Name _____

PRIMARY SOURCE

On June 7, 1494, representatives of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain (Castile and Aragon) and of King John II of Portugal signed a treaty in the Spanish town of Tordesillas. It drew a line down the Atlantic Ocean to divide the lands their sailors had found, or would find. Here is part of its first article in an English translation, in its exact words.

The Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494

	The treaty (exact words)	In plain English
Why	*That, whereas a certain controversy exists between the said lords, their constituents, as to what lands, of all those discovered in the ocean sea up to the present day, the date of this treaty, pertain to each one of the said parts respectively; therefore, for the sake of peace and concord, ... they, their said representatives, ... covenanted and agreed that a boundary or straight line be determined and drawn north and south, from pole to pole, on the said ocean sea, from the Arctic to the Antarctic pole.*	The rulers of Spain and Portugal are arguing about which lands found in the ocean belong to whom. So, to keep the peace, their representatives agree to draw a straight line north and south across the ocean, from the North Pole to the South Pole.
The line	*This boundary or line shall be drawn straight, as aforesaid, at a distance of three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands ...*	The line will be 370 leagues (about 1,200 miles) west of the Cape Verde Islands.
Portugal's side	*And all lands, both islands and mainlands, found and discovered already, or to be found and discovered hereafter, by the said King of Portugal and by his vessels on this side of the said line and bound determined as above, toward the east, ... shall belong to, and remain in the possession of, and pertain forever to, the said King of Portugal and his successors.*	All islands and lands east of the line, found now or later by Portugal's ships, will belong forever to the King of Portugal and the kings after him.
Spain's side	*And all other lands, both islands and mainlands, found or to be found hereafter, discovered or to be discovered hereafter, which have been discovered or shall be discovered by the said King and Queen of Castile, Aragon, etc., and by their vessels, on the western side of the said bound, ... shall belong to, and remain in the possession of, and pertain forever to, the said King and Queen of Castile, Leon, etc., and to their successors.*	All other islands and lands west of the line, found now or later by Spain's ships, will belong forever to the King and Queen of Spain and the rulers after them.

Treaty between Spain and Portugal concluded at Tordesillas, June 7, 1494, Article 1, in Frances Gardiner Davenport, ed., European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies to 1648 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917), p. 95, scan: https://archive.org/details/eurotreatiesus00daverich (Davenport reprints the Blair and Robertson translation); also at the Avalon Project, Yale Law School: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th_century/mod001.asp. Public domain. Exact words; ... marks words left out.