Mr. Hartong
World History
Exploration Unit
Causes of the Age of Exploration Notes

Name__________________________________
Period_______

Objectives: 1. Select examples of improvements in transportation, communication, and technology and explain how they have facilitated cultural diffusion among peoples around the world. 2. Explain why individuals, governments, and businesses must analyze costs and benefits when making economic decisions.

Click on this slideshow to take notes below.

The Age of Exploration 1400 – 1700 – What Caused This European Movement?

Don't Forget How We Got To This Point!

The Renaissance "rebirth" of critical thinking allowed merchants to question ways of trade and travel.

- How can I get there faster/cheaper?
- How can I get there more safely?

1. Basic economics – countries would have completed a cost-benefit analysis to determine the most profitable way to trade. Here is one from the perspective of the Portuguese and Spanish, who are the first to begin searching for new trade routes to Asia:

New Exploration Plans vs. The Old Traditional Plan

Routes	Costs	Benefits
1. Med. Sea/Silk Route (the traditional way)	ease of trade = not easy at all across land(mts.) walking or riding and can't carry much product distance = approx. 6k miles time = at least a year trade opportunity = have to pay taxes to Muslims and Italians who already controlled trade routes	ease of trade = the route already exists and food and water can be found at stops along the way
2. South around Africa (Portugal's plan)	ease of trade = ship & crew training & illnesses (of da Gama's 170 men only 54 survived the round trip) distance = 12k miles (w/Suez Canal its only 6k today) time = da Gama 7.8.1497 – 5.20.1498 = 10 months to India	ease of trade = more product less work on water distance/time = they hoped it would be faster trade opportunity = since they were the first they could control the trade route and tax others who follow
3. West to Asia (Spain's plan)	ease of trade = ship & crew training & illness distance = Canary Islands to Japan is 10k miles and it is 5k to the Bahamas time = it was 2 months to the Bahamas and there are two large continents in the way to Asia	ease of trade = more product less work on water distance/time = Columbus calculated it would be 2,500 miles and take about one month trade opportunity = since they were the first they could control the trade route and tax others who follow

2. New inventions helped merchants and sailors.

- The magnetic compass gave accurate direction.
- The new nautical astrolabe used the stars to find latitude while at sea.
- New maps, such as the Mercator map, were more accurate for sailors.
- Triangular sail and a rear rudder improved ship speed.

3. Sailors were educated.

- Prince Henry of Portugal created a navigation school in 1418.
- He built an observatory to study the universe and chart star formations.
- Taught that there was a water route to India around Africa.
- The printing press helped spread information faster!

4. Religion: European Christians were looking to spread their religion into Africa and Asia in order to stop the spread of Islam.

- The Protestant Reformation led to religious persecution and wars in Europe.
- Some denominations left their homelands for religious freedom.
- Examples: The English Puritans (Pilgrims)
- Others came to new lands to spread their religions – missionaries.

5. The Commercial Revolution helped finance (pay for) voyages.

- Banks were willing to loan money with interest so businesses could get started or people could travel.
- Joint-stock companies were created in which shares of stock were sold to people, allowing them to be part owners of the company and allowing the company to have enough money to operate or invest in a new expedition.

6. Mercantilism

- The European belief that there is only a fixed amount of wealth on earth and that a country should acquire as much wealth as possible by whatever means possible as quickly as possible.
- This is a system in which the government controls all economic activity and decision-making.

Three Ways to Achieve Mercantilism

1. <u>Colonialism</u>

- Settle on land away from home in order to produce whatever natural resources are there so you don't have to import raw materials from some other country.
- These settlements and ports allow nations to establish and control new trade routes, too!

2. Establish a <u>favorable balance of trade</u> where you export (make $) more than you import (spend $).

- The Triangle Trade is a great example of this.
- This is how it worked:
- Europe exported weapons, alcohol, and textile goods to Africa and made money.
- Europeans exported African slaves to the New World and made money.
- Europeans exported colonial plantation products like tobacco, rum, and sugarcane to Europe and made money.
- This is clearly a favorable balance of trade for the European countries.
- <u>The Middle Passage</u> - This is the name given to the slave shipments from Africa to the Americas.
- It is estimated that as many as 20 million African slaves survived the brutal trip to America.
- It is also estimated that about that many died on the trip!
- Slaves were chained together and forced into cramped ships with little water, food, and sanitation in order to turn a larger profit.

3. The third way to acquire wealth is through <u>conquest</u>.

- 90-95% of the Natives in the Americas will be killed within the first 100 years as Europeans sought wealth.
- Spain sent soldiers called conquistadors to destroy the Aztec and Incan civilizations for gold.