

Explorers have travelled all around the world to learn about the world around them.

The Age of Exploration

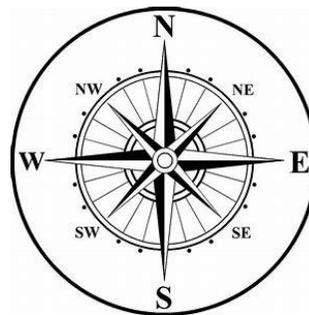
The Age of Exploration took place between the 15th and 17th centuries. During this time many countries in Europe sent out explorers to discover new lands, find trade routes, seek treasure, and gain territory for their country. During this time much of the world was mapped and many world civilizations came into contact with each other. Sometimes it is called the Age of Discovery.

Polar Explorers

The Arctic and the Antarctic are hostile and dangerous regions which have attracted explorers since the 19th century. These are the most remote places on Earth.

Timeline of Explorers

1472	European explorers begin expeditions to the Arctic
1492	Christopher Columbus sailed to Cuba and discovered new lands
1821	American John Davis is the first to set foot on Antarctica
1901	Robert Scott set of on his first voyage to Antarctica.
1909	American Robert Peary is thought to be the first to reach the North Pole
1910	Robert Scott set sail to Antarctica for the second time.
1911	Norwegian Roald Amundsen and his team are the first to reach the South Pole
1979	Ranulph Fiennes and Charles Burton travelled all the way around the world.
1986	Ann Bancroft become the first woman to reach the North Pole.



Vocabulary

Continent	A very large area of land, such as Africa or Asia that is made of several countries
Equator	An imaginary line around the middle of the Earth
Ocean	One of the five large areas of sea on the Earth's surface
Explorer	Someone who travels to places where very little is known, in order to discover what is there
Merchant	A person who buys and sells goods
Compass	Item used to show directions, North, East, South and West
Voyage	A long journey
Coordinates	A grid method used to plot a location or journey
Coast	Land near the sea
Mountain	A tall piece of land that rises suddenly
Forest	A large area covered in trees.
Lines of latitude	An imaginary parallel lines/circles, horizontal to the Equator, that never meet, and get smaller towards the Poles
Lines of longitude	An imaginary north-to-south lines/ circles, meeting at the North and South Poles to make segments. They are all the same length and go from pole to pole

Why People Explore

Trade - Many countries and rulers funded explorers in order to find new trade partners and goods. In some cases they hope to find new trade routes that would help them to transport goods cheaper than their competitors. This was the case of Vasco da Gama and Christopher Columbus.

Gold - Often explorers have been in search of riches and treasure. The Conquistadors were primarily searching for **gold** and **silver** when they conquered the Native Americans of the New World.

Science - In many cases, explorers are scientists hoping to learn about nature and new parts of the world. They may be hoping to find a new species of animal or type of plant.

Land - Many explorers claimed the land they found in the name of their country. Countries like Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain amassed huge empires during the Age of Exploration.

Challenge - Many explorers want to test their personal limits and be the first in the world to do something. These types of explorers include the men who raced to be the first to the North and South Poles, the top of Mount Everest, and to the Moon



Ernest Shackleton was a polar explorer who led British Expeditions to the Antarctic. He was interested in exploring the South Pole and wanted to be the first person to reach it. He went on his first expedition at 25 years old. On his second trip, he made it to within 97 miles of the South Pole before he had to turn back.

Vocabulary

Northern Hemisphere	half of the Earth north of the Equator
Southern Hemisphere	half of the Earth south of the Equator
South Pole	point where the southern end of the Earth's axis of rotation meets the Earth's surface
North Pole	point where the northern end of the Earth's axis of rotation meets the Earth's surface
Compass points	the four main directions on a magnetic compass and some of the divisions in between: N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW
Antarctic Circle	An imaginary line/circle about 66.5° south of the Equator
Arctic Circle	An imaginary line/circle about 66.5° north of the Equator



Ann Bancroft