

TruthQuest History

" American History for Young Students I (Exploration to 1800)

1É Journey!

You and your children are about to embark on a fascinating journey! America's story is so miraculous and so personal! To know that God had a hand in the forming of this nation gives us all—young and old—a special reason for loving America, learning about her, and caring what happens. And as with the study of all history, so many aspects of God's wonderful character and blessed principles are revealed. This guide is designed for the youngest students, so we will keep things light, but your children *will* glean meaningful insights.

This study will provide your family with a unique opportunity to enjoy some of the very best children's literature ever written! You can't help but have fun. Well, actually you can. Especially with your littlest students, a worried parent who tries to make this endeavor "just like what I did when I was in school" will squeeze the life and joy out of it for herself and her children.

So, here is how you do *TruthQuest History*: gather your young'uns and snuggle on the couch. Begin by reading aloud the commentary that heads the first section, and then enjoy a couple of the many yummy books recommended for further exploration of that topic! When you're done with the first topic, go on to the next! It's that simple. You will need to read aloud to your pre-readers, but you may want your older children to enjoy the books on their

own. Just be certain to read aloud the commentary which begins each new section.

You must avoid one temptation—to read every book on every list. Your goal should be twofold: to provide your children with their first sense of God's hand in history, and to create a lifelong interest in America's story and in wonderful literature. Your goal should *not* be that your students recall every fact about every explorer and battle.

Instead, allow your children to 'feed' on wonderful books, talk about the principles illuminated in this guide, and let the ideas percolate in their minds. Soon they will be *telling you* about them (Charlotte Mason's *narration*) and pretending with their siblings that their three beds are Columbus's ships far out at sea! Leave time for that. Don't make history a dull grind. Let them find the joy of God's involvement in this world! They can have fun, if you'd like, making a notebook or a timeline. They can dress up and do skits! Learning about God is so much fun! What a precious gift!

2É Discover the Discovery!

We might as well begin with the discovery of America! And right away, while you're learning about all that happened, you will find there is something interesting to think about: Leif Ericson bumped into North America around the year 1000. Some folks think a guy or two had the same experience even sooner, but nothing much came of it. No one moved here. Life didn't change for the folks living here. Hmmmm.

Then, all of a sudden, Christopher Columbus runs right smack into this big chunk of land while on a trip to China in 1492, almost five hundred years *after* Leif first set foot here, and soon the place is swarming with explorers! It makes me wonder if there was a certain moment when the Lord wanted to 'lift the curtain' on this continent, for we know the Lord is the Maker of this world, and whoever makes it also gets to be master of it. Even a sparrow, the Bible says, doesn't fall without Him noticing, so you can bet that whole continents aren't stumbled onto unless He's got His hand in it. And since He tells us that He is a good God, we can know that all His plans are for good! Yeah!

As we just said, there were, of course, people living here, and we will meet them a bit later on. But first let's look at the wave of exploration that *would* change their lives, and would also change the lives of the tired, suffering folks on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean—where the explorers had come from in Europe—which was called the 'Old World' once this 'New World' was discovered. When you get older, you will be able to understand that a lot of very important things were happening in Europe (the Old World) at the very same time the curtain was lifting on America. *One thing is certain, the Lord has His hand on every person and every place...and that means He had a plan for the land and people that would become America, just as He has a plan for every land and everyone.*

Well, there are several explorers to 'explore' here, so you parents will need to decide how many you would like to meet. This *TruthQuest History* guide (since it is for young children) focuses only on those who played a key role in American discovery. Though all American children should get to know Leif Ericson and Christopher Columbus, you don't have to cover all the others. You may choose to highlight a couple, or only those who explored in your area. Indeed, it can be confusing for young children to work through a long list of different explorers, so take that into account. The goal is for the children to see their sacrifices, endurance, mistakes, contributions, etc. (Do *ThinkWrite 1* as you study explorers.)

ThinkWrite 1:

"Lifting the curtain..."

A wonderful way to deepen the learning experience is to write about what you are reading. It helps us think more profoundly. For those children who are old enough, you may ask them to think and write about how God seems to have "lifted the curtain" on the New World. Or, you may want your child to write a fictional diary, as if they were an explorer. Younger children can draw pictures, do a play, or possibly make a map. Be creative and have fun!

You can learn about these explorers in two different ways. You can enjoy books that cover the whole history of early American discovery (Section 1a). Or, you may choose to read the special

biographies and delightful stories that focus on specific explorers, listed individually (the remaining items in Section 1). It is not necessary to do both, but I think you'd enjoy books of both types. Remember, you don't need to locate the same books as those listed here, but I do try to mention special ones in case they *are* on your library's shelves. But use whatever is available to you on these topics; this should not be a source of stress. Your library probably has oodles of good books because once America had been *really* discovered, the race was on! European nations were *hurrying* to send explorers who would 'claim' sections of the New World.

2aÉ General history of American discovery

- **Child's History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 47, 59, 60 Gr. 1-4
- America Begins*, by Alice Dalgliesh Gr. 1-5
- And There Was America*, by Roger Duvoisin Gr. 1-5
This is *so* wonderful, but is also very rare.
- **Discovery of the Americas*, by Betsy & Giulio Maestro Gr. 2-5
A beautiful book, but these authors sometimes have a subtle anti-settler undertone.
- **History News: Explorers*, by Michael Johnstone Gr. 2-5
Zany 'newspaper reports' cover entire history of discovery. If you use this just-for-fun resource, you need focus only on the 'articles' pertaining to this time period.
- **Land Ho!* by Nancy Winslow Parker Gr. 2-5
- **Explorers in a New World*, by Edith McCall (Frontiers of America) Gr. 2-6
- Fist Book of New World Explorers*, by Louise Dickinson Rich (First Books) Gr. 3-6
- **Great Atlas of Discovery*, by Neil Grant Gr. 4-9
Use 'Table of Contents' to focus on pertinent topics.

Remember! The asterisk before a book title does *not* mean it's a favorite! Instead, it means the book was deemed to be in-print at the time of this writing. Many of these newer books are unfamiliar to me, but folks were asking for more recent book references. Please use caution, as always.

2bÉ Activities

- **Exploration of North America Coloring Book*, by Dover Various

2cÉ Leif Ericson (c. AD 1000)

- **Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. IV-V Gr. 3-7
- **This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 1 Gr. 3-8
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- **Leif the Lucky*, by Ingri & Edgar d'Aulaire Gr. K-3
What a fabulous book! Take note of Leif's character qualities.
- Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky*, by Barbara Schiller Gr. K-3
- **Child's History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 47 Gr. 1-4
- **Leif's Saga*, by Jonathan Hunt Gr. 1-4
Gorgeous illustrations!
- Leif the Lucky: Discoverer of America*, by Erick Berry (Garrard Discovery) Gr. 1-5
- Leif Ericson, Explorer*, by Ruth Weir (Makers of America) Gr. 2-6
- Story of Leif Ericson*, by William O. Steele (Signature) Gr. 3-8
- The Viking Explorers*, by Walter Buehr Gr. 3-8
- **The Vikings*, by Elizabeth Janeway (Landmark) Gr. 4-8

Fiction/Historical Fiction

- Viking Adventure*, by Clyde Robert Bulla Gr. 1-6
Don't miss this charming, exciting story of a Viking boy and his explorations!
- Door to the North*, by Elizabeth Coatsworth (Land of the Free) Gr. 4-12
A story of the Vikings in North America.

Remember! Books mentioned before the dashed line are those cited frequently throughout this guide on behalf of those who like to follow one overview resource during a unit. You may or may not choose to use them.

2dÉ Christopher Columbus made his great discovery in 1492

- **Light and the Glory for Children*, by Marshall & Manuel, Ch. 1-2 Gr. 1-5
- **Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. VI-XIV Gr. 3-7

**This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 2-4 Gr. 3-8

(Parents educating themselves as they follow along may wish to read one or more of the following books, which we will incrementally cite throughout: **Basic History of the United States: Volume 1*, by Clarence Carson, Ch. 1-2; **The Light and the Glory*, by Marshall & Manuel, Ch. 1 & 2; and/or **The Story of Liberty*, by Coffin, Ch. I-VI. We will later cite the sequels.)

**Picture Book of Christopher Columbus*, by David Adler Gr. K-2

**Columbus*, by Ingri & Edgar d'Aulaire Gr. K-3
You will love this book!

**In 1492*, by Jean Marzollo Gr. K-3

**Meet Christopher Columbus*, by James DeKay (Step-Up Books) Gr. K-3

**Follow the Dream: Christopher Columbus*, by Peter Sis Gr. 1-3

**Child's History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 59 Gr. 1-4

Columbus Day, by Paul Showers (Crowell Holiday book) Gr. 1-4

Columbus Story, by Alice Dalgliesh Gr. 1-4

I, Columbus, by Lisl Weil Gr. 1-4

**Log of Christopher Columbus*, by Columbus, edited by Steve Lowe Gr. 1-4
Very easy adaptation of Columbus's own log.

The Value of Curiosity: Columbus, by Spencer Johnson (ValueTales) Gr. 1-4

Christopher Columbus, by M. Kaufman (Garrard World Explorer) Gr. 1-5

The Egg of Columbus, by Cyriel Verleyen (Tales from History) Gr. 2-4

Christopher Columbus, by Piero Ventura Gr. 2-5

Columbus: Finder of the New World, by Ronald Syme Gr. 2-5

1492: Year of Columbus, by Genevieve Foster Gr. 2-6
Details the key events of that year, including accomplishments of Columbus.

Christopher Columbus: Sailor and Dreamer, by Bernadine Bailey (Piper) Gr. 2-6

**Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus?* by Jean Fritz Gr. 2-6

Christopher Columbus, Discoverer, by A. Graham (Makers of America) Gr. 3-7

- I, Columbus*, by Peter & Connie Roop Gr. 3-8
Easy adaptation of Columbus's own journal.
- Story of Christopher Columbus*, by Nina Brown Baker (Signature) Gr. 3-8
- **Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, edited by John Clare (Living History) Gr. 3-8
This interesting series shows costumed re-enactors.
- Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, by Armstrong Sperry (Landmark) Gr. 3-8
- Christopher Columbus and His Brothers*, by Amy Hogeboom Gr. 3-10
- **World of Columbus and Sons*, by Genevieve Foster Gr. 4-9
This book looks not only at the life of Columbus, but also at other key people and events of his day, almost all of them European. Some folks enjoy these books a great deal; others feel they 'steal the thunder' of their later studies when they want to probe into the various individual people and events. It's your call!
- **Christopher Columbus*, by Janet & Geoff Benge (Heroes of History) Gr. 4-12
This is from a distinctly Christian biography series formerly called 'Christian Heroes.'
- Columbus and the New World*, by A. Derleth (Vision) Gr. 4-12
This is a distinctly Catholic biography.
- **Christopher Columbus: How He Did It*, by Charlotte & David Yue Gr. 5-12
This book is not a biography of Columbus; it explains his navigational feats and how he operated the ships. This one's for a budding sailor.
- Quest of Columbus*, by Robert Meredith & E. Brooks Smith Gr. 5-12
An edited version of the journal of Columbus's son.
- L** *Jean Fritz has written a related book, "The World in 1492," but it has an anti-Christian bias, in my opinion.*

Fiction/Historical Fiction

- Noko, Captive of Columbus*, by Wilma Pitchford Hays Gr. 1-4
Based on actual diaries; the son of an Indian chief was taken captive.
- I Discover Columbus*, by Robert Lawson Gr. 3-9
Columbus's parrot reveals that *he* was the brain behind the operation! Funny!
- **He Went with Columbus*, by Louise Kent Gr. 4-12
This has just been reprinted.

Audio/Video

**Christopher Columbus*, a wholesome old film starring Frederic March

**Your Story Hour, Volume 6*

2eÉ Amerigo Vespucci–America is named for an explorer

Do you wonder how America was named? Good question! ‘Amerigo’ was actually the first name of an explorer–Amerigo Vespucci–who explored South America. His friend, a mapmaker, wrote his name on this general area...and the name stuck! Since he didn’t explore the land in our nation, we won’t cover him deeply.

**Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XV Gr. 3-7

**This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 5 Gr. 3-8

2fÉ John Cabot got a foothold for the English in North America (1497)

**This Country of Ours*, by H.E. Marshall, Ch. 6 Gr. 3-8

(Parents: *The Story of Liberty*, by Coffin, Ch. VII)

John Cabot and Son, by David Goodnough Gr. 1-4

**Child’s History of the World*, by V.M. Hillyer, Ch. 60 Gr. 1-4

John Cabot and His Son, Sebastian, by Ronald Syme Gr. 2-5

**John Cabot*, by Tanya Larkin (Famous Explorers) Gr. 3-6

**(Tell Me About) John Cabot*, by John Malam Unknown

**Cabot*, by Robin Doak (Exploring the World) Unknown

**Travels of John and Sebastian Cabot*, by Joanne Mattern (Explorers...) Unknown

2gÉ Ponce de Leon discovered Florida (1513) giving Spain an American foothold

**Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XVI Gr. 3-7

<i>Ponce de Leon</i> , by Wyatt Blassingame (Garrard World Explorer)	Gr. 1-5
* <i>Ponce de León</i> , by Trish Kline	Gr. 2-4
<i>Juan Ponce de Leon: First in the Land</i> , by Bernadine Bailey (Piper)	Gr. 2-7
<i>Juan Ponce de Leon</i> , by Nina Brown Baker	Gr. 2-7
* <i>Juan Ponce de León</i> , by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers)	Gr. 3-6
* <i>Ponce de Leon</i> , by Ann Heinrichs (Exploring the World)	Unknown
* <i>Travels of Juan Ponce de Leon</i> , by Deborah Crisfield (Explorers and...)	Unknown

2hÉ Hernando de Soto used Florida as a starting point to explore the southeastern portion of America and find the Mississippi River, claiming all for Spain (1541)

<i>Hernando de Soto</i> , by Elizabeth Montgomery (Garr. World Explorer)	Gr. 1-5
<i>De Soto: Finder of the Mississippi</i> , by Ronald Syme	Gr. 2-5
* <i>Hernando De Soto</i> , by Tanya Larkin (Famous Explorers)	Gr. 3-6
<i>De Soto: Child of the Sun</i> , by William O. Steele	Gr. 3-9
<i>Exploring the Great River</i> , by R. Meredith & E. Brooks Smith, Sect. 1	Gr. 3-9
* <i>De Soto</i> , by Ann Heinrichs (Exploring the World)	Unknown
* <i>Hernando De Soto</i> , by Jim Whiting	Unknown
* <i>Hernando De Soto: A Search for Gold and Glory</i> , by Faye Gibbons	Unknown

2iÉ Balboa did not set foot into what is now America, but children may want to meet the European man who first sighted the Pacific Ocean (1513)

<i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa</i> , by F. Knoop (Garrard World Explorer)	Gr. 1-5
<i>Balboa: Finder of the Pacific</i> , by Ronald Syme	Gr. 2-5
<i>Balboa</i> , by Felix Riesenber (Landmark)	Gr. 3-9
<i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa</i> , by Emma Gelders Sterne	Gr. 4-10

<i>Balboa: Discover of the Pacific</i> , by Jeannette Mirsky	Gr. 5-12
* <i>Vasco Nuñez de Balboa...</i> , by Hal Marcowitz	Unknown

2jÉ Francisco de Coronado

Since the Spanish already held Mexico, Spanish explorers pressed from there up into what is now the Great Southwest of the United States. The Mexican Indians spoke of the Seven Cities of Gold. It was only a fable, but men like Coronado (1540-1542) searched the Southwest for them. Few people think about this early exploration of America; indeed, Santa Fe, New Mexico was a military outpost in 1605, two years before Jamestown! Spanish priests would later build Catholic missions; we'll cover them later.

* <i>Story of the Thirteen Colonies</i> , by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XIX-XX This talks about the Santa Fe area.	Gr. 3-7

<i>Francisco Coronado</i> , by Faith Knoop (Garrard World Explorer)	Gr. 1-5
* <i>Francisco Vasquez De Coronado</i> , by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers)	Gr. 3-6
<i>Spanish Conquistadores in North America</i> , by Walter Buehr, Ch. 7	Gr. 3-9
<i>Coronado and His Captains</i> , by Camilla Campbell	Gr. 4-8
<i>Francisco Coronado and the Seven Cities of Gold</i> , by Ronald Syme	Gr. 4-12
* <i>Coronado</i> , by Robin Doak (Exploring the World)	Unknown
* <i>Travels of Francisco de Coronado</i> , by Deborah Heinrichs (Explorers...)	Unknown

Fiction/Historical Fiction

<i>Conquista!</i> by Clyde Robert Bulla An Indian boy sees a horse which escaped from Coronado's party.	Gr. 2-6
<i>The King's Fifth</i> , by Scott O'Dell I'm rather nervous about including this (I don't know its tone) especially when the students are just beginning their study of history. It may be too overwhelming as it discusses the treatment of the Indians in the hunt for gold.	Gr. 5-12

2kÉ French explorers

You should also know that French explorers, such as Cartier and Champlain, were probing the area that would become Canada; they did sometimes touch on land that

would be America. (Even before these explorers, though, the French had been crossing the Atlantic Ocean to fish the rich cod banks near the Gulf of St. Lawrence.) But the French explorers went deep inland, and when their hopes of finding gold and diamonds were squashed, they eventually developed a very rich fur trade. You can read about Cartier and Champlain if you'd like, but their history is mostly tied with Canada's history. Feel free to see what your library has on the topic. (We will cite one of the 'spine' book some families are following, though.)

**Story of the World: Vol. 3*, by Susan Wise Bauer, Ch. 4a Gr. 3-6

**Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XVIII Gr. 3-7

21É Henry Hudson

Let's jump a bit in time and mention an English explorer, Henry Hudson, who travelled around the area that would be New York State and who found the Hudson River (1609). His explorations furthered England's hold on the main land area of America.

**Story of the World: Vol. 3*, by Susan Wise Bauer, Ch. 4b Gr. 3-6

**Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, by H.A. Guerber, Ch. XXVII Gr. 3-7

(Parents: **The Story of Liberty*, by Coffin, Ch. XXX)

Henry Hudson, by Carl Carmer (Garrard Discovery) Gr. 1-5

**Henry Hudson*, by Trish Kline Gr. 2-4

Henry Hudson: Explorer of the North, by Dorothea Snowe (Piper) Gr. 2-7
This older series is wonderfully readable!

**Henry Hudson*, by Claude Hurwicz (Famous Explorers) Gr. 3-6

Henry Hudson, by Ronald Syme Gr. 3-7
Syme's biographies are usually immensely adventurous!

Story of Henry Hudson, by Eric Weiner (Dell Yearling) Gr. 3-7

The Voyages of Henry Hudson, by Eugene Rachlis (Landmark) Gr. 3-8

**Beyond the Sea of Ice: The Voyages of Henry Hudson*, by Joan Goodman Gr. 4-9
I've not seen this new book.

**Hudson*, by Robin Doak (Exploring the World) Unknown

* <i>Travels of Henry Hudson</i> , by Joanne Mattern (Explorers and...)	Unknown
* <i>Voyage of the <u>Half Moon</u></i> , by Tracey West (Stories of the States)	Unknown

2mÉ Summary

Think back on what you've learned about these explorers! If you made a map, look at it! What do you notice? The French mostly held the northern area of Canada (they would later move down from Canada into the Great Lakes area). The Spanish held the southern areas of Florida and the lands close to Spanish Mexico. And the English had the land in the middle (at least along the Atlantic Coast), the land that would mostly become early America. Do you see? It was like a sandwich! Three distinct layers! Do you get the picture? You may be interested, then, in this: while things were *very far* from perfect in England, at least England had a little more religious and political freedom than either France or Spain, and that is *very, very, very* important! Hmmmmm.

At this point, the explorers were tramping around what was to become America. They came and went; none settled down. Their stories, though, would spread across Europe. There, people strangled by religious, political, and economic misery came to think of life in the New World as a great hope. And many would come. This would mightily change life for the people already living in the New World, the Native Americans of many tribes. Because we cannot fully grasp those changes until we see the waves of colonists which would soon come, we will meet these Indians after we've seen the settlement begins. Please note that the Indians are important in their own right, but we want to see them in the context of the changing world in which they were living at the time, so we'll explore their cultures in an upcoming section.