

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS?

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Book by Jean Fritz, illus. by Margot Tomes.
Themes: American History/Biography
Grade Levels: 3 - 6
Running Time: 35 minutes, Iconographic

SUMMARY

Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus? is the story of Columbus's journey from Spain to find a route to the "Indies". Determined to find a route to Japan, Columbus's voyage took him to San Salvador and on to Cuba and Haiti. Convinced that he had discovered Japan, Columbus returned to Spain to be received by Queen Isabella.

The story outlines Columbus's trip with the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria and at the close, mentions other explorers, including Balboa and Magellan, whose travels led to the discovery that a new world existed between Europe and Asia.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about Christopher Columbus.
- Children will investigate the route taken by Columbus to find Japan.
- Children will explore the routes taken by explorers to try to discover new worlds apart from Europe.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus?* with children. Then ask:

- Why do you think Columbus was so determined to find a route to Japan?

Have children investigate what life might have been like in Italy in 1451, the year Columbus was born. Talk with children about the kinds of homes people lived in, the foods they ate, how they traveled from place to place. Then have children dramatize life during this time. Allow children to paint a backdrop to use during their dramatizations.

Have children think about what it might have been like for early explorers to venture out into the wide, open oceans not knowing what lay beyond. Then have children pretend that they are one of these voyagers and write a journal of an adventure crossing the sea. Later, have children share their journals with one another.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Have children trace the route Columbus followed from Spain to San Salvador, Cuba and Haiti on a globe. **Ask:**

- What route would Columbus need to take to arrive in Japan?
- What countries would he find along the way?
- What would be the most direct route back to Spain from Japan?

Have children trace the route Magellan's crew followed taking a westerly direction around the world. **Ask:**

- What might be the first country Magellan's crew found after crossing the Atlantic Ocean?
- What bodies of water would they need to cross to get to Japan?
- What countries would they see before returning to Spain?

Ask children to imagine what America might have looked like before it was settled. Have children create illustrations, accompanied by

short descriptions of what an explorer would discover upon setting foot in the United States. Display children's drawings and have them describe their settings to one another.

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