What happened on Columbus first voyage?

The King and Queen of Spain issued orders for Columbus to be provided with everything he needed for his voyage. They ordered that the port of Palos, Spain supply him with three ships. The names of the ships were the ***Pinta***, the ***Nina***, and the ***Santa Maria***. These were all caravel ships. The ships were made of wood and, of course, had no motors. The Santa Maria, which Columbus chose as his flagship, was a heavy cargo ship It was the largest, and slowest of the three. The Pinta was named after her owners, the Pinzon brothers, and which was the smallest and fastest. The Nina was named after her owner, Juan Ninas, and was the smallest of the three. It was difficult to get men to go on such a voyage, so any criminal who sailed with Columbus was to be set free.

On ***Friday, August 3rd, 1492***, the three ships left the harbor on a south-west course from the Spanish port of Palos. The crew on the ship consisted of ninety (90) sailors including Columbus, his brother Bartholomew, his son, Ferdinand, and Martin Pinzon and his brother, Vincente Pinzon, and the criminals who made up the remainder of the crew.

On ***Monday, August 6th***, after three days of setting sail, the rudder of the Pinta broke. It was later repaired in the Canary Islands, where Columbus's ships stopped to be restocked with food, water, meat, and wood. The sail of the Nina was changed from lateen/triangular to square rig. These repairs took three weeks. On ***Tuesday, September 6th*** they left the Canary Islands and continued the great voyage.

The conditions were rough on the ships. Some of the officers had bunk beds; some of the other sailors were without. Cooking was done on the ship's decks, they used wood to cook their food in fireboxes on the deck. As the voyage dragged on the crew grew nervous. Many began to fear they would never see Spain again. Therefore, on ***Sunday, September 9th***, Columbus began to keep two ship logs one which was false and one which was true. The false one showed the ships daily distance or progress to be less than it really was. Columbus kept the true distance his ships were from Spain to himself. Even this trick was not enough to keep the sailors calm. They began to mutter among themselves, wondering if there was land beyond.

On ***Thursday, September 13th***, in the mid-Atlantic Ocean sailors noticed that the compasses on their ships started to act strangely and suddenly began to point east of north rather than west of north, which was the true north. The men being concerned and fearful

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approached Columbus, who explained to them that it was a normal occurrence. He also told them that this happened because they were going so far west. They saw clouds twice and mistakenly took it for land.

On ***Friday, September 16th***, they sailed through the Sargasso Sea, a sea of floating seaweed. The men felt that the ship would get stuck in it, but this did not happen. Throughout September the men were constantly afraid and wanted to turn back; Columbus kept insisting that land was near.

The trip turned out to take much longer than anyone on board expected. On ***Wednesday, October 10th***, after many days and nights at sea without seeing land, the sailors were ready to return home. They demanded that Columbus turn back and became violent and rebellious. Columbus talked them into sailing forward for just three more days. He promised them if land was not sighted in three days they would turn back.

On the night of ***Thursday, October 11th***, signs of land were seen: a branch with berries, a carved stick, which was picked up by a sailor, and birds which flew about the masts of the caravels.

On ***Friday, October 12th, 1492*** the excited voice of a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana who had sighted land shouted "Tierra, Tierra!" which means, Land, Land!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Using the notes above answer the following.

Where was Columbus born?

a) Genoa India

b) Genoa Japan

c) Genoa Italy

d) Genoa Spain

When did Columbus set sail for the far east countries?

_____

Name the far east countries.

_____ _____ _____

Which flag was on Columbus' ships? Why?

_____

Which ship was Columbus' flagship?

_____

What are the names of columbus' ships?

_____ _____ _____

When did Columbus see land and which island did he arrive on?

_____

How many crew members were on board the ship?

_____

What are three of the challenges that Columbus was faced with during this voyage?

_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

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