



## Christopher Columbus' Funding Campaign And a Fun Grammar Review



### Biography/Background

**Christopher Columbus** (1451-1506) was an Italian navigator, colonizer, and explorer who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492, hoping to find a route to India (in order to trade for spices and silk).

Columbus' initial 1492 voyage came at a critical time of growing national imperialism and economic competition between nation states seeking wealth from the trade routes and colonies. In this sociopolitical climate, Columbus won the attention of King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabella of Spain, despite having difficulty obtaining support for his plan because Europeans thought the Earth was flat, and that a westward route from Iberia to the Indies would be shorter than the overland trade route through Arabia. If true, this would allow Spain entry into the lucrative spice trade – up to then commanded by the Arabs and Italians.



Columbus led an expedition which set sail on Aug. 3, 1492 from Palos, Spain, with three ships: the Niña (captained by Vicente Yáñez Pinzon), the Pinta (owned and captained by Martín Alonzo Pinzon), and the Santa María (captained by Columbus), together with about 90 crew members. And on October 11, 1492, they spotted the Caribbean islands off south eastern North America. They landed on an island they called Guanahani, which Columbus later renamed San Salvador. As Columbus thought he had made it to Asia, he called this area the Indies, and called its inhabitants Indians.

Columbus is buried in eastern Hispaniola (now called the Dominican Republic).





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### Funding Campaign-Part I. Portugal, 1485

In 1485, Columbus presented his plans to John II, King of Portugal. He proposed him to fund three ships and be given one-tenth of all revenue from those lands. The king submitted the proposal to his experts, who rejected it, as they considered that Columbus' estimation of a travel distance of 2,400 miles (3,860 km) was far too short.



### Dialogue I

*Christopher is riding his mule as he reaches the castle's gate.*

- **Chris:** Knock! Knock!
- **Portuguese Soldier:** Who is it?
- **Chris:** It's me! Christopher Columbus.  
-May I come in, please?
- **Soldier:** Yes, you may come in.
- **Chris:** I'm here to see the king, please.
- **Soldier:** Sure! Just walk straight to the second chamber and he'll be very pleased to meet you.
- **Chris:** I appreciate it. Thank you.  
Good morning. Are you John II?
- **John II:** Yes, I am. How can I help you? OR What can I do for you?
- **Chris:** Yes, I'm interested in travelling westward to the Indies, and I was wondering if you could possibly help me.
- **John II:** How far is it?
- **Chris:** It's only 2400 miles away. (*Twenty four hundred. OR Two thousand, four hundred.*)
- **John II:** 2400 miles! Are you sure?
- **Chris:** I am positive.
- **John II:** So, what do you need from me?
- **Chris:** I want/need/would like/am asking you to fund my trip.
- **John II:** How much do you want/need me to fund? OR  
-How much would you like me to fund? OR  
-How much are you asking me to fund?
- **Chris:** I would like you to fund about 90% of the voyage.
- **John II:** Why don't you want me to fund 100%?
- **Chris:** If you funded 100% I would have to give you a higher percentage of my profit.  
OR  
-Because the more you fund, the less profit I obtain.



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- **John II:** Ok, but what if you didn't find the Indies?
  - And what if the ships sank?
  - And what if I never saw you again? **OR**
  - What if I didn't see you again?
- **Chris:** And what if I left and I proposed this business elsewhere?
- **John II:** I see the point you're making, but I'm afraid the distance is further, though I appreciate you've come to see me. By the way, have you hired a crew yet?
- **Chris:** Yes, I've already hired them. **OR**
  - Of course I have. **OR**
  - I've just done it. **OR**
  - I'm about to do it. **OR**
  - We're still hiring.
- **John II:** Have you spoken to (UK)/spoken with (Am) King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain yet?
- **Chris:** No, I haven't spoken with them yet.
- **John II:** Well, you should. Why don't you speak to (UK)/ speak with (Am) them?
- **Chris:** I agree with you. That's what I'll do.
- **John II:** However, let me give you some advice. If I were you, I would speak to Ferdinand instead of/rather than Isabella. Isabella is tougher and quite stingy to negotiate with.
- **Chris:** Thanks. I appreciate your advice. I'll do so.

## Funding Campaign-Part II. Cordoba, Spain, 1486

Then Columbus travelled from Portugal to both Genoa and Venice, but he received encouragement from neither. Previously he had asked his brother to convince Henry VII of England, who did invite him to come, though too late. Columbus had already committed himself to Spain.



However, these experts of Spain, like their counterparts in Portugal, reported back that Columbus had judged the distance to Asia too short. Nevertheless, to keep Columbus from taking his ideas elsewhere, and keep their options open, the Catholic Monarchs gave him an annual allowance of 12,000 maravedis.

After two years of negotiations, he was finally successful in 1492. Ferdinand and Isabella had just conquered Granada, the last Muslim stronghold on the Iberian peninsula, and they received Columbus in Cordoba, in the Alcázar castle. Isabella turned Columbus down, and he was leaving town by mule in despair when Ferdinand intervened.



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Financially **broke** after the Granada campaign, the monarchs left it to the royal treasurer to shift **funds** among various royal accounts.

According to the contract that Columbus made with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, if Columbus discovered any new islands or mainland, he would receive many high rewards.

- ▶ In terms of power, he would be given the rank of Admiral of the Ocean Sea and appointed Viceroy and Governor of all the new lands.
- ▶ He would be **entitled** to 10% of all the **revenues** from the new lands.
- ▶ **Additionally**, he would receive one-eighth of the **profits** of any commercial venture with the new lands.

## Dialogue II

*On his way to Cordoba's castle, Christopher Columbus is stopped by a soldier:*

- **Spanish Soldier 1:** Stop! Who are you?
- **Chris:** Don't you know who I am? Have you not heard of me?  
(Vs. Haven't you heard of me?)
- **Soldier 1:** You haven't gone down in history yet. Why should I know you?  
Well, where are you from? **OR** Where do you come from?
- **Chris:** I **am** from Italy. **OR** I **come** from Italy.
- **Soldier 1:** So **am** I! **OR** So **do** I! What a coincidence!
- **Chris:** And what are you doing here in Spain?
- **Soldier 1:** Well, I'm an expat(*riate*). Where are you coming from?
- **Chris:** I'm coming from Portugal.
- **Soldier 1:** What's the purpose of your visit?
- **Chris:** I'm here to speak to (UK)/ speak with (Am) the king.
- **Soldier 1:** Do you know each other? (Vs. Have you met?)
- **Chris:** We **haven't** even met. (No, we haven't.)
- **Soldier 1:** Neither have I.
- **Chris:** But I'd love to meet him.
- **Soldier 1:** So **would** I.  
-And why do you need to speak to the king instead of the queen?
- **Chris:** I've heard she is tougher and quite stingy. **OR**  
-Not only have I heard she is tough, but also stingy. **OR**  
-I've heard she is both tough and stingy.
- **Soldier 1:** Alright! Go straight towards the hill, and when you see the castle, knock on the gate and ask for Ferdinand.



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- **Chris:** Is that the castle with Charles V's Palace inside?
- **Soldier 1:** No! I think you're talking about/referring to Granada's Castle, and that palace hasn't been built yet. Didn't you know?
- **Chris:** No, I wasn't aware of it, but thanks. Have a nice day!
- **Soldier 1:** Likewise! And make sure you find a new mean of transport! Otherwise you won't go down in history. (Remember Columbus was riding a mule.)
- **Chris:** I sure will!

*Christopher is riding his mule as he reaches the castle's gate.*

- **Chris:** Knock! Knock!
- **Spanish Soldier 2:** Who is it?
- **Chris:** It's me! Christopher Columbus. May I come in, please?
- **Soldier 2:** Yes, you may come in.
- **Chris:** Good afternoon, I'm here to meet with Ferdinand.
- **Soldier 2:** Do you have an appointment with him?
- **Chris:** No, I couldn't call him.
- **Soldier 2:** Why couldn't you?
- **Chris:** iPhones have not been invented yet. Didn't you know?
- **Soldier 2:** That's right! We've been in the midst of a war for far too many years and I've been pretty much out of the loop.
- **Chris:** I'm sorry to hear that. Well, is Ferdinand in, please?
- **Soldier 2:** No, he hasn't arrived yet. Would you like to leave a message or would you rather speak to Isabella?
- **Chris:** Well, it's quite important, but I guess I could speak to the queen too.
- **Soldier 2:** Sure! Just walk straight to the second chamber and she'll be very pleased to meet you.
- **Chris:** I appreciate it. Thanks.  
Good afternoon. Are you Isabella?
- **Queen Isabella:** Yes, I am. How can I help you? OR What can I do for you?
- **Chris:** Yes, I'm interested in travelling westward to the Indies, and I was wondering if you could possibly help me. I would really appreciate that.
- **Isabella:** How far is it?
- **Chris:** It's only 2400 miles away. (Twenty four hundred. OR Two thousand, four hundred.)
- **Isabella:** 2400 miles! Are you sure?
- **Chris:** I am quite positive.
- **Isabella:** Fine, but why don't you go eastward? It'd be shorter.
- **Chris:** Yes, but I'm afraid of the Pirates of the Mediterranean Sea, and besides, I strongly/firmly believe the Earth is not flat.
- **Isabella:** Really? Where did you hear that?
- **Chris:** Well, I have done some findings.
- **Isabella:** Did you google it?
- **Chris:** How am I going to google it when Internet hasn't even been invented.
- **Isabella:** You're right. Sorry about that, but we've been in the midst of a war for far too many years and I've been pretty much out of the loop.
- **Chris:** I see.
- **Isabella:** So, what do you need from me?



Christopher Columbus' Funding Campaign and a Fun Grammar Review-6/6

- Chris: I want/need/would like/am asking you to fund my trip.
- Isabella: How much do you want/need me to fund? OR
  - How much would you like me to fund? OR
  - How much are you asking me to fund?
- Chris: I would like you to fund about 90% of the trip.
- Isabella: Why don't you want me to fund 100%?
- Chris: If you funded 100% I would have to give you a higher percentage of my profit.  
OR
  - Because the more you fund, the less profit I obtain.
- Isabella: Ok, but what if you didn't find the Indies?
  - And what if the ships sank?
  - And what if I never saw you again? OR
  - What if I didn't see you again?
- Ferdinand (*interrupting*): Hi sweetie!
- Isabella: Hi, Ferdinand!
- Ferdinand: What's going on?
- Isabella: Let me introduce you. This is Mr. Columbus. He comes from Italy. He is a navigator and an explorer, and he's interested in travelling westward to the Indies.
- Ferdinand: Hi, it's nice to meet you.
- Chris: My pleasure, really.
- Ferdinand: So, what can we do for you?
- Isabella (*with a grin on her face*): Well, Mr. Columbus would like us to fund his trip, but he thinks that if he travelled westward, that he would only be 2400 miles away.  
Can you believe that?
- Chris: That's it! I am outta here.
- Ferdinand: No, please! Wait! I look forward to hearing about your plans.
  - Ok. What if we gave you the rank of Admiral and Viceroy, would you be willing to reach an agreement?
- Chris: Umm, I'm not sure.
- Ferdinand: Ok! What if we gave you 10% of all the revenues, would you be willing to reach an agreement?
- Chris: Umm, I'm still not sure.
- Ferdinand: Okay! And what if we gave you one eighth of the profits, would you be willing to sign the agreement?
- Chris: "Yes." OR "Yes, I would." OR "I sure would."
- Ferdinand: Deal?
- Chris: Yes, but why don't you want a bigger profit?
- Ferdinand: Well, with this agreement, not only would we profit from the sale of the spices, but also we would be able to expand/spread the Catholic religion.
- Chris: I see. That's a good point you're making.
- Ferdinand: Do you agree, Isabella?
- Isabella: Umm, I'm not so sure.
- Chris: Have ever told you that you are very tough?
- Isabella: Well, you'd be surprised, but I've even heard that I'm stingy. Can you believe that?
- Chris: So, deal?
- Ferdinand & Isabella: Deal!!

To be continued