



Name _____

Atlantic Crossings

Directions: Read the exploration snapshot below, then answer the questions that follow using complete sentences.

For centuries, the Atlantic Ocean has been a major pathway for explorers searching for new lands, trade opportunities, and scientific discoveries. In the late 1400s and early 1500s, sailors from Europe set sail across the Atlantic, using the winds and currents to guide their wooden ships. Some traveled west from Spain and Portugal toward the Americas, while others sailed south along the coast of Africa before turning across the ocean. These routes helped connect distant regions of the world, leading to the exchange of goods, foods, cultures, and ideas.

As navigation tools improved, explorers were able to travel farther and map the coastlines with greater detail. Many expeditions recorded their journeys, including the challenges they faced with storms, unfamiliar waters, and limited supplies. Their routes shaped global trade patterns and influenced the development of ports and coastal communities on both sides of the Atlantic. Today, historians and geographers study these voyages to understand how early exploration changed the world.

1. Why did explorers cross the Atlantic Ocean during the early periods of exploration?
2. How did winds and currents help guide explorers on their routes?
3. What were some challenges explorers faced while sailing across the Atlantic?
4. Explain one impact that early Atlantic exploration had on the world.
5. Why do historians and geographers continue to study these exploration routes today?