

**SHORT ANSWER**

10 minutes for these questions (4 points each)

1. Name one reason for the great Age of Exploration.

*Any one of the following would be correct:*

- *Europeans wanted to buy Asian goods, but overland trade routes became increasingly dangerous and difficult. Thus, they sought sea routes.*
- *Mediterranean ports such as Venice had a monopoly on some Eastern goods; other Europeans hoped to find a direct sea route to the East in order to break the monopoly.*
- *The desire to thwart the expansion of the Muslim world and to spread Christianity was also a motivating factor for some (such as Prince Henry the Navigator).*

2. Portugal and Spain were the first European countries to put any serious effort or finances into finding a new trade route to the East.

3. Who was Henry the Navigator?

*He was the son of John I of Portugal. Henry encouraged and sponsored many voyages of exploration, though he never went on one himself. His expeditions and ships explored much of the African coast.*

4. What important political event occurred to give Columbus his chance to launch a voyage to find a western, Atlantic sea route to the Indies?

*The defeat of the Muslims at Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, allowed Spain to divert its interests toward undiscovered territories and exploration. The Spanish monarchs, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, sponsored Columbus's transatlantic voyage in 1492.*

5. What was Bartolomeu Dias's contribution to European knowledge of the globe?

*Dias discovered the southern tip of Africa, which indicated that a sea route to India was possible.*

6. Name one technological advance or invention that aided Spanish and Portuguese explorations.

*Any one of the following would be correct:*

- *Improved shipbuilding techniques*
- *Navigational instruments such as the astrolabe and quadrant*
- *Updated charts and maps*
- *Better arms and firepower (gunpowder and cannons)*

7. What is a caravel, and what was its significance to the Age of Exploration?

*By 1500, Portuguese shipwrights had designed a new kind of ship that combined square sails (for power) with the triangular lateen sails (for sailing against the wind), which made long voyages possible. Two of Columbus's ships were caravels.*

8. Which ship did Columbus captain on his first Atlantic voyage?

*Columbus captained the largest of the three ships, the Santa Maria.*

9. What is "dead reckoning"?

*"Dead reckoning" is a navigational method which makes use of somewhat imprecise instruments and guesswork in order to arrive at approximate conclusions.*

10. What is the name given to the island that Columbus discovered in 1492, and what does this name mean?

*Believing he had reached the Indies, Columbus named the island San Salvador, which means "Holy Savior."*

## ESSAY QUESTION

20 minutes for one of these questions. (60 points)

1. Put Columbus in context! Explain how the crusading era and the Renaissance eventually gave rise to Columbus's voyages, and summarize European reactions to those voyages.

#### Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

NOTE: Before assigning your student this essay quiz, make sure he has put sufficient thought into this topic, either with his printed resources or in discussion with you. This is a test to "teach to"!

#### Era of Crusading

- Taught Europeans to think in terms of glorifying God and extending His kingdom by force
- Spain's personal crusade against her Moorish (Muslim) conquerors entrenched this militant model of Christianity uniquely in the Spanish mind.
- Ferdinand and Isabella could not, at first, hear Columbus out because they were still driving the Moors from Grenada. They succeeded in 1492 and celebrated by financing Columbus.
- The Spanish thus turned without a hitch from extending Christendom militarily in their own land to extending it militarily in the New World.

#### Renaissance

- Encouraged a mindset of discovery and inquisitiveness, leading to curiosity about other lands
- Promoted ingenuity to improve seafaring, including the magnetic compass (allowing sailors to venture away from the coast line) and a Portuguese ship called the caravel
- Prosperity gave rulers the wealth necessary to finance such ventures.

#### European Reactions

- Enthusiastic interest in exploration
- Growth of Spanish prestige as the main imperial power
- Long-term effect of European imperialism on world history

#### Sample Answer

*Columbus did not come out of nowhere. The crusading era and the Renaissance provided a crucial context for his voyages, which in turn reshaped European history.*

*Long before Columbus sailed west, the Crusades introduced the idea of "holy conquest" into Europe. Popes and princes fired the imaginations of the European people, declaring that "God willed" them to reconquer the Holy Land. In Spain, Christians learned to be especially militant by fighting the Moors, who threatened their very existence. The Spaniards did not finish driving out the Moors until 1492, the year that Columbus sailed. Their attention turned naturally from crusading for God's glory in Spain and the Middle East to crusading for God's glory in new lands beyond the sea. Columbus's desire to extend Christendom by conquest reflected the attitude of the Crusades.*

*The Renaissance also shaped the European mindset in Columbus's day. Renaissance ingenuity contributed to the magnetic compass, the ship called the caravel, and other key advances that made such bold seafaring possible. Renaissance trade brought in the wealth necessary to finance risky voyages. Most importantly, the Renaissance encouraged a spirit of inquiry. People wanted to know about lands beyond their familiar world. They wanted to explore the ut-  
termost ends of the earth. The Renaissance set the stage for Columbus's voyages by encouraging and enabling grand discoveries.*

*Columbus's discoveries, in turn, had a major effect on Europe by inaugurating the Age of Exploration. Once Columbus had proved that it was possible to sail west without getting lost at sea or devoured by mythic storms, others quickly followed him. The slow realization that Columbus had discovered whole new continents excited people even more. His discoveries set Spain on the road to becoming an important power, due to her overseas empire. European imperialism would go on to shape much of world history. Thus, Columbus's voyages reshaped the course of European history.*

*Columbus's voyages did not happen in a vacuum. The crusading mindset and Renaissance inquisitiveness did much to lay the groundwork for his voyages. In turn, those voyages shaped European history by ushering in the Age of Exploration.*

2. Columbus was a complex individual. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of his character, noting his personal views on religion, his conduct during his expeditions, and his treatment of conquered peoples. Use specific examples, where you can.

### Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

#### Strengths

- Genuine religious desire to glorify God through the extension of Christendom
- Planned to use his profits to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem
- Reliance on God through prayer in difficult times
- Determination in pursuing his dream through many setbacks and disappointments
- Ability to inspire others to follow him in his dream

#### Weaknesses

- Erroneous reliance on force, rather than solely appealing to the gospel, to extend God's kingdom
- Personal ambition
- Lust for glory, shown in seeking royal titles
- Greed for wealth
- Willingness to cruelly exploit conquered peoples to maintain his power and satisfy his greed
- Used deception (falsified logs) to keep his crew going in rough times
- Despotic governor, eventually recalled to Spain for his misrule

### Sample Answer

*Like all people, Columbus was a complex individual, who had both admirable strengths and notable weaknesses. These can be seen in his personal views on religion, his conduct during his expeditions, and his treatment of conquered peoples.*

*Columbus appears to have been a sincere but inconsistent religious man. On the one hand, he seemed to show a genuine concern for God's glory and expressed a desire to bring Christianity to the heathen. During difficult times, he relied on God, recording prayers of thanksgiving and praise to God in his log. However, his actions showed that he was also driven by personal ambition, greed, and vainglory. Furthermore, he sought to extend God's kingdom militarily, instead of following the biblical model of lovingly presenting the gospel to the lost. His religious beliefs display both the sincerity and the error of his beliefs.*

*Columbus's conduct during his expeditions shows both his strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Columbus had great determination. Even during the most difficult times, he never gave up, and he was able to persuade others to follow his dream. However, he also displayed proud inflexibility, against which his followers eventually rebelled. He resorted to deception, falsifying records to keep his crews from knowing how far they had sailed. Though he was a determined leader, he could also be despotic and selfish.*

*Columbus's treatment of conquered peoples displays many of his flaws. Although he did express some desire to convert the conquered peoples to Christianity, in practice he treated them badly. Columbus openly allowed Spanish settlers to enslave the native peoples. He punished some cruelly when they would not find gold to satisfy his greed. Though he expressed some concern for their souls, Columbus's actions towards the conquered peoples showed that he was often motivated by cruelty and selfishness.*

*Columbus was neither totally wicked nor totally noble. Instead, he was a complex human being, with some genuine desire to glorify his God but also with much greed, selfishness, and desire for personal glory.*