

CONQUEST IN THE AMERICAS

As you read this section of your textbook, fill in the chart below to help you record the sequence of events that led to European empires in the Americas.

Spain Establishes an Empire		
Columbus	Cortés	Pizarro
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Columbus arrives in the West Indies.••••••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••

CHAPTER

15

SECTION 1

Section Summary

CONQUEST IN THE AMERICAS

READING CHECK

How did Malinche aid Cortés?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

Find the word *compelled* in the underlined sentence. What clues to its meaning can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences? For example, what does the phrase "relations grew strained" suggest about the relations between the two men? Circle other context clues in the paragraph that could help you figure out what *compelled* means.

READING SKILL

Recognize Sequence Sequence the following events:

- _____ Spanish forces take over Inca lands.
- _____ Pizarro arrives in Peru.
- _____ Columbus takes the Taínos as prisoners.
- _____ Cortés captures Tenochtitlán.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean islands now called the West Indies. Columbus' first meeting with Native Americans there began a recurring cycle of encounter, conquest, and death across the Western Hemisphere.

Columbus first encountered the Taíno people and claimed their land for Spain, taking prisoners back with him. A wave of Spanish **conquistadors**, or conquerors, followed. Ultimately, hundreds of Spanish overpowered millions of native people, using superior weapons and horses. Unknowingly, the Spanish also brought diseases like smallpox, measles, and influenza. This wiped out village after village of Native Americans, who had no **immunity**, or resistance.

One of the earliest explorers, **Hernán Cortés**, reached Mexico in 1519 and moved toward the Aztec capital, **Tenochtitlán**. Cortés was aided by an Indian woman, **Malinche**, who helped him form **alliances** with native peoples previously conquered by the Aztecs. Aztec ruler **Moctezuma** tried but failed to keep Cortés from coming to Tenochtitlán. Cortés later imprisoned Moctezuma and compelled him to sign over lands and treasure to the Spanish. Cortés was driven out, but he returned in 1521 and destroyed Tenochtitlán.

Another Spanish adventurer, **Francisco Pizarro**, sought riches from Peru's Inca empire. Pizarro reached Peru in 1532. The Inca ruler, Atahualpa, had just won a **civil war**, or conflict between people of the same nation. Pizarro captured Atahualpa and demanded a huge ransom. This was paid, but Pizarro had the Inca ruler killed anyway. Spanish forces overran Inca lands, adding much of South America to the Spanish empire. Pizarro was killed a few years later by a rival Spanish group.

Spain's impact on the Americas was immense. The Spanish took vast fortunes in gold and silver, making Spain the greatest power of Europe. They opened sea routes that connected two hemispheres and opened an exchange of goods, people, and ideas. However, they also brought disease and death to Native Americans. Many survivors converted to Christianity, seeking hope. Others, like the Maya, resisted Spanish influence by preserving their own religion, language, and culture, and ultimately leaving their imprint on Latin America.

Review Questions

1. Name two factors that helped hundreds of Spanish soldiers conquer millions of Native Americans.

2. Some native peoples resisted Spanish influence. What was one such group and how did it resist?
