

Prince Henry the Navigator



By the early 1400's, Europeans were trying to find faster ways to get to Asia. They began to look at sea routes. The search began in Portugal by a man named Prince Henry. Like others, he was lured by trade and wealth. However, he was also very religious and wanted to spread the Christian religion around the world.

In 1416 Prince Henry opened a school for navigation. He brought sailors, astronomers, geographers, and shipbuilders to his school to work together. They came from all over the world, and were the best in their fields. They worked to find better ways to travel. They made new maps and built stronger and faster ships. Together, they had many new ideas.

During his life, he sponsored many trips to explore the western coast of Africa. Before his time, sailors had only reached Cape Bojador, located just a little way down the coast. Many sailors were afraid to go further because so many had disappeared along the way. Stories of bubbling water and huge crashing waves kept most from even trying. Prince Henry hoped that explorers could eventually get around Africa and reach Asia. A major breakthrough came in 1434 when one of his explorers made it around the mysterious Cape Bojador!

From 1444 to 1446 Prince Henry sent over thirty ships down the African coast. He did not live to see his dream come true, but the last voyage he sponsored traveled over 1,500 miles! Prince Henry never went on any voyages himself. However, he did advance exploration. For this he was called Prince Henry the Navigator. By his death in 1460, many new inventions had come into use, and explorers had traveled farther than ever before.

The word "sponsored" in the reading MOST NEARLY means

- A. explored.
- B. feared.
- C. paid for.
- D. ran into.

Which sentence about Prince Henry the Navigator is FALSE?

- A. He sought to increase trade with Asia.
- B. He opened a famous school of navigation.
- C. He paved the way for future exploration.
- D. He bravely sailed where no one had before.

Which choice of title would BEST FIT a book about Prince Henry?

- A. "Mapmaking and Shipbuilding."
- B. "A Famous King of Portugal."
- C. "Spreading His Religion."
- D. "Prince of Progress."

Write 5 adjectives that could describe Prince Henry the Navigator: _____