



# Great Explorers: Journeys That Changed the World

A single lesson, cross-curriculum Curiosity Pack for Grade 7

## At a Glance

**Topic:** Exploration, Pirates and Adventures

**Age Level:** Grade 7

**Session Length:** 45–60 minutes

Pathfinders will:

- investigate a famous explorer
- explore why people undertook journeys into unfamiliar places
- examine challenges faced during exploration
- investigate navigation, travel, and discovery
- identify how exploration influenced people's understanding of the world
- create an Explorer Discovery Project

## Lesson Overview

This Curiosity Pack introduces Pathfinders to the people, journeys, and discoveries that shaped exploration throughout history.

Learners investigate a famous explorer and examine where they travelled, why they travelled, how they navigated, and what challenges they encountered. They explore how exploration expanded knowledge, connected places, and influenced the way people understood the world.

Pathfinders investigate examples such as Zheng He, Ibn Battuta, Matthew Flinders, James Cook, Ernest Shackleton, Ferdinand Magellan, and other explorers of interest.

The lesson combines history, geography, literacy, inquiry, critical thinking, mapping, and communication through investigation, comparison, analysis, and project creation.

This learning experience supports:

- observation and questioning
- historical inquiry
- geographical understanding
- research skills



- comparison and analysis
- critical and creative thinking
- communication and presentation

The lesson is designed using inclusive learning principles, supporting diverse learning needs through:

- self-paced learning
- visual supports
- flexible activity choices
- hands-on exploration
- multiple ways to show learning

### **Session Length**

**Total learning time:** 45–60 minutes

Pathfinders may:

- ✓ complete the lesson in one session
- ✓ pause and return later
- ✓ spend longer on favourite activities
- ✓ simplify or extend the task

### **Learning Focus**

This Curiosity Pack explores:

- historical exploration
- famous explorers
- navigation and travel
- journeys and discoveries
- historical challenges
- mapping and geography
- inquiry and investigation

Learners will:

- ✓ investigate a famous explorer
- ✓ identify where and why they travelled
- ✓ explore challenges faced during exploration
- ✓ examine discoveries and achievements
- ✓ organise ideas visually



- ✓ communicate discoveries through drawing, writing, discussion, or design
- ✓ create an Explorer Discovery Project

## ★ Success Looks Like

Success may look different for each Pathfinder.

Examples may include:

- ✓ identifying a famous explorer
- ✓ describing a journey or voyage
- ✓ recording discoveries about exploration
- ✓ creating a labelled map or timeline
- ✓ explaining why a journey was important
- ✓ designing an Explorer Discovery Project
- ✓ sharing discoveries in a way that works for them

Exploring, noticing, investigating, and creating are all part of success.



## Materials

You may want:

paper or workbook

- pencils and coloured pencils
- ruler
- books or websites about explorers
- world maps or atlases
- explorer biographies
- sticky notes or index cards
- printed maps

Optional:

- tablet or computer
- printer
- poster paper
- digital presentation tools



## Suggested Learning Resources

### National Geographic Kids

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com>

Articles, images, and information about explorers, geography, and world cultures.

### Google Earth

<https://earth.google.com>

Interactive maps and global exploration tools.

### Britannica School

<https://school.eb.com.au>

Reliable information about explorers, voyages, and world history.

### Royal Museums Greenwich

<https://www.rmg.co.uk>

Information about navigation, maps, exploration, and maritime history.

## Universal Design for Learning Supports

This Curiosity Pack supports different ways of learning by providing flexible choices for engagement, learning, and expression.

### Multiple ways to engage

Learners can:

- choose which explorer to investigate
- focus on one journey or several discoveries
- take movement or sensory breaks
- work independently or with support
- compare different explorers
- connect ideas to history, travel, geography, or adventure interests





### Multiple ways to learn

Learners can:

- read facts
- watch short videos
- explore maps
- examine photographs and illustrations
- compare different journeys
- discuss discoveries

### Online Safety Reminder

When exploring online, remember:

-  Ask an adult first
  -  Use trusted learning websites
  -  Keep personal information private
  -  Tell an adult if something feels wrong
- Stay curious and stay safe.



## Multiple ways to show learning

Learners can:

- draw and label
- write notes
- create a poster
- design a map
- explain ideas verbally
- create digitally
- make comparison charts



## FOR LEARNERS



# Great Explorers: Journeys That Changed the World

## Pathfinder Guide

Welcome Pathfinder!





Pathfinders explore how people have travelled, discovered, mapped, and investigated unfamiliar places throughout history.

Long before satellites, aeroplanes, and GPS existed, explorers travelled across oceans, deserts, mountains, and continents using maps, stars, compasses, and observation.

Different explorers travelled for different reasons. Some searched for trade routes. Some wanted to map unfamiliar places. Some hoped to learn about different lands, environments, and cultures.

Looking closely at the journeys of explorers can help Pathfinders understand how curiosity, perseverance, and discovery have shaped human history.

During this Pathfinder Journey, Pathfinders may:

-  explore famous explorers
-  investigate historical journeys
-  examine maps and discoveries
-  compare different voyages



 create an Explorer Discovery Project

Ideas may be shown in many ways:


 drawing

 writing notes

 creating charts

 designing

 creating digitally

 explaining ideas aloud

Activities may be completed in order or Pathfinders may begin with the part that feels most interesting.

Taking breaks, noticing patterns, asking questions, and making discoveries are all part of the Pathfinder Journey.

## **Pathfinder Investigation**

Pathfinders sometimes begin by noticing that explorers have played an important role in shaping human history. Looking closely at the journeys of explorers can provide opportunities to investigate discovery, navigation, perseverance, and the ways people have learned about the world over time.

Long before satellites, aeroplanes, and GPS existed, explorers travelled across oceans, deserts, mountains, and continents using maps, stars, compasses, and observation. Their journeys often connected different places, expanded knowledge, created new trade routes, and influenced how people understood the world around them.

Different explorers travelled for different reasons.

Some searched for new trade routes.

Some hoped to discover resources or opportunities.

Some wanted to map unfamiliar places.


Some travelled to learn about different lands, environments, and cultures.

Explorers who may be explored include:

- Zheng He
- Ibn Battuta
- Matthew Flinders
- Ernest Shackleton
- James Cook
- Ferdinand Magellan
- another explorer of interest



Different explorers experienced different challenges and opportunities. Looking closely at their journeys can help Pathfinders understand how exploration has shaped societies, communities, and historical events.

 As Pathfinders investigate, they sometimes look closely at clues that help them learn about an explorer and their journey.


Things that may be noticed include:

- places visited
- purpose of the journey
- navigation methods
- maps and routes
- challenges encountered
- discoveries made
- skills used during the expedition
- achievements and contributions
- impacts on people and places
- similarities and differences between explorers

Some Pathfinders notice:

- where explorers travelled
- why journeys were undertaken
- how explorers navigated unfamiliar environments
- what challenges were faced
- how discoveries changed understanding of the world
- how different explorers experienced different journeys
- what evidence supports these ideas


Pathfinders sometimes compare what they notice and look for patterns.

 Questions that may be explored include:

- Where did this explorer travel?
- Why was the journey undertaken?
- How did the explorer navigate?
- What challenges were faced?
- What discoveries were made?
- How did the journey influence people or places?
- How is this explorer similar to or different from others?
- What questions does this investigation create?



Exploration often involved uncertainty, planning, courage, and problem-solving. Looking closely at historical journeys can help Pathfinders understand how people responded to challenges while discovering new places.

 When ideas are noticed, some Pathfinders like to keep track of their discoveries. Recording observations can make it easier to compare journeys, organise information, and remember interesting discoveries noticed during the investigation.

Some Pathfinders may record their ideas by:

- creating a timeline
- drawing a route map
- labelling important locations
- writing short notes
- creating an explorer fact page
- making a comparison chart
- recording interesting discoveries
- creating a labelled diagram

Looking closely at explorers and their journeys can help Pathfinders understand how curiosity, perseverance, and discovery have influenced human history.

## **Pathfinder Studio**

Pathfinders sometimes create something to show what they have discovered about explorers, journeys, navigation, discovery, and historical exploration.

Creating a project can provide opportunities to organise discoveries, connect ideas, and share learning in different ways.

A project may focus on one explorer or bring together discoveries from several parts of the Pathfinder Journey.

During the investigation, Pathfinders explored famous explorers, historical journeys, navigation methods, and discoveries. Looking back at these discoveries can help Pathfinders notice connections between exploration, geography, history, and human curiosity.

Different ways of creating can help Pathfinders organise and share their discoveries about exploration and discovery.

 Some Pathfinders create by:

- making a fact page
- designing a poster
- creating an explorer profile
- drawing a labelled route map
- creating a timeline
- using digital tools



Different ideas may be included, such as:

- explorer name
- places visited
- maps and routes
- navigation methods
- challenges encountered
- discoveries made
- achievements
- interesting facts
- labels and diagrams
- observations from the investigation


Some Pathfinders focus on a single explorer.

Some compare several explorers and journeys.

Some projects focus on geography and mapping.

Some projects focus on discoveries and achievements.

Some projects combine historical evidence with creativity and design.

 As Pathfinders create, they sometimes think about the discoveries that interested them most.

Ideas may be organised by:

- sketching a plan
- writing notes
- making labels
- drawing maps or diagrams
- creating sections
- collecting pictures or information
- recording discoveries

One way to explore is to choose an explorer, journey, discovery, or historical event from the investigation and create a project that shares what was noticed.





There is no single correct way to create.

Different Pathfinders may choose different ways to share their discoveries.



## Reflection

How did this Curiosity Pack feel?

-  Loved it
-  Interesting
-  Okay
-  Challenging

Pathfinders may think about:

- Which explorer was most interesting?
- What surprised you about exploration?
- What did you discover about historical journeys?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- Which activity did you enjoy most?

You may reflect by:

- talking
- drawing
- writing
- building
- recording a short explanation

