

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Honoring Exploration and Discovery

Columbus Day is a holiday celebrated on the second Monday in October to commemorate the historic voyage of Christopher Columbus, an Italian explorer who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492. Let's explore the history and celebrations of Columbus Day!

Christopher Columbus was born in Italy in 1451 and had a dream of finding a new trade route to Asia. At that time, the usual route to Asia was long and difficult, so Columbus proposed sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean, believing that he could reach Asia faster. After receiving support from Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain, Columbus embarked on his journey.

On October 12, 1492, after a long and challenging voyage, Columbus and his crew arrived at an island in the present-day Bahamas. Although he mistakenly believed he had reached Asia, his arrival marked the beginning of European exploration and colonization of the Americas.

Columbus Day is celebrated to honor Columbus's courage, determination, and the spirit of exploration. It recognizes the historic significance of his voyage and its impact on the course of history. It is a day to appreciate the adventurous spirit of exploration and discovery.

In the United States, Columbus Day became a federal holiday in 1937. It is observed with parades, pageants, and other festive events in many cities and towns across the country. These celebrations often showcase cultural diversity and heritage, with people dressing up in traditional costumes and marching to lively music.

Some schools hold special lessons and activities about Christopher Columbus and his voyages. Students learn about the history of exploration, the challenges faced by early explorers, and the impact of Columbus's discoveries. They may engage in art projects, storytelling, and discussions to understand the importance of Columbus's journey in shaping the world.

However, it is important to note that there are different perspectives on Columbus and his legacy. While Columbus's voyage opened up new possibilities, it also led to the colonization and displacement of Indigenous peoples. Some communities choose to recognize Indigenous peoples' history and cultures on this day instead of solely celebrating Columbus.

As awareness grows about the experiences and contributions of Indigenous peoples, there has been a movement to reevaluate how Columbus Day is observed. Some places have renamed the holiday Indigenous Peoples' Day or Discoverers' Day, focusing on the contributions and resilience of Indigenous cultures.

In summary, Columbus Day is a holiday that honors Christopher Columbus's voyage and the spirit of exploration. It is celebrated with parades, pageants, and cultural events. It is also an opportunity to learn about different perspectives on Columbus's legacy and to recognize the history and contributions of Indigenous peoples.

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### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What is Columbus Day?
2. Why is Columbus Day celebrated?
3. What was Christopher Columbus's goal on his voyage?
4. How is Columbus Day celebrated in the United States?
5. What are some perspectives in Columbus and his legacy?