

CAVELIER DE LA SALLE



BIOGRAPHY

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René-Robert Cavelier de la Salle was born on November 21, 1643, in northern France. He first trained to be a missionary, but changed his mind in 1667, and instead became an explorer.

In 1667, La Salle arrived in New France and stayed in Montreal. He became obsessed with finding a route through to Asia. Two years later, he set off down the Ohio River, hoping it would lead to the ocean that we now call the Pacific. His party reached the Great Lakes, before La Salle returned to Montreal.

Later, La Salle returned to the Great Lakes on a mission to convince the Native Americans to let the French build a fort in the area. They did, which meant the French would control fur trade near the Great Lakes.

In 1677, La Salle and Louis de Buade, the Governor of New France, received a fur trade monopoly in the Illinois Country. The trading scheme didn't work, so La Salle moved down the Arkansas River in February 1682. He and his men built a stockade at Fort Prudhomme (near present-day Memphis). Finally he reached the Mississippi delta. On April 9, 1682, La Salle claimed the river and its drainage basin for King Louis XIV of France.

La Salle gained a contract for the colonization of Lower Louisiana from Louis XIV in 1682. Two years later, La Salle's small fleet left the French port of La Rochelle with 100 soldiers, a year's worth of supplies, and 280 men, women, and children. Because of a navigation error, La Salle continued west, past the Mississippi, and on to Matagorda Bay in present-day Texas by 1687. The party did not survive.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word '**control**'.

b From that sentence, suggest what '**control**' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word '**control**'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to '**control**'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think '**control**' means.

Try this for other words, too. 

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: error	mistake

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

In 1677, La Salle tried to trade fur in the Illinois Country.

René-Robert Cavelier de La Salle was born in France in 1643.

But it didn't work out, so La Salle moved south, and eventually reached the Mississippi delta.

La Salle claimed the Mississippi River drainage basin for France in 1682.

After that, La Salle led a colonizing expedition to Lower Louisiana, but poor navigation meant the party did not survive.

In 1667, La Salle arrived in New France, and explored the Great Lakes.

La Salle was first going to be a missionary, but then became an explorer.

Get to the facts

1 Where was La Salle born?

2 When did La Salle arrive in New France?

3 Which river did La Salle claim for France?

4 How many soldiers did La Salle take to Lower Louisiana?

5 Where did the colonizing party end up?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Exploring a lake

Imagine you are exploring unknown territory. One day you reach the shore of a great lake. The water stretches off into the distance... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'control'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'control' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'control'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'control'.
- e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'control' means.

Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – error Synonym – mistake

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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