GUIDED READING  Spain Builds an American Empire

Section 1

A. Following Chronological Order  As you read about the empire Spain built in the Americas, take notes to answer questions about the time line below.

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B. Determining Main Ideas  On the back of this paper define the following terms:

- conquistadors
- mestizo
- encomienda
### Chapter 20

#### Guided Reading

**Spain Builds an American Empire**

### A. Following Chronological Order

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### B. Determining Main Ideas

On the back of this paper define the following terms:

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Thursday, October 11th/. . .Two hours after midnight land appeared, at a distance of about two leagues from them. They took in all sail, remaining with the mainsail, which is the great sail without bonnets, and kept jogging, waiting for day, a Friday, on which they reached a small island of the Lucayos, which is called in the language of the Indians “Guanahani.” Immediately they saw naked people, and the admiral went ashore in the armed boat, and Martín Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yáñez, his brother, who was captain of the Niña. The admiral brought out the royal standard, and the captains went with two banners of the Green Cross, which the admiral flew on all the ships as a flag with an F [for Ferdinand] and a Y [for Isabella], and over each letter their crown, one being on one side of the [cross] and the other on the other. When they had landed, they saw very green trees and much water and fruit of various kinds. The admiral called the two captains and the others who had landed, and Rodrigo de Escobedo, secretary of the whole fleet, and Rodrigo Sanz de Segovia, and said that they should bear witness and testimony how he, before them all, took possession of the island, as in fact he did, for the King and Queen, his Sovereigns, making the declarations which are required, as is contained more at length in the testimonies which were there made in writing. Soon many people of the island gathered there. What follows are the actual words of the admiral, in his book of his first voyage and discovery of these Indies.

“I,” he says, “in order that they might feel great amity towards us, because I knew that they were a people to be delivered and converted to our holy faith rather by love than by force, gave to some among them some red caps and some glass beads, which they hung round their necks, and many other things of little value. At this they were greatly pleased and became so entirely our friends that it was a wonder to see. Afterwards they came swimming to the ships’ boats, where we were, and brought us parrots and cotton thread in balls, and spears and many other things, and we exchanged for them other things, such as small glass beads and hawks’ bells, which we gave to them. In fact, they took all and gave all, such as they had, with good will, but it seemed to me that they were a people very deficient in everything. They all go naked as their mother bore them, and the women also, although I saw only one very young girl. And all those whom I did see were youths, so that I did not see one who was over thirty years of age; they were very well built, with very handsome bodies and very good faces. Their hair is coarse almost like the hairs of a horse’s tail and short; they wear their hair down over their eyebrows, except for a few strands behind, which they wear long and never cut. Some of them are painted black, and they are the colour of the people of the Canaries, neither black nor white, and some of them are painted white and some red and some in any colour that they find. Some of them paint their faces, some their whole bodies, some only the eyes, and some only the nose. They do not bear arms or know them, for I showed to them swords and they took them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are certain reeds, without iron, and some of these have a fish tooth at the end, while others are pointed in various ways. They are all generally fairly tall, good looking and well proportioned. I saw some who bore marks of wounds on their bodies, and I made signs to them to ask how this came about, and they indicated to me that people came from other islands, which are near, and wished to capture them, and they defended themselves. And I believed and still believe that they come here from the mainland to take them for slaves. They should be good servants and of quick intelligence, since I see that they very soon say all
that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for it appeared to me that they had no creed. Our Lord willing, at the time of my departure I will bring back six of them to Your Highnesses, that they may learn to talk. I saw no beast of any kind in this island, except parrots.” All these are the words of the admiral.

Saturday, October 13th/As soon as day broke, there came to the shore many of these men, all youths, as I have said, and all of a good height, very handsome people. Their hair is not curly, but loose and coarse as the hair of a horse; all have very broad foreheads and heads, more so than has any people that I have seen up to now. Their eyes are very lovely and not small. They are not at all black, but the colour of Canarians, and nothing else could be expected, since this is in one line from east to west with the island of Hierro in the Canaries. Their legs are very straight, all alike; they have no bellies but very good figures. They came to the ship in boats, which are made of a treetrunk like long boat and all of one piece. They are very wonderfully carved, considering the country, and large, so that in some forty or forty-five men came. Others are smaller, so that in some only a solitary man came. They row them with a paddle, like a baker’s peel, and they travel wonderfully fast. If one capsizes, all at once begin to swim and right it, bailing it out with gourds which they carry with them. They brought balls of spun cotton and parrots and spears and other trifles, which it would be tedious to write down, and they gave all for anything that was given to them. And I was attentive and laboured to know if they had gold, and I saw that some of them wore a small piece hanging from a hole which they have in the nose, and from signs I was able to understand that, going to the south or going round the island to the south, there was a

king who had large vessels of it and possessed much gold. I endeavoured to make them go there, and afterwards saw that they were not inclined for the journey. I resolved to wait until the afternoon of the following day, and after that to leave for the south-west, for, as many of them indicated to me, they said that there was land to the south and to the south-west and to the north-west, and that those of the north-west often came to attack them. So I resolved to go to the south-west, to seek the gold and precious stones. This island is fairly large and very flat; the trees are very green and there is much water. In the centre of it, there is a very large lake; there is no mountain, and all is so green that it is a pleasure to gaze upon it. The people also are very gentle and, since they long to possess something of ours and fear that nothing will be given to them unless they give something, when they have nothing, they take what they can and immediately throw themselves into the water and swim. But all that they do possess, they give for anything which is given to them, so that they exchange things even for pieces of broken dishes and bits of broken glass cups. . . .”


Discussion Questions

1. **Determining Main Ideas**  What is Columbus's main interest on the island? Why is he interested in that?
2. **Drawing Conclusions**  What impressed you most about this excerpt from Columbus's journal?
3. **Developing Historical Perspective**  What do you think is Columbus's attitude toward the Taino? Point out passages that reveal his thoughts and feelings about them.
In 1519 Spanish conquistadors led by Hernando Cortés first entered the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlán. The Aztec emperor, Montezuma II, who is called Motecuhzoma in this excerpt, believed that the Spaniards were powerful gods whose arrival had been foretold by Aztec priests. The following account, written by Aztec historians, describes the meeting of Motecuhzoma and Cortés—at Huitzillan. How did Motecuhzoma and Cortés react to one another?

**Motecuhzoma Goes Out to Meet Cortes**

The Spaniards arrived in Xoloco, near the entrance to Tenochtitlán. That was the end of the march, for they had reached their goal.

Motecuhzoma now arrayed himself in his finery, preparing to go out to meet them. The other great princes also adorned their persons, as did the nobles and their chieftains and knights. They all went out together to meet the strangers.

They brought trays heaped with the finest flowers—the flower that resembles a shield; the flower shaped like a heart; in the center, the flower with the sweetest aroma; and the fragrant yellow flower, the most precious of all . . . .

Thus Motecuhzoma went out to meet them, there in Huitzillan. He presented many gifts to the Captain and his commanders, those who had come to make war. . . . Then he hung the gold necklaces around their necks and gave them presents of every sort as gifts of welcome.

When Motecuhzoma had given necklaces to each one, Cortes asked him: “Are you Motecuhzoma? Are you the king? Is it true that you are the king Motecuhzoma?”

And the king said: “Yes, I am Motecuhzoma.” Then he stood up to welcome Cortes; he came forward, bowed his head low and addressed him in these words: “Our lord, you are weary. The journey has tired you, but now you have arrived on the earth. You have come to your city, Mexico. You have come here to sit on your throne again.

This was foretold by the kings who governed your city, and now it has taken place. You have come out of the clouds and mists to sit on your throne again.

When Motecuhzoma had finished, La Malinche translated his address into Spanish so that the Captain could understand it. Cortes replied in his strange and savage tongue, speaking first to La Malinche: “Tell Motecuhzoma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented.”

Then he said to Motecuhzoma: “We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear.”

La Malinche translated this speech and the Spaniards grasped Motecuhzoma’s hands and patted his back to show their affection for him.


**Discussion Questions**

1. **Clarifying** What gifts did Motecuhzoma present to Cortés and his men?
2. **Making Inferences** Why did Motecuhzoma say to Cortés “now you have arrived on the earth”?
3. **Drawing Conclusions** What can you conclude from this passage about the advantages Cortés had in his attempt to conquer the Aztecs?
We arrived in Tenochtitlán to find torches flaming everywhere along the causeway, the plaza strewn with flowers and filled with a curious throng, word having reached the city of the beast with a voice like thunder that ran much faster than a deer and carried a man on its back.

Indeed, so curious were the Indians that as they lost their fears, they began to press around us and had to be driven away. So keen was their delight, I regretted that the stallion had only a small part of his once magnificent tail to show them.

Lord Tzapotlan led us to the Emperor’s palace, I still riding Bravo and the dwarf clinging on behind. A place for the stallion was waiting, and for us a series of rooms, sparsely furnished but with braziers burning and flowers scattered about.

Lord Tzapotlan had water brought to us in silver bowls and then disappeared, saying that he would see the Reverend Speaker and arrange for our meeting. I thought because of the important message I carried that the Emperor would be anxious to see us. But Lord Tzapotlan came back in a short time with distressing news.

“The Great Emperor,” he said, “has locked himself away. He is taking neither food nor drink. He has only Tenayuca, his trusted soothsayer, at his side.”

“You understand the urgent message I carry from Captain-General Cortés?”

“It is understood,” the lord said. “I spoke of it to the wizard.”

“The Emperor won’t talk to you?”

“He’ll talk to no one except to Tenayuca.”

We waited that night with no word from Lord Tzapotlan. But in the morning one of the servants said that she had heard that the Emperor had left the palace secretly during the night and gone to the temple of Uitzilopochtli, where he had prayed for a sign from the war god.

The Emperor remained in the temple for two days, praying and burning incense, surrounded by wizards.

On the third day at noon, Lord Tzapotlan came and led me to a chamber different from the one I had visited before. The walls and ceiling were bare and painted a pearly white, which gave me a feeling that I was suspended in the sky, floating high among drifting clouds.

Moctezuma was sitting on a mat that was the same color as the walls, woven of dovellike feathers. I stood before him in my bare feet, out of respect, and gave him the message that Cortés had given me, only softening it somewhat from the harsh words Cortés had angrily spoken.

A confused man, thin and visibly different from the proud emperor I had once talked to, sat before me. He seemed even more confused than on the morning he had shown me the painting of the Spanish ships.

A servant brought forth a long-stemmed reed packed with a brown substance, which he had lit. The Emperor put the stem in his mouth and sucked on it. Smoke came out from his nostrils. He did this but once, then put it aside, as if it were suddenly distasteful. . . .

“Tell me,” he said, “you of the sunlit hair, with whom I hoped to talk during many hours, to whom I wished to make princely gifts, who fled from me not knowing that I planned for you the most exalted of deaths, tell me. . . .”
Moctezuma paused. I began to wonder if he had lost the thread of his thought or if he had changed his mind about what he had started to say.

"Tell me," he said, moving his gaze from the dove-colored walls that seemed to drift about like clouds, "tell me, why did you flee?"

"Truly," I said in a firm voice, "I fled because I did not want to die on the altar stone."

"But when we talked before, you agreed that it was a great honor to die and be transported to a warrior's heaven, the place of flowers and hummingbirds and life everlasting."

"I discovered, thinking about it later, that I was not yet ready to visit this place of hummingbirds and flowers. I have more battles to fight, many more prisoners to take."

At that moment, looking at the Emperor's gold-shod feet, I saw them move nervously back and forth. I took from this that my answer had diminished me in his eyes. He was silent for a long time.

"I showed you," he said at last, "the pictures my artists painted of Cortés and his captains. They do not look like you, but still they have an air about them, all these men who call themselves Spaniards, that I find about you. Are you one of them? Are you a Spaniard?"

I nodded.

"A Spaniard in the army of this Cortés?"

"No, I am a seminarian. Someday I hope to be a priest. I was cast away on an island off the coast, among the Maya."

"I have heard of a white man who was left on this coast. He became a great cacique."

"The man you name is Gerónimo de Aguilar."

"You are not a spy for this Cortés?" the Emperor said.

"No."

"You have seen Cortés. You have talked to him. You have brought a message from Cortés. You were with him, so my ambassadors say, in Texcál and Cholólan. What do think of this Hernán Cortés?"

I had no difficulty in answering this question.

"He is a ruthless man, cruel and ambitious and without fear of anything or anyone, even you, Revered Speaker."

"He says, he has said many times, since the day he left the sea, that he comes to visit a city about which he has heard marvelous things and to pledge me loyalty and..."

"The loyalty is only to himself," I broke in.

"To pledge loyalty and to inform me about his king and his god. Lately, in a message sent from Texcál and Cholólan, he scolds me about the Azteca gods and our rites. We have worshipped our gods from the long beginning. In our own way. And we know them to be good. Your gods may be good, also. Is this why he wishes to come, to scold me again?"

"It is not why he comes," I said. "He comes as a conqueror to subdue the city, to kill all those who seek to defend it, to kill you yourself should you dare to oppose him."

Moctezuma showed no emotion at these words. He turned his gaze to the wall, to the stars I had not noticed before painted there among the clouds, and fell silent.

I left with the strong belief that he would oppose Cortés' entry into the city and that Lord Tzapotlan, who had heard of the happening in Texcál and himself had seen the carnage in Cholólan, would stand firmly behind him. My belief, however, was not borne out.

No sooner had Cortés appeared on the outskirts of the city than the Emperor went forth to greet him, carrying presents of gold. With the Emperor were Cácamáztin, Revered Speaker of Texóco and Tlácapan, and a company of Arrow, Eagle, and Jaguar Knights, bedecked in feathers and jade insignias, who swept the causeway clean and scattered it with flowers as the Captain-General advanced.

The lords supported Moctezuma upon a litter, beneath a rich canopy of green feathers, and when Cortés was close at hand he descended and walked on bare feet to meet him. A number of lords went ahead, sweeping his path, laying cloaks so that his feet would not touch the earth.

Upon seeing the Emperor, Cortés jumped from his horse. When the two came close, each bowed to the other. Moctezuma welcomed Cortés and he, speaking through Doña Marina, who stood at his side proudly holding aloft his personal banner, wished the Emperor good health.
Cortés then brought out a necklace of colored glass, dipped in musk to give it a pleasant odor, and hung it around the Emperor’s neck.

As he did so, Cortés attempted to take hold of him in a hearty Spanish embrazo. But the lords who stood around Moctezuma quickly grasped Cortés’ arms, for they felt that this was an indignity.

Afterward, Hernán Cortés made another complimentary speech, thanking Moctezuma for being there to greet him, and saying that it rejoiced his heart to meet the great Emperor. Whereupon Moctezuma ordered his nephew, the lord of Texcéco, to accompany Cortés and his captains into the city.

They were escorted to a large house located on the plaza close to the royal palace.

Taking Cortés by the hand, Moctezuma led him to a richly furnished hall where the captain was to stay, gave him a heavy necklace fashioned of golden crabs, and disappeared, suggesting that he rest from his hard journey.

Cortés waited until the Emperor’s entourage was out of earshot, then called me over and queried me at length.

“I gather this from his messages, which changed from week to week, lately from day to day. If I had waited for him to make up his mind I would still be camped in Cholólan. But now that I am inside the gates, what can we expect? Will he strangle us in the night while we sleep—or gather our men for a festival, then treacherously fall upon them?”

As you did with the men and women of Cholólan, I wanted to say.

“The Emperor has a vast army,” I said. “He should be treated with respect.”

“I intend to, but I am not here to trade compliments and gifts. Remember this when you talk to him. And do so at once. He seems to put trust in you. Remind him that we come here in the name of God and our King. And do not forget, I have allies, an army of five thousand Texcaltéca camped in the hills. In the meantime, I trust him with all my heart.”

Activity Options

1. **Writing for a Specific Purpose**  With a small group of classmates, write a skit about the meeting between Cortés and Moctezuma. Then assign roles and perform your skit for the class.

2. **Making Judgments**  Jot down vivid descriptive details that you find in this excerpt. Then draw a sketch to illustrate the meeting between Moctezuma and Cortés.
Ferdinand Magellan believed that he could head west and sail around the world. He was right, but the voyage took longer than he thought and involved hardships that required him to show great resolve. Ironically, he died not knowing that his dream would be fulfilled.

Magellan was born in 1480 to a local Portuguese official. At the age of 12, Magellan was sent to the Portuguese court, where he learned navigation, mapmaking, and astronomy. In his twenties, he served Portugal as a soldier and sailor. He traveled to the East Indies and fought in Morocco.

Magellan returned to Portugal in 1512 as an experienced captain with an idea. He heard from another sailor that there was a passage south of the Americas that would open to waters west of that land, just a few weeks sailing to the Spice Islands. Magellan tried to convince the king of Portugal to back the trip, but he refused. Frustrated, Magellan took his plan to Charles I, the king of Spain. He approved the plan the same day.

Magellan's five ships and crew of about 230 sailed from Spain on September 20, 1519. From the beginning, the Portuguese commander had difficulty with the Spanish captains of the other boats. In addition, storms rocked the ships during the trip down the east coast of South America. Magellan tried to convince the king of Portugal to back the trip, but he refused. Frustrated, Magellan took his plan to Charles I, the king of Spain. He approved the plan the same day.

Magellan ordered his fleet into a safe harbor. The Spanish captains urged him to sail to the Indies by way of Africa, and the crew wanted to head back north. Magellan would not budge. The Spanish captains mutinied, but Magellan was able to maintain command. The party then waited seven months for the storms to weaken so that they could resume their journey.

Three days after setting out again, Magellan found a narrow passage. The crew thought the ships would be destroyed, but Magellan ordered them to enter it. Huge waves appeared and separated the vessels into two groups. Two boats were sucked inside the strait and assumed to be lost, while the other two were thrown back into the Atlantic. (The fifth ship had been lost earlier.) When the weather finally cleared, Magellan was able to sail through the entrance. He saw the two ships presumed lost and had found the passage and the straits now named for him.

While the group explored their discovery, the largest ship, which had the most supplies, deserted the others for Spain. The crew begged Magellan to turn back as well, but he refused. As they left the passage, he named the massive calm body of water that lay in front of them the Pacific.

However, Magellan and his men had no idea about the size of this ocean. They also did not realize that their course led them away from islands that could have provided them with fresh food and water. They sailed for three more months. Starvation and scurvy killed half the remaining crew. On March 4, 1531, they ate the last of the food. Two days later they sighted the island of Guam, and landed on one of the islands of the Philippines.

Magellan tried to convert the people living in the Philippines to Christianity, and a battle followed between those native peoples and the outnumbered Europeans. In the fight, Magellan was killed. One of the crewmen wrote, “And so they slew our mirror, our light, our comfort and our true and only guide.”

Though Magellan was dead, the voyage continued. One ship, a skilled navigator, and a half-starved crew of 17 were all that returned to Spain. They arrived on September 8, 1522, almost three years after they had departed. Though Magellan himself did not complete the trip, he had been proven right. It was possible to sail around the world.

Questions

Determining Main Ideas
1. Give two examples of Magellan’s resolve.
2. What problems did the explorers have while crossing the Pacific Ocean?
3. Making Inferences Why do you think Magellan had problems with the crews of his ships?
Hernando Cortés was a restless, aggressive man who was eager for adventure, hungry for wealth, and ambitious for power. These drives combined with wily intelligence, great energy, and a chance opportunity enabled him to conquer the Aztec Empire.

Early in life, Cortés showed signs of his desire for excitement and control. In 1504, he left his native Spain to seek opportunities in the New World. He spent the next 14 years on the island of Hispaniola helping Diego Velázquez conquer Cuba. Velázquez heard stories of a rich land full of gold to the west. In 1519, he gave Cortés the assignment of investigating the area to see if the stories were true. As Cortés prepared his expedition, though, he displayed such arrogance and ambition that Velázquez revoked the order that put Cortés in charge. However, Cortés ignored Velázquez, loaded his ships, and sailed for Mexico.

Upon landing there, Cortés learned that the stories of a gold-rich empire were true. As a result, he moved to establish his authority over the mission as legitimate. He ordered his men to build a town, named a council to lead that town, and then had that council name him captain general and the representative of the king of Spain. With these steps, Cortés tried to secure at least some legal basis for his command.

Cortés also took three additional actions. He made contact with a Native American woman named Malinche. She became a valued adviser because of her ability to speak the Aztec language and to learn Spanish quickly. Next, Cortés sent a sampling of gold gifts that he had received from the Aztecs on a ship back to Spain. With these presents for the king, he hoped to win an official appointment. Finally, he boldly had his men burn the remaining boats. There would be no returning to Cuba.

With the preparations complete, Cortés now set out for the Aztec Empire. Taking advantage of the resentments that other Native American groups held against the Aztecs, he forged several key alliances. These were important, as his small force of around 600 men was woefully outnumbered by the mighty Aztecs. The Aztec emperor Montezuma II sent several missions bearing gifts, hoping to persuade Cortés to turn back. However, the gifts of gold only convinced the Spaniards to continue.

Cortés, meanwhile, used dogs, horses, guns, and cannons—none of which had ever been seen before in the Americas—to surprise and scare the native peoples. As the Spanish neared the Aztec capital, Cortés learned of an ambush. He quickly struck first, though, and killed thousands of enemy troops. However, a Native American account disputes that version, saying that Cortés carried out a premeditated massacre.

After reaching the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, Cortés imprisoned Montezuma and tried to rule through him. Troubles with Velázquez returned, however, and Cortés traveled to the coast to meet a Spanish force that had landed to seize him. Upon meeting this new army, Cortés described the riches of the Aztec Empire and convinced the soldiers to join him. Reinforced, he returned to Tenochtitlán to find a crisis. His second in command had killed many Aztecs and ignited a revolt. The Spaniards were being assaulted by them. Cortés had to withdraw from the city under attack. Within two years, though, he completed the conquest of the Aztecs.

In the meantime, Cortés had won the recognition he had sought from the Spanish crown. He was named governor of New Spain and began to set up the roots of a Spanish colonial government. He would eventually lead more expeditions to Honduras and to Baja California, but none proved as successful or lucrative as his voyage to Mexico.

Questions
1. Making Inferences How worried was Cortés about his actual authority to act in Mexico?
2. Drawing Conclusions Do you agree or disagree with Cortés’s decision to burn the ships? Explain.
3. Developing Historical Perspective Do you think that Cortés was admirable or a villain? Explain.
RETEACHING ACTIVITY  
Spain Builds an  
American Empire

Section 1

Multiple Choice
Choose the best answer for each item. Write the letter of your answer in the blank.

1. In 1492, Christopher Columbus and his crew landed on an island in the Caribbean Sea that he named  
   a. the East Indies.  
   b. the Bahamas.  
   c. San Salvador.  
   d. Hispaniola.

2. Lands that are controlled by another nation are called  
   a. territories.  
   b. dependencies.  
   c. protectorates.  
   d. colonies.

3. After Magellan’s death, his crew returned to Spain in 1522 and became the first sailors to  
   a. sail around the world.  
   b. sail around the tip of Africa.  
   c. land on North America.  
   d. land on South America.

4. The first European settlers in the Americas were the  
   a. Spanish.  
   b. French.  
   c. Portuguese.  
   d. Dutch.

5. Cortés and others who sought riches in the Americas were known as  
   a. tyrants.  
   b. conquistadors.  
   c. dictators.  
   d. emperors.

6. The Spanish explorer who conquered the Inca was  
   a. Christopher Columbus.  
   b. Hernando Cortés.  
   c. Francisco Pizarro.  
   d. Amerigo Vespucci.

7. The mestizo population in the Americas was a mixture of  
   a. Native Americans and Portuguese.  
   b. French and Spanish.  
   c. Spanish and Portuguese.  
   d. Spanish and Native Americans.

8. The system of oppression used by the Spanish against the Native Americans was called  
   a. sharecropping.  
   b. slavery.  
   c. conquistadors.  
   d. encomienda.