Essential Question:
– What factors encouraged the European Age of Exploration?

Warm-Up Question:
From the 1400s to the 1700s, Europe experienced an “Age of Exploration”.

The Renaissance encouraged curiosity & a desire for trade.

**Motivations:**
Why did Europeans want to explore?

As a result of exploration, European nations grew powerful & spread their influence throughout the world.
Gold (Money)

A desire for new sources of wealth was the main reason for European exploration during the Crusades & Renaissance. This period stimulated European desires for exotic Asian luxury goods. Merchants began looking for quick, direct trade routes to Asia to avoid Muslim & Italian merchants & increase profits.

The Crusades & Renaissance stimulated European desires for exotic Asian luxury goods.
The Renaissance inspired new possibilities for power & prestige. Exploration presented Europeans the opportunity to rise from poverty and gain fame, fortune, & status. Kings who sponsored voyages of exploration gained overseas colonies, new sources of wealth for their nation, & increased power.
European Christians, especially Catholics, wanted to stop the spread of Islam & convert non-Christians to the faith. Explorers were encouraged to spread Christianity or bring missionaries who would focus only on conversions.
**Means:**
How were explorers able to sail so far & make it back again?

Before the Renaissance, sailors did not have the technology to sail very far from Europe & return.
Navigation

Trade & cultural diffusion during the Renaissance introduced new navigation techniques to Europeans.

- Magnetic compass: made sailing more accurate.
- Astrolabe: used stars to show direction.
- Maps: were more accurate and used longitude & latitude.
European shipbuilders built a better ship; The caravel was a strong ship that could travel in the open seas & in shallow water.

Caravels had triangular lateen sails that allowed ships to sail against the wind.

Cannons & rifles gave ships protection.

A moveable rudder made the caravel more maneuverable.
Who were the explorers, where did they go, & how did they change world history?
Europeans were not the first to explore the oceans in search of new trade routes.

Islamic merchants explored the Indian Ocean & had dominated the Asian spice trade for centuries before European exploration.
From 1405 to 1433, Zheng He led the Chinese treasure fleet on 7 expeditions to SE Asia, India, & Africa during the Ming Dynasty.
But in the late 1400s, the European sailors did what neither Muslim nor Chinese explorers could: Begin global (not regional) exploration & create colonies to increase their wealth & power.
In Portugal, Prince Henry the Navigator started a school of navigation to train sailors.

He brought in Europe’s best map-makers, ship-builders, & sailing instructors.

He wanted to discover new territories, find a quick trade route to Asia, & expand Portugal’s power.
Prince Henry’s navigation school & willingness to fund voyages led the Portuguese to be the 1st to explore the west coast of Africa.

Vasco da Gama was the 1st explorer to find a direct trade route to Asia by going around Africa to get to India.

Portugal gained a sea route to Asia that brought them great wealth.
During the Age of Exploration, Portugal created colonies along the African coast, in Brazil, & the Spice Islands in Asia.
The Spanish government saw Portugal’s wealth & did not want to be left out.

More than any other European monarch, Ferdinand & Isabella of Spain sponsored & supported overseas expeditions.
Columbus reached the Bahamas in America but thought that he had reached islands off the coast of India. Like most educated men of the Renaissance, Columbus believed the world was round & thought he could reach Asia by sailing west. He made 4 trips to “India” never knowing he was in “America”.
Despite the fact that Columbus never found Asia, Ferdinand Magellan still thought he could reach Asia by sailing West.

Magellan became the first explorer to circumnavigate the Earth (go all the way around).
During the Age of Exploration, Spain created colonies in North & South America.
Spain sent explorers called conquistadors to the New World to find gold, claim land, & spread Christianity.

Cortez conquered the Aztecs.

Pizarro conquered.

The influx of gold from America made Spain the most powerful country in Europe during the early years of the Age of Exploration.
England, France, & the Netherlands became involved in overseas exploration & colonization as well.
The French explorer Samuel de Champlain searched Canada for a northwest passage to Asia. After failing to do so, Champlain founded the French colony of Quebec. The French would soon carve out a large colony along the Mississippi River from Canada to New Orleans.
Unlike other European nations whose kings paid for colonies, the English colonies were paid for by citizens who formed joint-stock companies.

English colonies formed along the Atlantic Coast of North America by colonists motivated either by religion or wealth.
The English explorer James Cook was the first European to make contact with Australia, New Zealand, & Hawaii.
Like England, the Netherlands (the Dutch) allowed private companies to fund exploration. The Dutch had colonies in America & Africa, but the Dutch East India Company dominated trade in Asia.
Conclusions

As a result of the Age of Exploration, European knowledge & influence of the world increased greatly.