

TEXT: Who Discovered America?

Christopher Columbus was an Italian from the great port of Genoa. As a boy, he often talked with the sailors who arrived in the port after long and dangerous voyages across the ocean. He became a sailor, and after one of his voyages he arrived in Portugal.

Lisbon, the capital city of Portugal, was one of the centers of learning, exploration, and discovery in Europe. Columbus studied old maps and globes, and read the books of great geographers and travelers. He knew that the world was round like a ball, not flat like a plate as many people had thought. He decided that it must be possible to sail around world.

At that time, Americans were trading with China, India, and Japan. They had to travel over land, going east, to get there. The journey was long and dangerous, but traders made the journey because they could get very rich. Europeans would pay a lot of money for the spices, silks, and jewels of the East.

Columbus decided that he would try to get to the east by sailing in the opposite direction. If the world was round, he said, then if he kept sailing west he must eventually arrive in “the Indies”, as the Europeans called the East. He estimated that distance across the Atlantic would be about 3840 km and that the voyage would take about three weeks.

Columbus was not a wealthy man. He had to find someone to sponsor him for the voyage. He needed money for ships, and he had to pay the crew. He tried for two years to get the king of Portugal to sponsor him, but the Portuguese decided to get to Asia by a different route: by sailing south-east around Africa. Then he decided to try the King and Queen of Spain. It took six years for Queen Isabella to agree to be his sponsor.

After three months of preparation, in August 1492, Columbus set off with three ships and a crew of about ninety sailors. They headed first for the Canary Islands. This first leg of the voyage took a week, but they were delayed there for three weeks while they made some repairs. At last on September 6, they set off into the unknown ocean to the west.

Life on board the ship was rough. Only Columbus and the captains of the other two ships had bunks; the sailors slept where they could, in their clothes. They did the cooking on deck; they ate salt meat and fish, and mixed flour with sea-water to make a kind of flat bread.

Columbus had expected the journey to take about three weeks; unfortunately, he based his estimate of the circumference of the world on some inaccurate calculations. It was not until October 12 that they finally saw land.

QUESTIONS (20 points)

I- READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (5 points)

A. Multiple choice questions (2 points)

Copy the complete sentence containing the correct answer.

1. Who was Christopher Columbus?

- a. a Portuguese b. an American c. an Italian d. an Indian.

2. Columbus spent... years to try to get to sponsor him.

- a. two b. six c. eight d. three.

B. True / False questions (2 points)

Copy the true sentences and correct the false ones.

1. Christopher Columbus became a sailor.
2. The journey Europeans made was short and dangerous.
3. Columbus was a rich man.
4. Columbus and his crew sailed in two ships.

C. Answer the following questions (2 points)

1. What did Europeans bring from the East?
2. How far did Columbus estimate the way to the Indies?
3. How much time did Columbus take to get prepared for the voyage?
4. When did Columbus and his crew see land?

II- LANGUAGE (10 points)

A. Copy down each word from the list on the left with the correct definition from the right (1 point)

A	B
sail	to look on as likely to happen
delay	a sleeping-berth on board ship
bunk	stop temporarily
expect	to travel by water

B. Insert suitable prepositions in the following. (2 points)

The car stopped ... the traffic lights and wouldn't start again, so the driver got... and pushed it... the side ... the road.

C. Copy the dialogue and supply the missing part. (2 points)

Mussa: Columbus set off in August 1492 and saw land on October 12.

Seydu:

Mussa: I think he spent some three months on sea.

Seydu:

III- TRANSLATION (4 points)

A. Translate into English (2 points)

Christophe Colombe a commis l'erreur de prendre une autre direction, et il a découvert l'Amérique. Pensant qu'ils (lui et son équipage) étaient arrivés en Inde, il a donné le nom « Indiens » à la population qu'il a trouvée sur place.

B. Translate into French (2 points)

From "Columbus had expected the journey ..." to "... finally saw land."

IV- COMPOSITION (5 points)

Choose **one** topic only.

A. Many young people would like to go abroad to look for a job. They face difficulties like housing problem, registration problem, and so on. What can be done to discourage them?

B. Oumar Diallo TLL, LDKK, writes a postcard giving Ismael Kounta, TLL - LMAHT, his holiday travel plans.

Write Oumar's postcard appropriately.

