

Focus Lesson 1

Looking for New Routes

Why were Europeans exploring land in New York?

VOCABULARY

explorer
Northwest Passage
trading post
colony

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

Word Origins A colony is a group of people who settle in a new land. The word comes from the Latin word *colonia*, which means “settler.” What other words use this Latin root?

READING STRATEGY

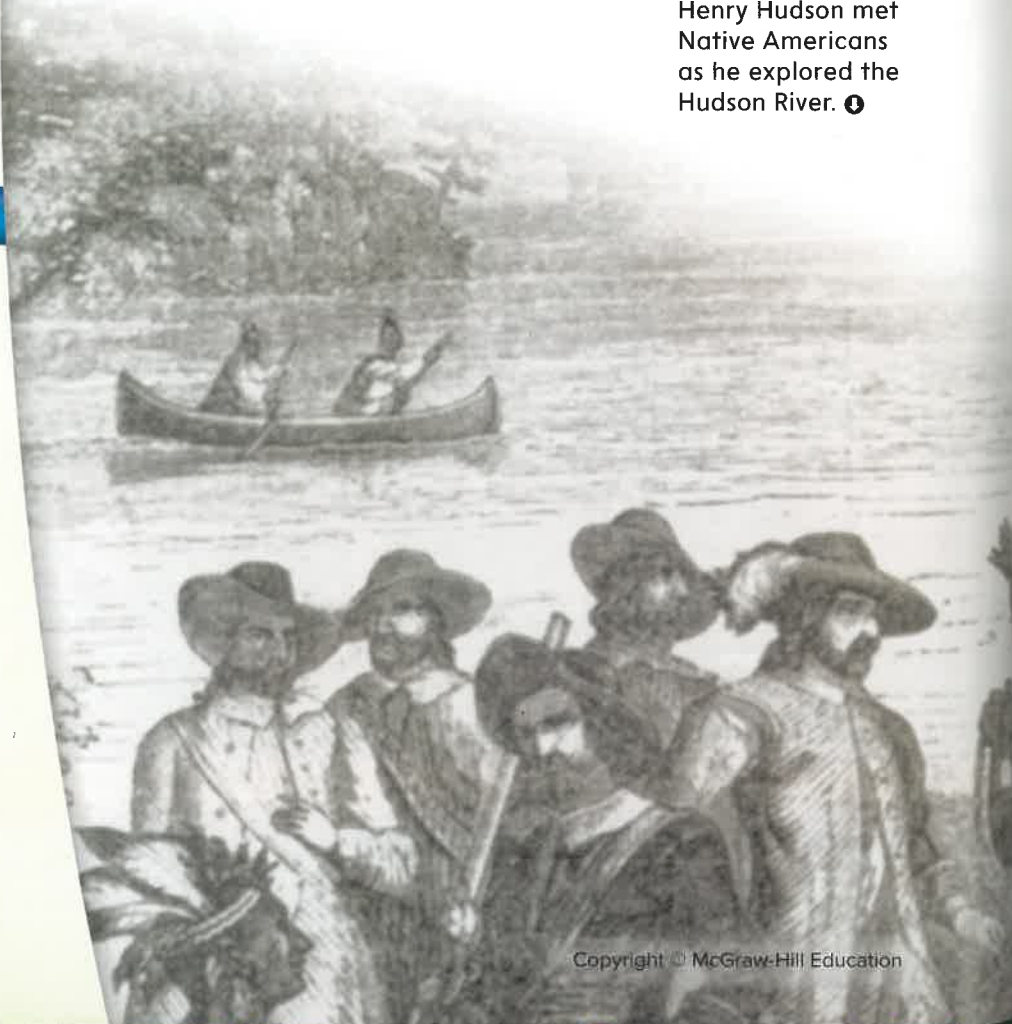
Summarize Use the chart below to summarize why explorers came to New York.

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It is the year 1524. You are a French sailor who has spent weeks in a small wooden boat crossing the Atlantic Ocean. You have no idea what lies ahead. No European has ever sailed to this place before. You hope that the people of the region will be friendly. Later your captain writes:

“So we took the small boat up the river to a land which we found densely [thickly] populated. The people . . . came toward us joyfully, uttering loud cries of wonderment. . . .”

Henry Hudson met Native Americans as he explored the Hudson River. ❶



1490 1520 1550 1580 1610

1492 Christopher Columbus lands in the Americas

1524 Giovanni da Verrazano sails into New York Harbor

1609 Samuel de Champlain explores New York; Henry Hudson explores the Hudson River

A Europeans Reach the Americas

In the late 1400s, Europeans began to look for a water route to the rich spice markets found in Asia. An explorer travels to unfamiliar places to find out about them. One explorer, Christopher Columbus, thought he could reach Asia by sailing westward across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1492, instead of Asia, Columbus sailed to the Bahama Islands in the Caribbean Sea. Columbus did not realize that he had reached a world Europeans knew nothing about.

The First Europeans in New York

By the 1500s, many more explorers came to North America and the land of New York. These Europeans believed that there must be a Northwest Passage, a water route across North America to reach Asia. The country that found this water

route would grow rich from trade with Asia.

Giovanni da Verrazano

You read the words of Giovanni da Verrazano (joh VAHN nee duh vair uh ZAHN oh) at the beginning of this lesson. Although an Italian sea captain, he sailed for the king of France in 1524. He did not find the Northwest Passage, but he was probably the first European to see what is now New York. Verrazano realized he was not in Asia, but he hoped this new land might have riches and products for Europeans to buy. Today a part of New York Harbor north of Staten Island is called Verrazano Narrows in this explorer’s honor.

QUICK CHECK What were Columbus and other explorers looking for when they sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean? *Summarize*

