

# LESSON 3

1000

1250

1500

1000  
Leif Ericsson  
reaches North  
America

About 1350  
The Renaissance  
begins

1420s  
Prince Henry  
sends  
Portuguese  
ships to Africa

1498  
Vasco da Gama  
reaches India



## PREVIEW

### Focus on the Main Idea

In the 1400s European explorers developed sea routes to Africa and Asia.

### PLACES

Greenland  
Vinland  
Portugal  
Cape of Good Hope

### PEOPLE

Eric the Red  
Leif Ericsson  
Johann Gutenberg  
Prince Henry  
Bartolomeu Dias  
Vasco da Gama

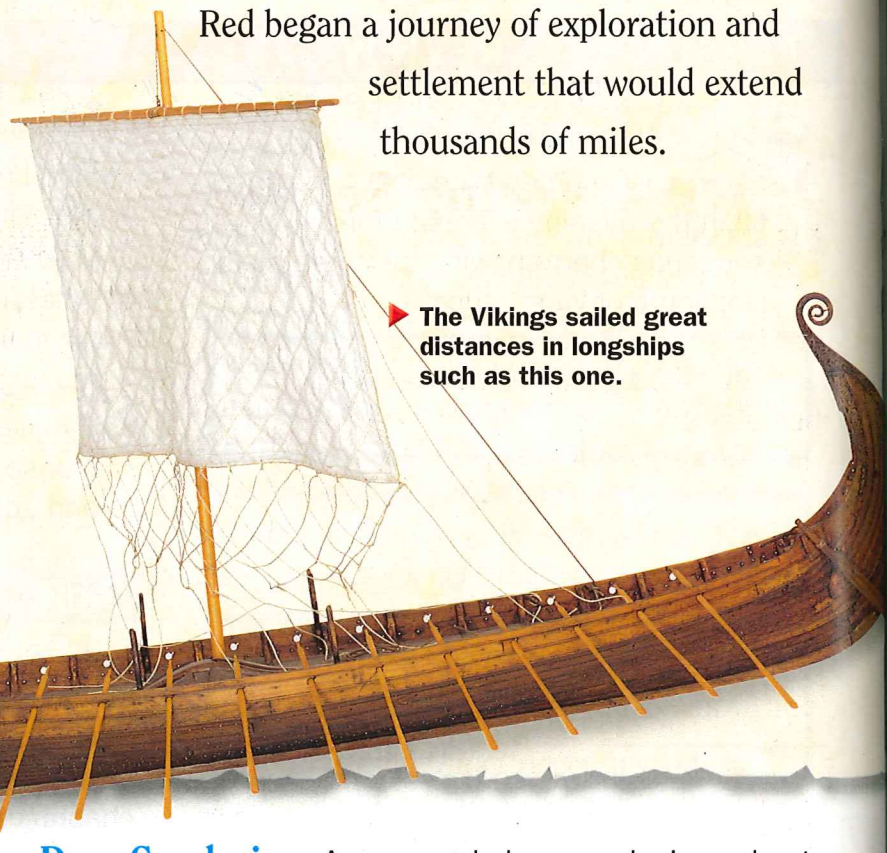
### VOCABULARY

saga  
Renaissance  
navigation  
slave trade

# European Explorers

## You Are There

Eric the Red had a lot of enemies. He was quick to anger and quick to use his sword. In about 965, the Viking people had had enough. They forced Eric to leave his homeland. But where would he go? Like many Vikings before him, he took to the sea. Eric the Red began a journey of exploration and settlement that would extend thousands of miles.



▶ The Vikings sailed great distances in longships such as this one.

**Draw Conclusions** As you read, draw conclusions about the reasons that European explorers sought to find new routes to Africa and Asia.

## The Vikings


The Vikings were skilled sailors. Their homeland was Scandinavia in northern Europe. In their sleek wooden boats, powered only by sail and oars, they sailed as far east as Asia, as far south as North Africa, and as far west as North America.

**Eric the Red** sailed west to the island of Iceland. But Eric was soon thrown out of Iceland too. So he sailed west again, and in about 982, he came to a place he called **Greenland**. Despite the name, it was a very cold land. But Eric wanted the place to sound like a good land to settle. He called it Greenland to encourage Icelanders to come.

Eric's son, **Leif Ericsson**, was interested in rumors of a land still farther west. In 1000, he sailed to find it. When he and his crew set foot upon North America, they were probably the first Europeans to do so.

Ericsson had landed on Newfoundland on the east coast of what is today Canada. According to legend, his men found grapes growing there. So they called the place **Vinland**, or "Land of Wine." Soon groups of Vikings came to settle in Vinland. But conflict broke out with the American Indians living there. By about 1015, those Viking settlers who survived had returned home.

The Vikings did not have a written language. So how do we know about these adventures of a thousand years ago? They created long spoken tales called **sagas**, repeated from one generation to the next. Later, these sagas were written down. Archaeological evidence also tells us about these early explorers, as you will read below in the Then and Now feature.

**REVIEW** In one sentence, describe the most important information this page tells you about the Vikings.  **Summarize**



### A Viking Settlement

At the northern tip of Newfoundland, you can visit a historic site called **L'Anse aux Meadows** (LOHNS oh meh dohz). There archaeologists have found the remains of a Viking settlement. Ruins of Viking huts, jewelry, lamps, and tools have been dug up and are on display.





► **AN EARLY MAP** This map was made in 1482, using information from ancient times. It shows only Europe, Africa, and Asia.

## The Business of Exploring

Most sailors thought the only way to reach Asia was to go east. Not everyone agreed. One such sailor was **Christopher Columbus**.

### Christopher Columbus

Columbus was fascinated by the stories he had heard of the wealth in Asia. He had already sailed along the coasts of Europe and Africa. Columbus believed he could reach Asia by sailing west across the Ocean Sea, as the Atlantic Ocean was then known. He thought this would be a more direct route to Asia than sailing

around Africa. However, Columbus could not prove this until he had money for a ship, crew, and supplies.

### Risks and Rewards

Explorers had to be **entrepreneurs** (ahn•truh•pruh•NERZ). They set up and ran their expeditions just as an entrepreneur sets up and runs a business. Often, explorers had to persuade others that the **cost**, or effort made to achieve or gain something, was worth the risk of an expedition. Ships and supplies cost a great deal. There were many risks, too. For example, a ship could sink, or an explorer might not find any valuable goods.

However, the **benefit**, or reward gained, was the chance of finding riches