Lesson 1

- While the Native American culture was growing and developing in North America, few people in Europe knew about what was happening in North America.
- Middle Ages - 500 to 1500 - a period of European history when travel between areas lessened and Europeans became less interested in the world beyond their walls.
- Major economic and cultural changes took place in Europe in the 12th century.
- Improved farming technology made life easier. More towns and cities began to appear. Cities served as important trade centers.
- Merchants are people who buy and sell to earn a living.
- Trade played an important role in the founding and developing of many European cities and towns.
- Many cities and towns were built at trading sites.
- Large cities functioned as commercial centers from which merchants traded goods from Europe and Asia. These became permanent settlements.
- Some items traded were spices, cloth, perfume, medicine, and dyes.

Marco Polo’s Journey:
- Marco Polo was a merchant who traveled to distant lands. He traveled from Europe to Asia.
- He was known as “the man with a million stories.” Kublai Khan was the ruler of China.
- Marco Polo’s family helped him become a great explorer because they took him to Central Asia with them.
- Marco Polo’s book was useful to mapmakers and merchants because it gave them information about Asia’s culture and geography that helped them draw maps and plan trade expeditions.
- Marco Polo broadened trade routes and sparked interest in the world outside of Europe.
- After Marco Polo’s journeys, Europe became more interested in life beyond their own borders and there was an increased trade with countries on other continents.
- The Silk Road was a network of trade routes that connected China to various parts of Europe and India.
- Europeans traded goods for other goods. They used gold, silver, or other precious metals or stones as payment.
- In China, Marco Polo saw they used paper money. This was an advantage because paper is not heavy and is easier to handle and transport.

Lesson 2: The Expansion of Trade
European Trade Grows

- Genoa, Pisa, and Venice built large fleets of ships that transported goods across the Mediterranean Sea to Spain.
- They traded at international fairs at main trade routes.
- They traded silk, spices, perfume, lumber, furs, and stones.
- They also traded news about technology, cultures, and events in their own part of the world at the international fairs.

Banking Develops

- Currency is the coins, paper, or gold used as money.
- The expansion of European trade lead to the development of banks because traders needed bankers to hold their money, convert currency, and lend them money to trade.

Africa

- In the 1200's, caravans of traders from Arabia began riding across the Sahara.
- A caravan is a group of people traveling together, especially through a desert area.
- Songhai was a powerful and wealthy kingdom because it was the main destination for caravans of traders from Arabia, and it controlled most of the African trade and the salt and gold resources in the region.
- Timbuktu was important trade city because of its location of the salt mines and gold fields.
- Sunni Ali was king of Songhai.
- Trade was important to China, Songhai, and Europe because they were able to trade goods that were plentiful in their own countries for goods that were rare and exciting.

Lesson 3

- Prince Henry of Portugal set sail to prove that there was a way to reach Asia by ship.
- Navigation is the science of determining a ship’s sailing direction and location.
- Portuguese scientists worked to improve the magnetic compass and the astrolabe.
- A caravel was a type of ship that was designed to move faster. Its shape was wider and rounder. The rudder was in the back. The multiple masts improved wind control.
- Prince Henry’s improvements to shipping encouraged Portuguese traders travel more by sea. They probably also participated in international trade.
- Portuguese explorers were interested in the coasts of Africa because of goods such as gold. They also wanted to find new sea routes to Africa and Asia.
- Bartolomeu Dias was the first European explorer to sail around the tip of Africa. He named named it the “Cape of Storms” because strong winds had blown the ships past the tip of Africa into the Indian Ocean. It was later named the “Cape of Good Hope” because of its importance as a new route to the east.
- Vasco de Gama was the first European to reach Asia by sea.