16-3 Notes

* One by one the people of Western Europe took to the seas to find a sea trade route to Asia. The first were the Portuguese.
* Next were the Spanish who sent Christopher Columbus, an Italian sea captain who thought he could reach Asia by sailing west. In 1492 he landed on the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean Sea discovering the Americas.
* On Columbus’s second voyage to the Americas, he took conquistadors, soldier-explorers who claimed the land for Spain.

Defeating the Aztec

* Hernan Cortes, a conquistador from Spain defeated Montezuma II and the Aztec with guns, horses and an epidemic. An epidemic is a disease that spreads quickly. The diseases, smallpox and measles killed more Aztecs that the Spanish swords.
* Cortes had another weapon, Malintzin, a Mayan woman who was his translator.
* Montezuma did not attack the invading Spaniards, because he thought Cortes was a god.

Defeating the Inca

* Looking for a golden, Balboa led a band of soldiers across the jungle covered mountains of present-day Panama. He found the Pacific Ocean, but not the golden empire. A jealous Spanish official in Panama falsely charged him with treason or disloyalty to the government and had him beheaded.
* Francisco Pizarro, a conquistador marched with Balboa, took up Balboa’s search for gold and became a wealthy landowner.
* The Inca could do nothing to stop the spread of smallpox nor scare away Pizarro and his men. He raided the Incan storehouses and fired guns at the villagers.
* Pizarro had spent more than 30 years fighting the Incan people. He defeated the Incans by capturing their emperor, Atahualpa.