

1. Read the following text and then answer 5 questions.

Columbus's voyages

On August 3, 1492, Columbus left the Spanish port of Palos. His expedition consisted of three ships: La Niña, La Pinta and La Santa María. They carried everything necessary to feed the entire crew. The holds were loaded with dried and salted meat; barrels of water, wine, and oil; biscuits; sacks of flour, chickpeas, and lentils; cheese, and some live animals.

The journey was long. The crew had many problems. When they ran out of food, some sailors tried to take control of the ships by force.

After 71 days of navigation, on October 12, 1492, they found land. Columbus was convinced that he had arrived in the Indies. However, he had reached a new continent, which years later was given the name of America, in honor of Amerigo Vespucci.

He was the first European to realize that this continent was different from those they already knew.

After this first voyage, Columbus made three more, on which other Spanish travelers joined him. This is how the process of colonization of America began. By 1515, Spain occupied the islands of the Caribbean and had traveled the northern coasts of South America, without entering the continent yet.



Why did the Spanish arrive in America?

The search for precious metals

The European expeditions of the 15th and 16th centuries responded to the need for precious metals, which multiplied their possibilities of exchange with other regions. Europe needed metals like gold or silver to make its coins.

Personal motivation

Winning land and honor was the motivation that led many Spaniards of the 16th century to embark and depart in the adventure of conquest. According to the historian Guillermo Bustos (2008), the conquistadors dreamed of a life of leisure and the ownership of land and titles of nobility. They did not expect to reinvest their wealth.

The conquest was actually the result of various initiatives by private companies. The Spanish Crown appointed the *adelantados* to carry out the process of expansion in America. These captains had to obtain horses, weapons and ships. They also needed to recruit men and priests. To satisfy these conditions, they required financiers, who usually came from northern Europe.

How was the Conquest justified?

The conquerors imposed themselves with violence on the native peoples. Why did the Europeans not feel bad about this? The Spanish society of the time justified the use of violence for religious reasons. They said it was important for non-believers to convert to the Catholic religion. There were, however, priests like friar Bartolomé de las Casas, who denounced the injustices that were committed against the Indigenous people.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the 3 caravels that Christopher Columbus used for the trip.

2. What type of food did they have in the ships?

3. When did Spanish people arrived to America?

4. Why were they interested in metals like gold or silver?

5. Was the conquest a friendly or violent process? Justify your answer.