

**Grade 6**  
**Social Sciences – History**  
**Term 2 - Week 6**



**Unit 4 – Page 132 – 136**

**The European trade route to the East via southern Africa**

- A big reason for the voyages of exploration was **wealth**. The rulers and rich people wanted access to the spices, silk and other riches from the East.
- Rulers also wanted **new land** to expand their empires and were hoping to find **silver and gold**.
- Merchants wanted new **trade opportunities**.
- The **Portuguese** were the first Europeans to sail around Africa.
- They did not have much to offer the people of the East and were forced to pay for goods in precious metals like gold.
- Their search for **gold and a sea route** to the East led to the voyages around Africa.
- With the **invention** of fast sailing ships like the **caraval** and the **telescope**, they were able to travel faster and further.
- Each year the Portuguese ships sailed a **little further** down the coast of Africa.

**Batholomew Dias – An explorer**

- Eventually one of the sailors, **Batholomew Dias**, sailed around the tip of Africa.
- This voyage of exploration lasted **16 months**. They would have to stop at places along the way to get **provisions** such as food and water as in those days there was no way of keeping food fresh.
- In **1488**, Dias sailed through a terrible storm that lasted for 13 days. The wind blew him over a thousand kilometers off course and around the south of the Cape.
- When the wind died down, he changed his direction and landed in **Mossel Bay** on 3 February 1488. He had no idea that he had sailed around the tip of Africa.
- They carried on sailing up the coast to a place called Kwaaihoek in the Eastern Cape. Here they planted a **padrao** (a small monument, shaped like a cross) to show that they had reached this point in their explorations.
- They then turned back to sail back home. This is where they saw the Cape for the first time.
- They named it the **Cape of Storms** or the **Cape of Good Hope**.

**Activity 1 (Page 132 – 133)**

1. Why do we not know what Bartholomew Dias looked like?
2. What was the first group of people the Portuguese sailors encountered in Mossel Bay?
3. What did the Khoi have that the Portuguese wanted?
4. Why do you think they started throwing stones at the sailors?
5. From whose point of view is the description on page 133 written? Give a reason for your answer.
6. What is a crossbow?
7. Why did Dias shoot at them with a crossbow?
8. What did Dias call the southern tip of Africa?
9. Why did he call it this name?
10. Why did the ships turn back and not go further?



*The padrao in the Eastern Cape*

## The journey of Vasco da Gama

- Nine years later, in **1497**, another explorer set sail from Portugal to try to reach the East. His name was **Vasco da Gama**.
- Dias had already shown that it was possible to sail around Africa to the East Indies, and da Gama was determined to do this.
- Dias helped him get ready for the long voyage. da Gama and his sailors took 4 ships with them and among the crew was a **pilot**, (someone who steers a ship and guides the captain) who had sailed with Dias.
- They managed to sail past the Cape and up the east coast of Africa.
- When they reached **Malindi**, which is in present day Kenya, da Gama managed to hire an Arab pilot who showed them the route to India.
- Here they found the spices they wanted and stayed in **India** for three months before setting sail back to Portugal.
- They had a terrible voyage back home and by the time they got back to Portugal, only 54 of the original crew of 170 had survived. Most of the crew had died from a disease called scurvy.
- da Gama and his crew had been away for more than **two years**.

### Activity 2

Read pages 134 – 136 and answer the questions.

1. Why did they give the place they landed the name Natal?
2. What does the name mean?
3. Where did they land in April 1498?
4. What did the Portuguese see here and why did it surprise them?
5. Why did the people on the east African coast not really want to trade with the Portuguese?
6. How did the Swahili traders see the Portuguese?
7. Who was the pilot of da Gama's ship to India and why was he famous in his day?
8. This pilot also wrote a book. What was this book called in English?
9. Why was da Gama seen as a hero when he returned home?

