanish forces conquer such vast empires so quickly?

EUROPEAN EXPLORERS AND CONQUERORS

- The Spanish had guns and cannon, weapons the Aztec and Inca had never seen before.
- They also had horses and ferocious dogs.
- To the Native Americans, the Spanish seemed like gods.

“their weapons clashed and rattled... They terrified everyone who saw them.”

—an Aztec soldier, recalling the fear they spread

- With no immunity to European diseases, many were wiped out by sickness, which weakened their ability to successfully fight the Spanish invaders.

STOP & CHECK

- How were the Spanish able to defeat Native American empires?

SPAIN IN FLORIDA

- Some conquistadors weren't as successful as Cortés and Pizarro.
- In 1513, **Juan Ponce de León** landed in Florida. He claimed the land for Spain and named it because of the wildflowers and plants he saw.
- According to legend, he wasn't only searching for gold, he sought the fountain of youth, which was said to "make old men young again"
- King Ferdinand of Spain appointed him governor of Florida and asked him to set up a colony there.
- Ponce de León returned to Florida in 1521 to establish a settlement but was attacked by local Native Americans. Many Spaniards were killed, including Ponce de León (who was gravely wounded and died a few days later).

SPAIN IN FLORIDA

- Encouraged by Spain's success in the new world, France decided that if they could control Florida, they could capture the Spanish riches coming from Central America.
- In 1562, Jean Ribault sailed to the St. Johns River, building a stone monument, a settlement, and a fort, Fort Caroline, to protect France's claim.
- Obviously, Spain wasn't thrilled about this and, in 1565, the king sent Pedro Menéndez de Avilés to found a settlement and drive out the French. He founded St. Augustine (which was the first permanent European settlement in the United States). Ribault sent ships to attack St. Augustine, but most were destroyed by a hurricane. The Spanish killed the survivors and sent forces to capture Ft. Caroline. This victory ended France's attempt to control Florida.

STOP & CHECK

- How did the Spanish respond to the French presence in Florida?

EXPLORING THE SOUTHWEST

- Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, a Spanish explorer to Florida fled an Apalachee attack by sailing west across the Gulf of Mexico. He and others landed near Texas and lived among the Native Americans for a while before setting off for Mexico. When he reached Mexico, he shared stories he had heard from the natives about the “Seven Cities of Cibola”
- Inspired by Cabeza de Vaca, Hernando de Soto set off through what is now the Southeastern US. After crossing the Mississippi River and reaching Oklahoma, de Soto died of fever.
- Francisco Vázquez de Coronado also went looking for the “Seven Cities of Cibola,” traveling through Mexico and present-day Arizona and New Mexico. He traveled as far as Kansas, realizing there was no gold, only “windswept plains” and “shaggy cows.”

SPANISH SETTLEMENTS

- There were three kinds of Spanish settlements in the Americas:
 - **Pueblos** were centers of trade
 - **Missions** were religious communities that usually included a small town, farmland, and a church.
 - **Presidios** were forts near a mission
- A class system also developed in the Americas
 - At the top were peninsulares, or people who were born in Spain. They owned the land, served in the church, and ran the local government.
 - Below them were creoles, who were born in the Americas to Spanish parents.
 - Next down were the mestizos who had Spanish and Native American parents.
 - Next were the Native Americans
 - Last were the enslaved Africans
- Spain gave the conquistadors the power to demand taxes and labor from the Native Americans, which basically turned them into slaves. Many died of malnutrition and disease.

SPANISH SETTLEMENTS

- A Spanish priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas, condemned the cruel treatment of the Native Americans. He pleaded for laws to protect them. He helped convince the Spanish to pass New Laws in 1542, making it illegal to enslave Native Americans.

"[T]he Spaniards still do nothing save tear the natives to shreds, murder them and inflict upon them the untold misery, suffering and distress, tormenting, harrying and persecuting them mercilessly. ...When the Spanish first journeyed there, the ...population of the island of Hispaniola stood some three million; today only two hundred survive."

-from A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies, by Bartolomé de Las Casas

SETTLING THE SOUTHWEST

- In the 1600s, England, France, and the Netherlands began sending colonists to North America.
- To protect their well-established interests, Spain settled New Mexico, establishing Sante Fe in 1609/1610.
- When the French claimed the mouth of the Mississippi River, the Spanish settled Texas, establishing San Antonio in the early 1700s. The Spanish wanted to control the land between the French territory and Mexico.

STOP & CHECK

1. Which conquistadors overthrew the Aztec and the Inca?
2. Why was 1513 a significant year in the history of Florida?
3. What effect did Spanish settlements have on Native Americans?