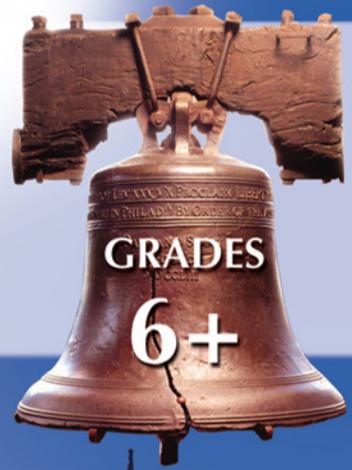




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# U.S. HISTORY

## People and Events 1607-1865



GRADES

6+



*The  
Mayflower*



*Thomas Jefferson*

*George  
Washington*



*Frederick Douglass*



*Abraham  
Lincoln*

By George Lee  
Mark Twain Media, Inc., Publishers

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## Introduction

Decisions—we make them all the time. However, we don't usually think of them as being important; in fact, many are not. But the consequences of our decisions can be far-reaching because they may stretch beyond ourselves to affect others. If a young person prefers to buy a CD by the ABCs rather than one made by the XYZs, that puts money in the ABCs' pocket. If everyone buys only the ABCs' CDs, the XYZs are out of business.

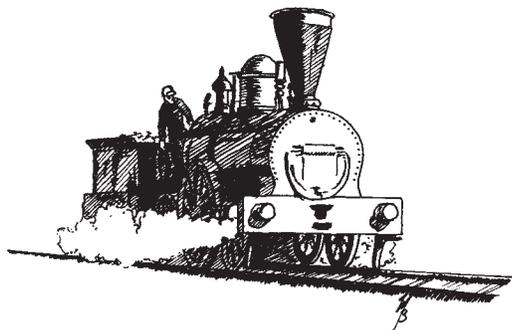
Decisions made by one person often affect others as well. A young person's decision to take drugs may be devastating to himself and his family. Another family's future may be decided by someone the family doesn't even know and has never heard of, but this mystery person decides to open a factory or close one or to buy more (or less) of the products this person produces.

Some decisions have affected not only individuals and those with whom they come in contact but have changed history. Most of the time, the person making the decision was thinking about himself or herself and what was to his or her advantage at that moment. He or she was not thinking in terms of how people hundreds of years from then would react to it. Some decisions turn out for the better, some for the worse. At times, there were surprising side effects. Eli Whitney's cotton gin is a good example. He was not thinking about how it would create a new demand for slaves. He was only interested in helping farmers clean seeds from their cotton.

As we look at decisions made by people of the past, we need to realize that they were products of their time and place, just as we are. We may not approve of things they did, but we cannot judge them by the standards of our time. We can't imagine any intelligent person thinking slaveholding is fine, so we assume they must have felt guilty for owning human property. However, if they grew up in the South before the Civil War, slavery was part of their society, and they may never have met a person who opposed slavery. No one asked what slaves wanted, but eventually some African-American men and women made decisions affecting themselves and history. Fighting duels was another sign of the times, but it wasn't much different than the death-defying risks some people take today. The role of women was much more restricted than in the modern world. Men thought that women were there to cook, tend the garden, and produce children. They thought it was a waste of time to educate women or listen to them. As a result, a woman's role was very limited in making major decisions that affected the nation. Nevertheless, some women made or began making major breakthroughs.

This book is about decisions made before 1865. The nation was young, and in some ways it was different from what it became—different even from any nation in existence at the time. Crèvecoeur asked, "What is this new man, this American?" Perhaps one way to answer that question is to look at decisions that made America what it was and what it would become.

The information in this book is correlated with the National Council of Social Studies (NCSS™) curriculum standards and the National Standards of History (NSH). It also supports the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) initiative. Relevant websites are given in each chapter for students to use in researching the topics further.



## Queen Isabella Appoints an Admiral

Queen Isabella of Spain studied the face of the sailor who stood before her. He seemed self-assured, experienced, and certainly bold, but was he insane for what he wanted to do, and would she be wise to back him?

In 1492, Isabella was 41 years old and had already proven herself as a woman who knew what she wanted. Born into the royal family of Castile, her family had tried to marry her off twice while she was very young. One prospective husband died when she was 10, the other died on his way to their wedding when she was 15. In 1469, she married the man she chose, Ferdinand of Aragon, and together they began to conquer the rest of Spain. She knew the look in the sailor's eye—that desire to achieve and conquer shone in her eyes as well. Her advisors told her the sailor was doomed to failure. Ships were not strong enough, and Asia was too far away.

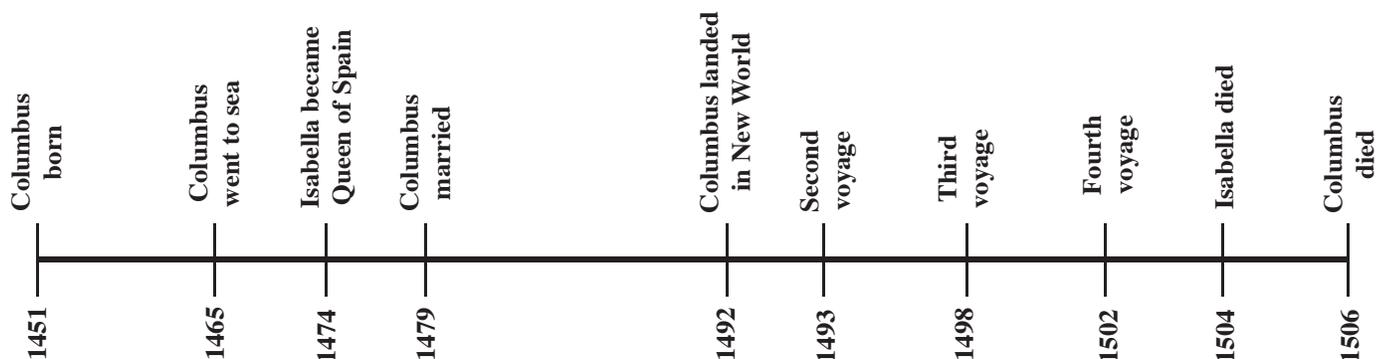
Christopher Columbus, a sailor, was also 41 years old. He came from a humble Italian family of weavers. He had been drawn to the sea at an early age. When he was 15, the ship on which he sailed was attacked by pirates, and he landed in Portugal. There he learned valuable skills: reading, writing, navigation, and seamanship. In 1479, he married and for a time worked as a merchant. But the sea called to him, so he boarded a ship sailing to Africa's Gold Coast. This ocean voyage would give him valuable experience.

To Columbus, it seemed logical to assume that one could reach China by sailing west, and the treasures of the Orient would enrich the person and nation that was first to arrive. Most educated people knew the world was round; that wasn't the problem. The question was whether the ships of the time, caravels, could make such a long journey. Columbus tried to persuade the rulers of Portugal, Spain, and then England to sponsor the trip, but all rejected him. Again, he returned to Spain where the war to remove the Moslems from Grenada was ending. Again, the queen turned him down, so he started to leave for Portugal. But a messenger caught up with him and told him to return to the palace. The queen had decided in his favor; he would be given the title "Admiral of the Ocean Seas" and would receive ten percent of the revenues from anything he found. In a dramatic gesture, she said she would sell her jewels if necessary to fund the trip, but money was raised elsewhere. With three small ships, Columbus set sail in August, 1492.

**RESULTS:** Columbus discovered a small island on October 12 and assumed he was somewhere near India; for that reason, he called the friendly Taino natives on the island "Indians." He would make four voyages all together but proved to be a better explorer than ruler. There were many complaints about his using Indians as slaves and the harsh way in which he and his family ruled. In 1499, he was taken to Spain in chains. Later his title and money were restored. Queen Isabella died in 1504; Columbus died in 1506. To his dying day, Columbus was sure his discoveries were on the outskirts of China.



*Christopher Columbus*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Queen Isabella Appoints an Admiral: Reinforcement

**Directions:** Complete the following activities, essays, and challenges on your own paper.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Have students create a map of the four voyages of Columbus and those of other explorers. Notice that at no time did Columbus come to any part of what is now the United States.
2. Have students look at models or pictures of caravels found in encyclopedias or on the Internet and draw pictures of these ships.

### ESSAYS:

1. You are Columbus writing a letter to the queen. Describe the trip you are planning and your qualifications to command the expedition.
2. You are Isabella, and people are asking you why you have agreed to let Columbus make this trip. What reasons would you give?
3. A friend of yours has signed on to go on a voyage with Columbus, and he wants you to go. If you want to go, write a letter to your mother explaining why you would like to go. If you don't want to go, write a letter to your friend and explain why you are turning him down.

### CHALLENGES:

1. In what year was Columbus born?
2. In what year was Isabella almost married the first time?
3. What had been Columbus' longest trip before he sailed in 1492?
4. Who was Spain fighting in 1492?
5. How many times was Columbus turned down before he got approval?
6. Before his title of "Admiral of the Ocean Seas" meant anything, what would Columbus have to do?
7. What were two good reasons that Isabella could have given for not helping Columbus when he asked the first time?
8. Why did Columbus call the natives he met "Indians"?
9. Why didn't Columbus take any pride in discovering a "new world"?
10. If you were Columbus, what questions would you have to consider in planning your trip?
11. When we look at the globe, it is obvious that Columbus is nowhere near China or India. What could have caused him to be so far off in his calculations?

### NATIONAL STANDARDS CORRELATIONS:

**NCSS VIi:** (Power, Authority, & Governance) Give examples and explain how governments attempt to achieve their stated ideals at home and abroad.

**NSH Era 1, Standard 2:** How early European exploration and colonization resulted in cultural and ecological interactions among previously unconnected peoples

### WEBSITES:

<http://www.ibiblio.org/expo/1492.exhibit/overview.html>

"Outline of Objects and Topics in 1492: An Ongoing Voyage Exhibit," The Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/dsxphome.html>

"Discovery and Exploration," The Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html>

"Map Collections: 1500–2004," The Library of Congress

## Captain John Smith Saves Jamestown



John Smith

Other nations besides Spain were interested in establishing colonies, especially after Cortés conquered the Aztecs of Mexico and Pizarro the Incas of Peru. In both cases, they took large quantities of gold from the natives. Portuguese sailors moved down the coast of Africa, and their ships came back with gold, ivory, and slaves. England was also interested, but their explorer, John Cabot, found no great wealth, and only a few Englishmen were interested in colonizing. Sir Humphrey Gilbert tried to establish a colony in Newfoundland in 1583, but he died at sea, and the settlers returned after a cold winter. In 1587, Sir Walter Raleigh sent 117 settlers to Roanoke Island (North Carolina), but this colony disappeared.

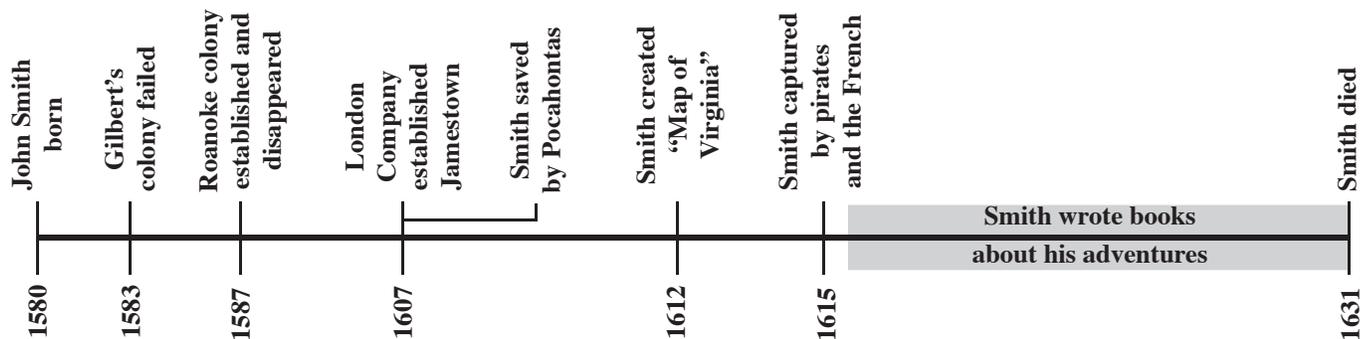
Establishing colonies was too expensive for any one person to afford. A new system developed: the joint stock company. Groups of people would each put up part of the cost and receive a share of the profits. The Muscovy Company traded in Russia and the East India Company in India. In 1606, the London Company was formed, and it sent 144 settlers to develop a coastal settlement at Jamestown in Virginia. One of those men was 27-year-old John Smith.

Smith's motto was *Vincere est vivere* (To conquer is to live). He had been tossed overboard from a sinking ship and had fought the Turks. The Turks captured him and held him as a slave with a chain around his neck. He escaped and finally returned to England in 1604. When he learned about the expedition to create a new colony, he signed on. He was supposed to be a member of the council for the colony, but after arguing with the ship's captain, Smith finished the voyage in chains.

Smith was released after a jury trial. In December 1607, Smith was captured by the Native Americans living in the area, but the chief's daughter, Pocahontas, risked her life to save his. When he returned to Jamestown, he was arrested and charged with causing the deaths of the two men who had gone with him into Native-American country. After he was found not guilty, he was elected council president.

The colony was in danger of starvation, despite the fact that the soil was good and plenty of food could be found. Six-foot-long sturgeon swam past. Deer were abundant, and turkeys weighing 70 pounds were nearby. But the men who came were looking for quick riches, so they wandered up and down the beaches looking for gold nuggets. They wanted to get rich and go home. They ignored the danger they were in. Smith ordered that every man must work or would receive no food. The colonists began to grow blisters on their hands as they tilled fields and built houses. After Smith was injured by an explosion, he returned to England in 1609. He returned to North America in 1612 and drew maps of a region he named "New England." He was captured by pirates and then by the French in 1615. When he got home, he spent the rest of his life quietly writing books about his adventures.

**RESULTS:** Later, leaders of Virginia would continue to force settlers to work. The London Company never made any money from their efforts, but John Rolfe would take a local plant, tobacco, and export it to England. Pocahontas later married John Rolfe.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Captain John Smith Saves Jamestown: Reinforcement

**Directions:** Complete the following activities, essays, and challenges on your own paper.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. On a map, identify the places John Smith went. Ask what drives a man to take the risks he did.
2. Research the Lost Colony, Powhatan, and Pocahontas.

### ESSAYS:

1. You overhear a stockholder in the London Company talking with a man who has signed up to establish the colony at Jamestown. What would he say was the duty of the settler?
2. You are one of the settlers who has been in Jamestown from the beginning. Write a letter to a friend in England. Describe your experience.
3. To be a great leader, does a person have to be popular? How might Smith and others have handled the situation so there would not have been so many complaints among the settlers?

### CHALLENGES:

1. Why did joint stock companies rather than private individuals start colonies?
2. How many times was John Smith held as someone's prisoner?
3. Why was Cabot's voyage to the New World discouraging to those thinking about colonizing America?
4. Who established the famous "Lost Colony"?
5. What reason did the English have for thinking there would be gold in the New World?
6. Why did the settlers in Jamestown almost starve?
7. What was the name of the Native American girl who saved Smith's life? Whom did she marry?
8. What kind of people came to Jamestown? How long did they plan to stay?
9. What are sturgeon?
10. Captain Smith was not very popular, even though he was saving the lives of the settlers. How would you account for that?

### NATIONAL STANDARDS CORRELATIONS:

**NCSS Id:** (Culture) Explain why individuals and groups respond differently to their physical and social environments and/or changes to them on the basis of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs.

**NSH Era 2, Standard 1:** Why the Americas attracted Europeans, why they brought enslaved Africans to their colonies, and how Europeans struggled for control of North America and the Caribbean

### WEBSITES:

<http://www.apva.org/history/jsmith.html>

"Captain John Smith," The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities

<http://www.apva.org/history/pocahont.html>

"Pocahontas," The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities

<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/smith.cfm>

"Captain John Smith by Dennis Montgomery," The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/maps1.html>

"Virtual Jamestown: The Original Maps," [virtualjamestown.org](http://virtualjamestown.org)

## Answer Keys

### Queen Isabella Appoints an Admiral (page 6)

1. 1451 (1492 - 41 years old)
2. 1461
3. Gold Coast of Africa
4. Moors (Moslems); The final victory was at Grenada.
5. Four (Portugal, Spain, England, Spain)
6. He would have to go and discover something worth claiming.
7. Short on experience, foreigner, rejection of concept, doubt about seaworthiness of ships, etc.
8. He thought he was near India.
9. Columbus refused to believe that it wasn't China he had found.
10. Distance, difficulty of storing enough supplies, uncertainty about where he was going, doubts about how Asians would treat him, etc.
11. Could be off in the size of the earth or the size of Asia. He was off on both. He assumed from Marco Polo's writings that Asia stretched farther east than it did. But he also used the estimate that the earth was 18,000 miles in circumference. That put his island discoveries about where Asian off-shore islands would have been.

### Captain John Smith Saves Jamestown (page 8)

1. Establishing colonies was too expensive for individuals. Gilbert and Raleigh were both much richer before trying to establish a colony than they were afterward.
2. Seven (when tossed overboard, when Turks captured him, by ship captain, by Native Americans, by Jamestown, by pirates, by French)
3. Cabot didn't find any riches.
4. Sir Walter Raleigh
5. The Spanish had found gold in Mexico and Peru.
6. They were looking for gold and made no attempt to hunt or farm.
7. Pocahontas; John Rolfe
8. Rich young adventurers who expected to find wealth and return to their homes.
9. Fish
10. People didn't like to work, even if it saved their lives.

### Pilgrims Write the *Mayflower Compact* (page 10)

1. Look at the first four letters of the word "Puri-tan." They wanted to purify the Church of England.
2. Look at the first seven letters of "Separat-ists." They wanted to separate from the Church of England.
3. Church of England, commonly called Anglican
4. Puritans didn't think anyone was important if they violated God's laws. So when a king did something they didn't like, they wouldn't obey. That caused trouble.
5. They were having a hard time with the Stuarts who ruled England after Elizabeth I's death.
6. They had no jobs in England and no reason to suppose that the situation would be any better there than before.
7. Miles Standish; probably from Native Americans, French, Spanish, or other outsiders
8. They named it after the port from which they had sailed.
9. Others were women and children, and they had no voice in political matters.
10. William Bradford

### Religious Toleration Becomes the Law in Maryland (page 12)

1. Baltimore; it was named after Lord Baltimore.
2. Parliament (or Puritans)
3. Charles I was executed by beheading.
4. Catholics; he was Catholic himself.