



TOPIC: Social Studies  
Language Arts  
GRADE LEVEL: 4 - 6  
TIME: 30 - 45 min.

## REWRITING HISTORY

**OBJECTIVE:** The student will review historical information regarding Christopher Columbus and develop their creative writing skills by rewriting a story.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. One copy of Student Data sheet (Christopher Columbus) for each student or transparency to be used on an overhead projector (optional).
2. Writing paper and pencil.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Distribute activity sheets if being used.
2. Read the data to or with the students.
3. Assign the students to rewrite history by creating a new story based on the data about Christopher Columbus. Any facts or information found in the Student Data sheet may be changed. However, the reason for the voyage must remain the same.
4. Ask for volunteers to share their stories or put students into small groups for sharing purposes.
5. Collect stories for teacher evaluation. Be sure each is properly identified.



## CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Inquiring About American History, Holt Data Bank, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc. N.Y., 1972 Page 6-16.

About a half hour before sunrise, on an August day in 1492, three ships slipped out of the harbor of Palos in Spain. They sailed westward into what people of the 15th century called the Sea of Darkness. Christopher Columbus began a voyage now known the world over. For, three months later, on October 12th of that year, he was to see the NEW WORLD for the first time.

Columbus set sail with three ships - the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria, all three were caravels. Caravels were the most popular ship used in the 15th century. Even though they were small and looked clumsy, they were good for long sea journeys. Columbus' destination was China. There he hoped to set up trade between Spain and the rich land of the East. So it is not surprising that when Columbus saw land on October 12, 1492, he thought he was near India, China, or Japan. Actually, he was just off the mainland of North and South America.

Columbus and his crew members kept a journal on the first voyage to the Americas. They wrote down what happened on each day of the voyage. You are now going to read parts of the journal kept by the crew members.

Thursday, October 11, 1492: The course we were following was west by southwest. We saw more water all around us than at any other time during the voyage. The sailors saw sandpipers and a green plant near the ship. The crew of the Pinta saw a cane and a pole floating on the ocean. They took up out of the water another small pole which seemed to have been made by iron tools. They also took up another piece of cane, a land plant, and a small board. The crew of the Nina also saw signs of land in a small branch covered with berries. Everyone rejoiced at these signs.



After sunset, Columbus returned to his original Westward course. The ships went along at the rate of 12 miles an hour.

At ten o'clock, Columbus, who was standing on the deck of the Santa Maria, saw a light. It was so far away that he could not say it was land. Columbus saw the light once or twice again. It was like a wax candle rising and falling. It seemed to be from land. But Columbus wanted to look out. To the man who should first cry out that he saw land, Columbus promised a silk shirt and other rewards. At two hours after midnight the land was seen six miles away.

Friday, October 12, 1492: On Friday, they arrived at a small island. They anchored the ships and waited for daylight. Soon they saw people. Columbus and some of the crew decided to sail to the shore in an armed boat. When they landed, they saw very green trees, much water and many different kinds of fruit. They quickly leaped out of the boat and onto the shore. The men with Columbus promised that they would say that Columbus, in the presence of his men, had claimed the island for the Queen and King of Spain. Before long the people who lived on the island gathered around Columbus and his men. Columbus called the people Indians. He thought he was near India. He thought he had reached his destination.