Christopher Columbus

* 1451-1506
* Italian born navigator who found fame when he landed in the Americas (October 12, 1492)
* Set sail on behalf of Spain with three ships: the *Nina, the Pinta,* and his flagship, the *Santa Maria*
* Originally, he had sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean to find a water route to Asia
* He was convinced that he had found the waterway that he sought and that the Americas were actually an extension of China
* Returned from his expedition with gold, encouraging future exploration

Amerigo Vespucci

* 1454-1512
* Italian member of a Portuguese expedition
* Explored South America
* Discovery suggested that the expedition had found a “New World”
* After an account of his 1497 expedition was published, a cartographer mistakenly thought that Vespucci had led the expedition and had landed in the New World before Christopher Columbus, foolishly naming the continent America.

Treaty of Tordesillas

* 1493
* Commitment between Spain and Portugal
* Created a Papal Line of Demarcation, which divided the New World; east of the line for Portugal and west of it for Spain.
* Later, the Papal Line affected colonization in Africa and Asia

New Spain

* Spain’s tightly controlled empire in the New World
* To deal with labor shortages, the Spaniards developed a system of large manors, (encomiendas) using Native American slaves under conquistadors
* With the death of Native American slaves, Spaniards began importing African slaves to supply their labor needs.

Mercantilism

* 1500s-1700s
* Prevailing economic philosophy of the 1600s that held that colonies existed to serve the mother country
* Founded on the belief that the world’s wealth was sharply limited and, therefore, one nation’s gain was another nation’s loss.
* Each nation’s goal was to export more than it imported in a favorable balance of trade; the difference would be made up in their possession of gold and silver, which would make the nation strong both economically and militarily
* Mercantilists believed economic activity should be regulated by government

Queen Elizabeth I

* 1533-1603
* Protestant successor to Queen Mary (England)
* Popular leader and the first woman to successfully hold the throne
* Invested in English raids on the Spanish New World
* Brought on a war response from Spain in the form of the Spanish Armada
* Established Protestantism in England and encouraged English business

The Spanish Armada

* 1588
* Fleet assembled by King Philip II of Spain to invade England
* The Armada was defeated by the skill of British military leaders and by rough seas during the assault
* England’s victory over Spanish forces established England as an emerging sea power; it was one of the great achievements of Queen Elizabeth I
* Defeat helped bring about the decline of the Spanish empire.