The Early Modern Period of world history is the period of time from the 1400's to the 1800's. Mankind made great strides during these years in such areas as exploration, science, education, and industry. Sweeping political and social changes also occurred.

Almost all of the cultural advances of the Early Modern Period were made by the people of Western Europe. Little progress was made in other parts of the world. For this reason, European countries, with improved navigation and military techniques, were able to conquer distant lands and establish colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Holland, England, France, Spain, and Portugal soon grew rich through trade with their new colonies.

By the 1800's, revolutions in North and South America successfully ended European colonialism there. But European nations still governed large colonial empires in Asia and Africa well into the 1900's.

Important events of the Early Modern Period are summarized on the timeline that follows. Read the descriptions carefully.

1492: Columbus sailed to the New World and claimed the West Indies for Spain.
1498: Vasco da Gama of Portugal discovered an all-water route around Africa to India.
1513: Vasco Nunez de Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and discovered the South Sea -- later renamed the Pacific Ocean by Magellan.
1517: Martin Luther posted 95 theses on a Wittenberg church door to protest the selling of papal indulgences; the Reformation began.
1519-22: Hernando Cortez, a Spanish conquistador, invaded Mexico.
1519-22: The crew of Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the world and proved that it was round.
1531: Francisco Pizarro conquered the Inca Empire in South America for Spain.
1543: Nicolaus Copernicus wrote that the sun, not the earth, was at the center of the solar system.
1545: The Council of Trent began the Counter Reformation by emphasizing papal authority and reaffirming beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.
1564: William Shakespeare, the world's greatest playwright, was born in England.
1588: The Royal Navy of England defeated the Spanish Armada and opened the way for English colonization in the New World.
1607: English settlers, led by Captain John Smith, started the first permanent English settlement in the New World -- Jamestown, Virginia.
1613: Michael Romanov became Czar of Russia and started a 300-year reign by the Romanov family.
Pilgrims left England in search of religious freedom in America.

James II was forced from power in England during the Glorious Revolution. Parliament firmly established its control over kings, and an English Bill of Rights was adopted.

American colonists issued the Declaration of Independence and later ended British rule by winning the Revolutionary War.

The French Revolution began.

Code Napoleon, a system of laws in France, became a model legal system for many other countries.

The Congress of Vienna met to discuss the future of Europe after the Napoleonic Wars.

Napoleon returned from Elba in the Hundred Days, but was defeated at Waterloo, Belgium, by the Duke of Wellington and allied forces.

The United States issued the Monroe Doctrine warning European countries not to interfere in Latin American affairs.

Revolutionary leader Simon Bolivar ended Spanish power in South America by winning independence for Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. This followed successful independence movements in Brazil and Mexico.

The Treaty of Nanking ended the "Opium War" and granted important trading rights in China to Britain.

Liberia became the first independent Negro republic in Africa.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto, still the basic doctrine of communism today.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry negotiated a treaty to open Japan to U.S. ships.

Great Britain began governing India.

The British North America Act established the Dominion of Canada.

The Suez Canal opened.

All states and kingdoms in Italy were united into a single nation-state.

German unification was completed by Otto von Bismarck; Kaiser William I ruled the new empire.

Henry M. Stanley located missionary David Livingstone in Central Africa.

Great Britain invaded and occupied Egypt.

Japan took control of Taiwan after the Chinese-Japanese War.

The United States won the Spanish-American War and took control of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.

Six nations agreed to the U.S.-sponsored Open Door Policy which made China an open market for trade and protected it from foreign invasion.
Complete the crossword puzzle with information from the timeline.

**Across**
1. Said the sun was at the center of the solar system.
5. Created the German nation-state.
8. Protected by Open Door Policy.
9. His "Hundred Days" ended at Waterloo.
11. Name of war in which Britain gained trade rights in China.
13. Continent rounded by da Gama on route to India.
14. Site of meeting that launched the Counter Reformation.
15. Indian empire conquered by Pizarro.
17. Country where revolution led to Napoleon becoming emperor.
18. Became a nation-state in late 1800's.
20. English playwright whose works included "Romeo and Juliet", "Macbeth", and "A Midsummer Night's Dream".
23. Its defeat caused Spain's power to decline and England's to rise.
24. Resulted from Commodore Perry's voyage to Japan.
25. Took power away from English kings.
26. Once a British colony.
27. Headed Virginia expedition.
28. First permanent English settlement in America.
29. His crew circumnavigated the world.
30. South American freedom fighter.

**Down**
1. Cortez and Pizarro were each one.
2. Council of Trent reaffirmed his authority.
3. Former British colony in North America.
4. Their beliefs differed from the Church of England.
5. Discovered the South Sea.
7. German for "emperor".
8. Russian ruler.
10. Subject of Code Napoleon.
12. U.S. president who warned against European colonization in Latin America.
16. Based on writings of Marx and Engels.
19. Where diplomats met to decide Europe's future following Napoleonic Wars.
21. Colonists from there issued Declaration of Independence and won Revolutionary War.
22. Family that ruled Russia for three centuries.
24. Taken from China by Japan.