

The Spanish in America

School Name _____

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Date ____ / ____ /20 ____

Per. ____

Fill in the blanks with the following words:

Christianity

Mississippi

Puerto Rico

corn and potatoes

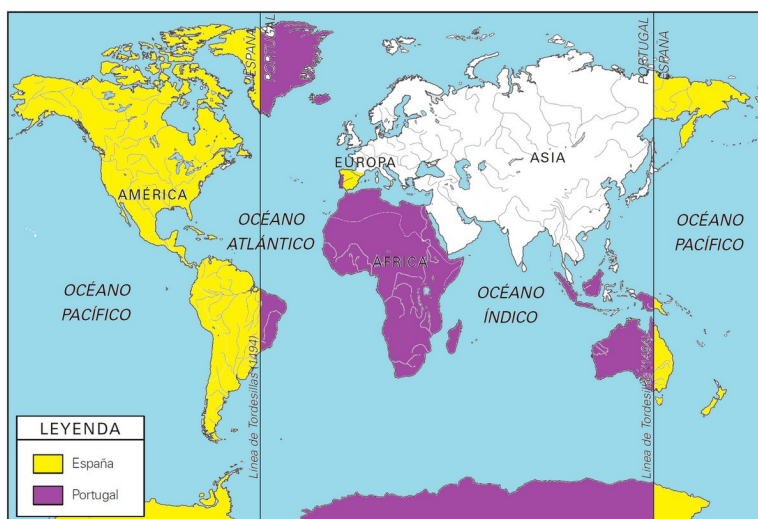
Pope

smallpox

Mexico

Although the first Europeans to reach North America were probably the Vikings, the Spanish were the earliest to have extensive impact on the newly recognized continent.

At the time of Columbus' voyages to the Americas, the _____, who had more power than individual rulers, established in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 that the entire New World belonged to Spain, except for the Brazil area which the Pope designated for Portugal.



Spain's ambitions included - first, to defend the claim to vast territories, second, to extend _____ throughout the empire, and third, to gain new riches, such as gold and silver.

Unexpectedly, among the most important resources Europeans found in the New World were the new crops of _____. These crops and other foods indigenous to the Americas, such as beans, tomatoes, and peanuts were brought to Europe and Africa by travelers who had visited the Americas. Because they were cheap, easy-to-grow basic foods full of essential vitamins, they soon became important foods for areas that had nothing like them.

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What the Europeans brought to the peoples of Americas included horses, pigs and cows and plants such as wheat and sugarcane. What the peoples of the New World did not welcome was European diseases such as _____ – causing epidemics, killing thousands.

Nevertheless, Spain continued to lay claim by sending explorers to areas beyond where Christopher Columbus landed. The explorer Ponce de Leon first came to the Americas as a "gentleman volunteer" among 1200 sailors on Christopher Columbus' second expedition in 1493. He was authorized by the Spanish crown to explore the neighboring island of _____ in 1508 and to take office as the first Governor of Puerto Rico by appointment in 1509.

In 1513, another Spanish explorer, Ponce de León, led the first known European expedition to the North American continent. During the Easter feast period he landed at what he thought was an island; he named the area *La Florida* and claimed it for Spain.

A quarter century after Ponce de León made his claim for Spain, another Spanish explorer, Hernando de Soto, landed in western Florida with 600 men. From there compelled by a desire for treasure, De Soto went on an epic trek that took him almost halfway across the uncharted continent. As a result, Spain was the first European nation to gain any knowledge of the interior of North America. De Soto never did find his treasure, but it is likely that he was the first white man to cross the _____ River.

In 1565, the first European town and the city in present-day United States was established by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. On the site of an old indigenous - "Indian" village, he set up a colony and defensive outpost against the French, who were beginning to encroach on Spanish territory. He named the spot Saint Augustine because he arrived on that saint's feast day.

New Spain dominated the Americas for centuries although challenges arose from other empires, especially those of England and Holland. By the end of the century, other nations were laying claim to the great North American territories and Spain's hold dwindled, although it remained strong in South America for another fifty years. Even after the American Revolution, Spain still occupied all of the land west of the Mississippi as well as the territory of _____ and into Central America and into South America.