

“Flat-Earth Fear” Process Paper

How did we choose our topic?

While studying ancient history we discovered Magellan’s story. There was dispute about who truly was the first to circumnavigate the world. So we investigated.

Our research was based on the book Who Was Ferdinand Magellan, which stated that Magellan was the first one around the globe. But then, in the book Sailing True North by Admiral James Stavridis, it was stated that Sir Francis Drake was “the first known global circumnavigator.” So then we got really curious. Our research helped us figure out that no matter who sailed around the world, there would always be a barrier because people were afraid to join the sailing crew and monarchs did not want to sponsor expeditions because they thought the world was flat. So that fear turned out to be the real barrier. The Age of Discovery would not have happened if people stayed afraid.

How did we conduct our research?

Our research was based on books and internet reading. We created an outline of Magellan’s trip and then we read about Drake. Then we got together and inserted our ideas into the outline. We had to write our own script and make it all flow together.

The research became exciting when we found the book that Antonio Pigafetta wrote Magellan’s Voyage. It is the English translation of his journal that was written on the voyage, 1519-1521, so it made a great primary source. From reading portions of that book, we realized that this journal actually was the barrier breaker, because people read the stories and realized that he really saw all those things and then made it back alive. The book triggered curiosity and excitement. We used excerpts from Pigafetta’s book in the play script – when Pigafetta describes #1 the launching of the voyage in Spain, #2 the description of “El Paso” and also #3 when Pigafetta describes the death of Magellan.

Finally, our research involved finding the results of the Age of Discovery that Magellan’s voyage triggered. After seeing how the number of explorers more than doubled in next 100 years from those in the previous 500 years, we decided to focus on one journey that the Age of Discovery led to eventually- the Magellan spacecraft expedition. We found some interesting similarities to emphasize.

Why did we choose our category?

We put our research into a play because we wanted to act. All of us have acting skills. Magellan’s experience looked like it could be turned into a play with some work on our part.

How does our topic on Magellan relate to the theme?

Our play relates to the theme because Magellan’s expedition did break a barrier, with Antonio Pigafetta on board. He wrote the journal that was published awakening people’s excitement and quenching fear. After hearing the stories and realizing that the world really was round, the ancient times were left behind and the Age of Discovery began leading to Magellan’s space expedition in the 20th century.

“Flat Earth Fear” Bibliography

Junior Group Performance

Primary Sources

Maat Mons video released at the April 22, 1992 news conference by NASA

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/spaceimages/details.php?id=PIA00106> accessed: March 15, 2020

A Venus “mountain” displayed in this computer-generated three-dimensional perspective of the surface of Venus. Image created by the MAGELLAN radar system.

This picture was displayed in our Magellan Space Voyage portion of the performance.

“Magellan’s Deployment from Atlantis 1989”, picture

<https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/missions/magellan/in-depth/> accessed: March 15, 2020

NASA's Magellan spacecraft is deployed from the cargo bay of the Space Shuttle Atlantis (STS 30) in 1989. Magellan was the first planetary spacecraft launched from a space shuttle. **Image Credit:** NASA

Picture used in the performance.

Ferdinand Magellan portrait

https://exploration.marinersmuseum.org/subject/ferdinandmagellan/ferdinand_magellan/
accessed: February 15, 2020

This painting is displayed in the Mariners’ Museum in Newport, Virginia. The artist is unknown but the painting was completed in the 16th or 17th century. Above Magellan on the painting is a phrase which says (translated) “Ferdinand Magellan, you overcame the famous, narrow, southern straits.”

This painting was used for costume ideas.

Pigafetta, Antonio, *Magellan’s Voyage, A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*

translated by R.A. Skelton, New York, Dover Inc. 2018. Yale University owns the copyright to this edition of the journal which was first written in French. Pigafetta’s original manuscript was written in 1534 after his voyage with Magellan.

This book gave us very important information. In Pigafetta’s own words, he described a variety of life forms he saw around the world including giants in America and penguins (he called them geese) at the southern tip of the continent. He wrote about what it was like when they first set sail in Spain, about the discovery of “El Paso”, but also witnessed and wrote about the death of Magellan in the Philippines. For the script we mostly quoted out of the journal when the Pigafetta character was speaking.

Antonio Pigafetta, statue, sculptor unknown

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ginesdemafra/albums/72157627998926589/>
accessed: March 2, 2020.

A statue was erected in Vincenza Italy, Pigafetta’s hometown, in honor of his voyage with Magellan. We used this for ideas for costumes.

Sir Francis Drake portrait by Unknown artist oil on panel, circa 1581

National Portrait Gallery

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp01357/sir-francis-drake>

Accessed March 22, 2020

We used this portrait for costume ideas.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Circumnavigators, artist unknown NPG D21178

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw91589/Circumnavigators?LinkID=mp72990&role=sit&rNo=1>

accessed: March 22, 2020

This is an etching, completed in the early 17th century, and displayed in the National Portrait Gallery in London. It names 4 explorers who are remembered for circumnavigating the earth: Francis Drake (Drack), Ferdinand Magellan, Thomas Candisch and Georg Speilbergh. There is also included a map of the earth as cartographers viewed it in the 1600's.

“Explorers from 1501-1550: The Early Sixteenth Century”

<https://www.enchantedlearning.com/explorers/1500a.shtml>,

copyright 1996

accessed: March 19, 2020

This source helped us compile a list of explorers during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. We wanted to see how many more explorers there were after Magellan's planned voyage. What we learned was that between 1000 AD and 1500 AD there were only 11 explorers. In the century after Magellan, there were 18 explorers that were willing to sail beyond the horizon.

Ferdinand Magellan, the First Circumnavigation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIwiOLab5AA> accessed: Thursday, March 12, 2020

From this video we learned that there was a lot of starvation on the journey. The importance of Pigafetta was not even mention.

Juan Sebastian de Elcano, portrait, artist unknown

<https://www.art.com/products/p27986291481-sa-i8439991/portrait-of-juan-sebastian-elcano-painting.htm> accessed: February 3, 2020.

This was used for costume ideas.

Kramer, Sydelle, *Who Was Ferdinand Magellan?* Grosset & Dunlap, an imprint of Penguin Random House, New York, New York, 2004

This was the first book we read. It gave us what we needed to make an outline for the play script.

Magalhaes, Ewandro. "How Magellan circumnavigated the globe" – Ted Talk.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFdiX8mj0Es> access date: December 9, 2019

This online video also gave our group a good overview of the voyage as we were in the beginning stages of our performance project.

"Magellan" (spacecraft) - Video Learning - WizScience.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsXfAtFUF9Q> access date: March 21, 2020

This information helped us understand in what ways the Magellan ocean voyage was similar to the Magellan space voyage. They both were commissioned by a government (Spain and then the United States). They both went to regions that had not been explored before (circumnavigation and then Venus). They both mapped the previously uncharted regions. (Pigafetta's journal with the first Magellan, and radar with the second.) And neither Magellan returned to where they had started even though they both were considered successful voyages.

Magellan to Venus, NASA documentary from 1990

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=magellan+to+venus,
nassdc.gsfc.nasa.gov accessed: March 22, 2020

We learned that Magellan was launched on May 4th, 1989. Arrived at Venus on August 10, 1990. Radio connect with Magellan was lost on October 12, 1994. These are important background details for us to understand the mission.

Schwartz, Heather E., *Early Explorers*, Teacher Created Materials, Huntington Beach, CA., 2017

This book made it clear how much more exploration happened after Magellan along with Pigafetta's journal proved to the masses that the world is round.

Stavridis, Admiral James USN (retired), *Sailing True North, Ten Admirals and the Voyage of Character*, Penguin Press, New York, New York, 2019

*The portion in this book about Francis Drake made us realize that there was a debate about who really was the first man to sail around the world. On page 61 the author stated: "As Drake's life demonstrates, courage is a powerful asset of character, but also one that tempts a leader into trouble. Ferdinand Magellan was hardly less brave, yet his luck did not hold out as Drake's did, allowing the latter to claim the title of the **first known global circumnavigator.**"*

Strozzi, Bernardo, *Eratosthenes Teaching in Alexandria*

Oil painting completed between the years 1581-1644, in Genoa, Italy. This picture currently is displayed in the National Gallery.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mark6mauno/10832052985> accessed: February 21, 2020.

The picture was used in the performance when Pigafetta explains that the Greeks knew that the world is round.

Spielvogel, Jackson and the National Geographic Society, Glencoe World History, student edition, McGraw Hill, 2 Pennsylvania Plaza, New York, January 21, 2009
In chapter 13, this text showed us the slow start for the Age of Exploration up until when Pigafetta published his journal of sights around the world during the Magellan circumnavigation. Up until Magellan, there were 11 notable explorers that were willing to sail past the horizon between the years 1000 (with the Vikings) to 1519 with Hernan Cortes. (a total of 500 years) After Magellan in 1520, we found 18 explorers willing to sail beyond the horizon in the next 100 years.