

# *La Belle in the Classroom*

## **Lesson 1: La Salle's Expedition**

### **Overview**

*In 1684 Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle was given permission by the French King Louis XIV to sail to North America from France to set up a colony at the mouth of the Mississippi River. During this lesson students will discover the events that occurred during his failed expedition.*

### **TEKS**

§113.15 – Social Studies, Grade 4

4.2A, 4.2B

4.21B, 4.21C

4.22A, 4.22B, 4.22C, 4.22D

§110.15. English Language Arts  
and Reading, Grade 4

4.15A, 4.15B

4.19

4.20B

§113.19. Social Studies, Grade 7

7.1B

7.2B

7.21B, 7.21C

7.22A, 7.22B, 7.22C, 7.22D

§110.19. English Language Arts  
and Reading, Grade 7

7.14A, 7.14B, 7.14C, 7.14D, 7.14E

7.18A, 7.18C

### **Objective**

Students will:

- Identify the motivations for French settlement of North America.
- Match and sequence events of La Salle's expedition according to the dates they occurred.
- Create an illustrated timeline of La Salle's expedition to North America.

### **Materials**

*La Salle's Expedition* map

*A Voyage Through Time* cards

*La Salle's Expedition* persuasive planning template

8.5" x 11" paper

Butcher paper

Crayons or markers

### **Online Resources**

*La Belle: The Ship that Changed History*

<http://www.thestoryoftexas.com/la-belle>

# Procedure

## Key Terms

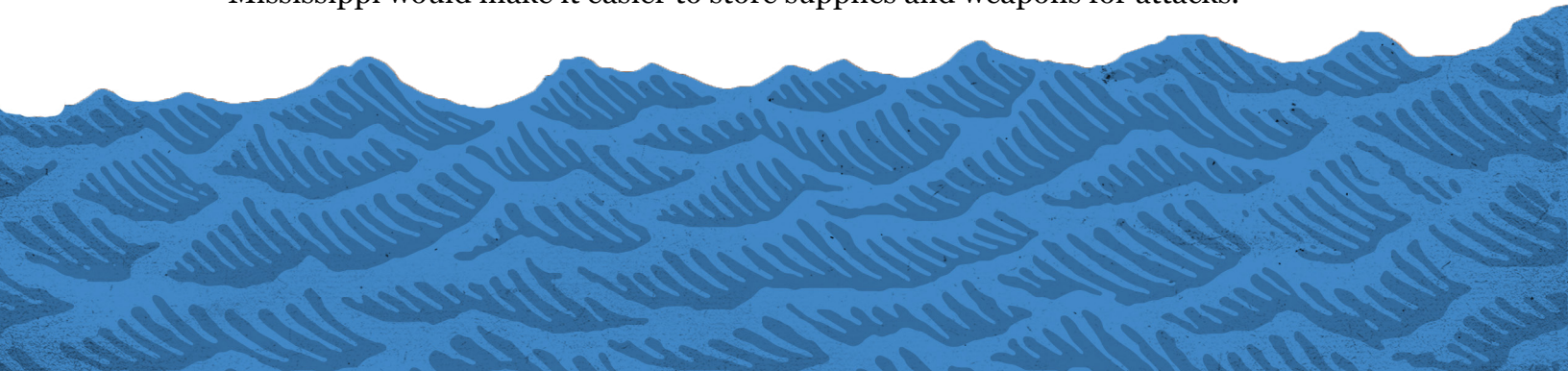
colonist  
colony  
expedition  
Robert Cavalier,  
    Sieur de la Salle  
Ft. St. Louis  
Matagorda Bay  
France  
Mississippi River  
Gulf of Mexico  
North America  
Karankawa  
*La Belle*

## Engage Students: Identify Reasons to Colonize

1. Show *La Salle's Expedition* map on a projector. Read students the following background information:

*In 1684, Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle was given permission by the French King Louis XIV to sail to North America from France to set up a colony at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Even though La Salle had already been successful in traveling from the Great Lakes down the Mississippi River, the King wanted him to take a different and unfamiliar route through the Gulf of Mexico. The journey would be long and difficult. La Salle was traveling with about 400 soldiers, sailors, and colonists. They would face challenges such as getting along with American Indians, building the colony, surviving in an unfamiliar land, and defending against threats from Spanish soldiers and pirates. Why would the King send La Salle on such a dangerous expedition?*

2. Form groups of two or three students. Provide students with a copy of *La Salle's Expedition* map. In their groups students read, discuss, and select the possible reasons why King Louis XIV would send La Salle on such a dangerous expedition.
3. As a class, students explain the choices they selected and the choices they eliminated. Then reveal the actual reasons why King Louis XIV sent La Salle to settle in North America. Ask and discuss:
  - **Why would France want to establish a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi River?** France was competing with Spain for control of territory inside North America, and King Louis XIV wanted to extend France's claim.
  - **Why would La Salle want to begin trade with American Indians?** La Salle planned to trade with American Indians for furs and hides that would be exported back to France and sold. This would help pay for his expedition.
  - **Why would France want to invade New Spain and take control of the silver mines? Why would France need a colony to carry out the attacks?** King Louis XIV wanted to invade and capture the silver mines in Nueva Vizcaya, today's Mexico. He planned to take the silver for France. A permanent colony located at the mouth of the Mississippi would make it easier to store supplies and weapons for attacks.



## ***Explore Concepts: Create a Timeline***

1. Make copies and cut out the *Voyage Through Time* cards. Give each group one set.
2. Explain that students must create a timeline of the events from La Salle's expedition.
  - Each card contains one part of an event from La Salle's expedition. Cards are labeled as complete subject or complete predicate.
  - Place all complete subjects in order by date.
  - Match the predicates to the subjects to complete the statements. Connect with tape or glue.
  - Refer to *La Salle's Expedition* map and online resources if students need information to help complete the statements.
  - Mount timelines on butcher paper and illustrate.
3. As a further extension, assign each group an event to illustrate on an 8½ x 11 piece of paper. Students read their events in the order they occurred, and stand holding their illustrations to create a human timeline. Hang the timeline in the classroom.

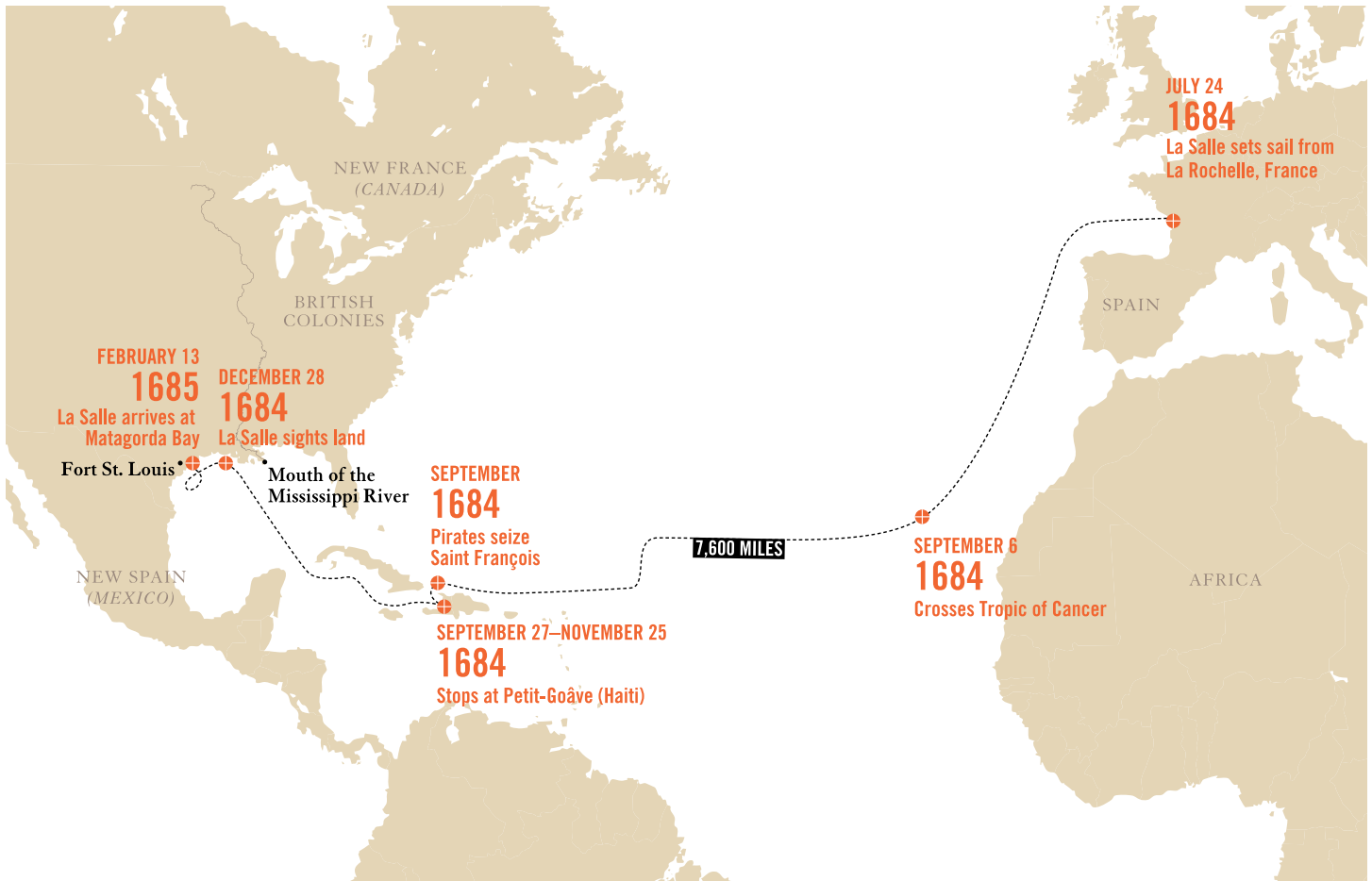
## ***Extend Learning: Write a Persuasive Essay***

1. Explain that students will write a persuasive essay related to La Salle's expedition. Brainstorm topics and discuss students' points of view.
2. Give each student a *La Salle's Expedition* persuasive planning template. Students decide on a position to develop that is related to what they learned about La Salle's expedition. Topics might include:
  - La Salle should not have traveled to North America.
  - La Salle should have taken a different route to North America.
  - The colonists would have survived if...
  - Even though La Salle failed and most of the colonists died, his expedition influenced the future of Texas.
3. Students step through the writing process to plan, write, edit, and revise essays.
4. Students present their completed essays to the class.



*La Belle*  
The Ship That Changed History

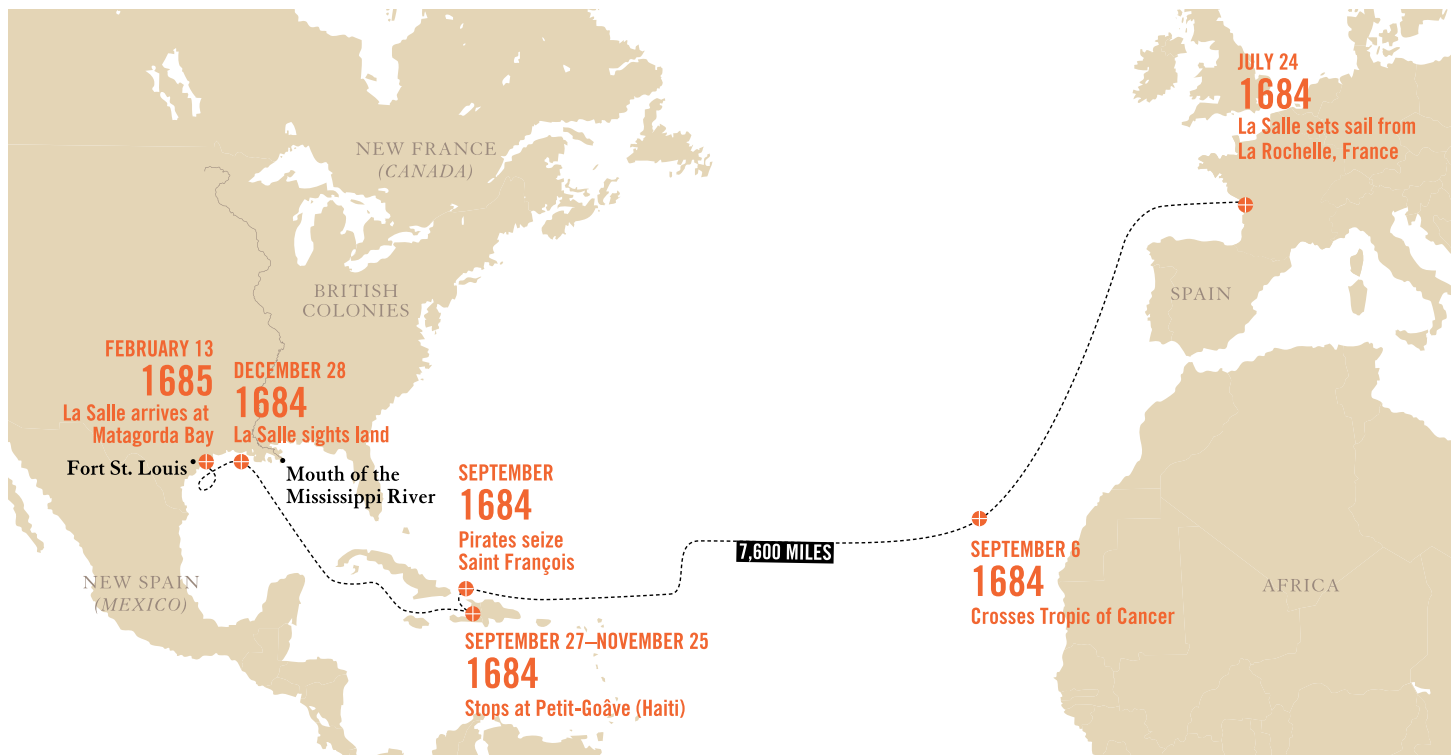
# La Salle's Expedition



The voyage from France to North America would be long and difficult. La Salle, the crew, and colonists would face dangers along their journey and at their new settlement. Place a ✓ next to the reasons you think King Louis XIV would send La Salle on such a dangerous expedition. Place an X next to the statements that are NOT reasons for sending La Salle to North America.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Study the wildlife that lives in North America.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi River and hold onto the French claim to Louisiana.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make peace with the enemy – the Spanish.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin trade with American Indians.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set up a permanent colony to help carry out a future invasion of New Spain and take control of their silver mines.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Live with the American Indians and learn their customs.

# Key La Salle's Expedition



The voyage from France to North America would be long and difficult. La Salle, the crew, and colonists would face dangers along their journey and at their new settlement. Place a ✓ next to the reasons you think King Louis XIV would send La Salle on such a dangerous expedition. Place an X next to the statements that are NOT reasons for sending La Salle to North America.

- Study the wildlife that lives in North America. (Not a reason. La Salle planned to locate the Mississippi River and establish a port city for trade, as opposed to exploring the coastline to draw and document the wildlife).
- Establish a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi River and hold onto the French claim to Louisiana. (The King Louis XI wanted to extend France's presence in North America. France was competing with Spain for control of territory inside North America.)
- Make peace with the enemy – the Spanish. (Not a reason. La Salle believed France was still at war with Spain, and planned to invade the Spanish silver mines.)
- Begin trade with American Indians. (La Salle planned to trade with American Indians for furs and hides to export back to France to sell. This would help pay for his expedition.)
- Set up a permanent colony to help carry out a future invasion of New Spain and take control of their silver mines. (The King wanted to invade and capture the silver mines in Nueva Vizcaya, today's Mexico. He planned to take the silver for France.)
- Live with the American Indians and learn their customs. (Not a reason. Although La Salle planned to communicate with local American Indians in order to set up trade relationships, he did not go on this expedition to study and learn about the American Indians).

# A Voyage Through Time

Cards

SUBJECT	<b>April, 1684</b> King Louis XIV _____.	_____ gives La Salle permission to travel to North America to set up a permanent settlement.	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<b>July, 1684</b> La Salle and four hundred soldiers, sailors, and colonists _____.	_____ set sail on four ships from France to North America.	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<b>May, 1684</b> The ship <i>La Belle</i> _____.	_____ is assembled in Rochefort, France.	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<b>January, 1685</b> After entering the Gulf of Mexico, La Salle _____.	_____ sails along the Texas coast to Matagorda Bay.	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<b>July, 1685</b> La Salle's colony, known as Ft. St. Louis, _____.	_____ is established near Garcitas Creek.	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<p><b>January, 1686</b></p> <p><i>La Belle</i> _____.</p>	<p>_____ is loaded with supplies and anchored in Matagorda Bay.</p>	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<p><b>February, 1686</b></p> <p>A storm in Matagorda Bay _____.</p>	<p>_____ wrecks <i>La Belle</i>, the last of La Salle's ships.</p>	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<p><b>January, 1687</b></p> <p>La Salle and sixteen men _____.</p>	<p>_____ try to travel over land to get supplies from Canada.</p>	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<p><b>March, 1687</b></p> <p>La Salle _____.</p>	<p>_____ is killed by some of his men on the Brazos River.</p>	PREDICATE
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SUBJECT	<p><b>December, 1688</b></p> <p>Karankawa Indians _____.</p>	<p>_____ attack La Salle's colony, killing all but five children.</p>	PREDICATE
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# *La Salle's Expedition*

## Persuasive Planning Template

