

Chapter Summary

Early Explorers of Texas

Lesson 1: The Spanish Explore Texas

- Europeans wanted to discover new sea trade routes from Europe to India to replace the land routes used in the past.
- Italian explorer Christopher Columbus was the first to cross the Atlantic Ocean in 1492 during a voyage that was financed by Spain.
- Spain sent many other explorers across the Atlantic Ocean to claim new lands and resources for Spain.
- Spanish conquistadores built an empire for Spain in South America, Central America, Mexico, and the United States.
- Hernán Cortés conquered the Aztec Empire and founded Mexico City.
- Catholic priests and nuns from Spain established missions in order to convert Native Americans to Catholicism.
- Alonso Álvarez de Pineda studied and mapped the Texas coastline in 1519. His map was very accurate for its time.
- Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca encouraged other explorers to search for gold and treasures in the new world. Many conquistadores volunteered to explore the area that is now Texas.

Lesson 2: The Quest for Gold and Glory

- Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza heard stories about the riches to be found to the north of Mexico, so he organized an expedition to discover whether the stories were true.
- Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led a two-year unsuccessful expedition in search of riches.
- Coronado found a Zuni settlement and fighting between this group and the explorers resulted in Coronado's injury.
- Luis de Moscoso accidentally led an expedition into what is now Texas while trying to find a land route from the Mississippi River to Mexico.
- Juan de Oñate led an expedition to settle the upper Rio Grande valley. He founded Santa Fe, in what is now New Mexico in 1609.

Chapter Summary *cont.*

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Lesson 3: A Challenge from France

- La Salle was the first French explorer to enter the area that is now Texas. He explored the Mississippi River valley and claimed it for France.
- La Salle convinced the king of France to let him start a settlement at the mouth of the Mississippi River. However, he was a poor navigator and missed the mouth by 400 miles, going ashore in what is now Texas.
- La Salle and the colonists built a settlement along Garcitas Creek called Fort St. Louis. The settlement was not built well and was a stockade, or crude fort of logs.
- After many of the settlers decided to return to France, La Salle was left with only one ship, *La Belle*, which was destroyed in a storm in 1686.
- Many people at Fort St. Louis died from hunger and disease, and many were killed by the Karankawa.
- La Salle began a journey with a group of colonists to the nearest French outpost, which was by the Great Lakes. The men mutinied in East Texas and killed La Salle in March of 1687.
- Fort St. Louis was attacked by the Karankawa at the end of 1688. Most of the colonists were killed; a few were captured.