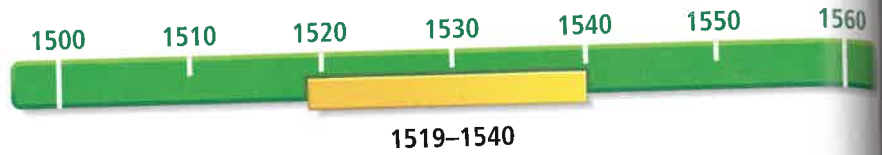


Core Lesson 4

Conquest of the Americas



VOCABULARY

expedition
conquistador
empire

Vocabulary Strategy

expedition

The word **expedition** begins with the prefix **ex-**, meaning "out." An expedition goes out to explore.



READING SKILL

Compare and Contrast

Contrast what Spanish explorers were looking for with what they found.

Build on What You Know Many books and movies today tell stories about people traveling to other worlds. In 1519, when the Spanish and the Aztecs first met, it was like a meeting of people from two different worlds.

Cortés Conquers the Aztecs

Main Idea Spanish soldiers conquered the Aztecs in present-day Mexico.

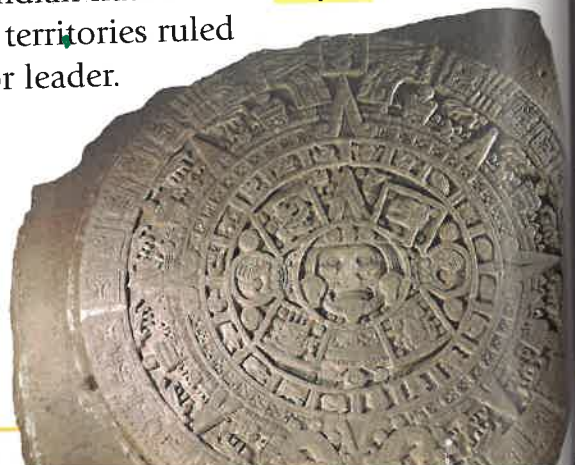
The travels of **Columbus** and **Balboa** were exciting news in Europe. Sending ships and soldiers across an ocean was expensive, but Spain's rulers believed the explorers would bring back gold.

One of these explorers was **Hernán Cortés** (er NAN kohr TEHS). In 1519, Cortés led an expedition to Mexico. An **expedition** is a journey to achieve a goal. Cortés's ships carried horses, weapons, and an army of more than 500 conquistadors (kohn KEY stah doors). **Conquistador** is Spanish for conqueror. The conquistadors were eager to find wealth and fame for themselves and their families.

Cortés had heard stories about the Aztec Indians in present-day Mexico. The Aztecs had built an empire by conquering other Indian nations. An **empire** is many nations or territories ruled by a single group or leader.

Aztec Sun Stone

The Aztec civilization had its own calendar. This carved stone is 13 feet across.



STANDARDS

SS.A.4.2.1.5.1 Exploration of Americas
SS.A.4.2.1.5.2 Impact of Exploration