



SIGNIFICANT EXPLORERS

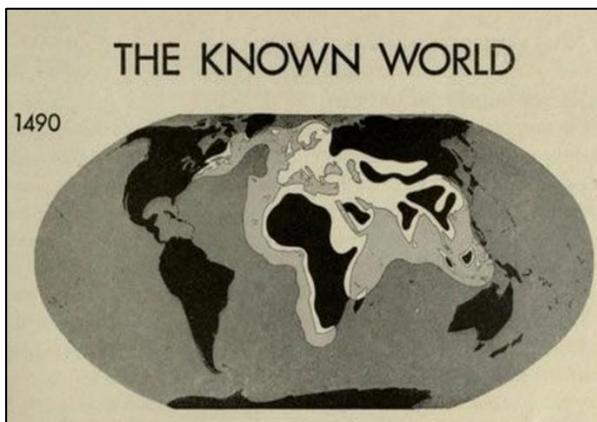
from across history

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Overview

- Explorers** are people who explore new or unfamiliar areas, in order to discover what is there.
- Explorers have helped us to better understand the world that we live in, and beyond!
- Human exploration has been driven by changes in science and technology.
- Changes to sailing technology helped those in 'the Age of Exploration' to travel greater distances and explore unfamiliar lands. In more recent times, air and space travel have opened up new fields of discovery.
- Explorers often share important qualities, e.g. patience, technical skill, courage, resilience and self-belief.



The lighter areas show the world as it was known in 1490. The work of many explorers, with the help of technological advances, has meant that there has been rapid development in our knowledge since then.

Christopher Columbus

Columbus Factfile

- Lived between:** 1451 and 1506 (died aged 54).
- From:** Genoa, Italy (born Cristoforo Colombo).
- Most famous for:** In 1492, for leading an expedition that was the first to make land on the new world of the Americas during the 'Age of Exploration.'



Portrait of Columbus from 1519, completed after his death. Modern image showing Columbus' treatment of indigenous people.

Important Notes

- Columbus lived during the **Age of Exploration**. At this time, improvements to sailing technology allowed explorers to search areas of the world that were previously unknown to them.
- Many European countries wanted to find these new places to **improve trade**: they could find quicker routes to cover long distances and build trade links with the native people that they encountered.
- Columbus, unlike many at the time, **recognised that the world was a sphere** (not flat). He believed that he could find a new, shorter route to India and south-east Asia if he sailed across the Atlantic – this was important because **Indian spices and textiles were extremely valuable in Europe**.
- After sailing across the Atlantic in 1492, he finally came across land. Instead of landing in Asia, however, he had **instead reached the Americas**. On each of his 3 voyages, he explored the Caribbean Islands.
- His voyages started a wave of **Europeans travelling to and 'conquering' the Americas**. These people did not 'discover' these lands: native peoples had lived there for thousands of years. In the modern day, Columbus and other explorers are often criticized for the way that they **mistreated indigenous people**.

Edmund Hillary/ Tenzing Norgay

Hillary and Norgay Factfile

- Lived between:** Hillary: 1919 and 2008 (died aged 88). Norgay: 1914 and 1986 (died aged 71)



Photograph of Hillary and Norgay, taken on the peak of Mount Everest, 8,848 metres above sea level!

Photograph of both climbers taken upon their return to base camp, after safely descending the mountain.

Important Notes

- Mount Everest, located on the border between Nepal and China, is the **highest mountain on Earth**. Its peak is **8,848 metres above sea level**.
- Everest had been known to indigenous people for many years, but was recognised as the world's highest mountain by the western world from 1852. By the early 1900s, **western explorers tried to be first to reach the top. Many died**.
- There are **many dangers** with climbing a mountain that is so high: the extreme cold & wind, steep sides and the reduced oxygen (a third of oxygen at sea level).
- The first summit** was on May 29th, 1953 by Sir Edmund Hillary from New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay, a Sherpa from Nepal. They climbed from the south side (in Nepal) on a British expedition led by Colonel John Hunt.

Neil Armstrong

Armstrong Factfile

- Lived between:** 1930 and 2012 (died aged 82).
- From:** Ohio, USA.
- Most famous for:** In 1969, being the first person to set foot on the surface of the Moon. Armstrong was a part of the Apollo 11 mission.



NASA photograph of Armstrong taken in 1969.

Photograph of Armstrong with an American flag on the lunar surface.

Important Notes

- The first aeroplane flight took place in 1903, and by 1957 space craft were built that were able to travel into space. These technological advances massively opened up new exploration opportunities.
- By the 1960s, the United States (USA) and Soviet Union (USSR) were racing to send a person to the surface of the moon (the space race). NASA – the US space agency – launched their Apollo missions.
- Neil Armstrong was commander of Apollo 11 (alongside Buzz Aldrin & Michael Collins). He stepped onto the lunar surface on 21st July 1969, stating 'One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.'

Explorers Timeline

1400: The Age of Exploration begins.

1492: Columbus' first voyage. He reaches the Caribbean Islands.

1606: William Janzoon lands on Australia: the first European to do so.

1650: Age of Exploration ends around this time.

1700-1800s: Europeans create vast empires in the lands they have explored.

1903: The Wright brothers make the first aeroplane flight.

1953: Hillary and Tenzing reach the South Pole.

1961: USSR cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first person to fly into space.

1969: Neil Armstrong steps foot on the moon.

Key Vocabulary

Explorer

Christopher Columbus

Age of Exploration

Indigenous

Edmund Hillary

Tenzing Norgay

Mount Everest

Neil Armstrong

Space Race

Lunar

Courage

Resilience