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# Lesson Plan: Explorer Weston's Great Voyage!

## Materials Needed:

- A small globe or a world map
- One paper towel tube (to be a spyglass)
- Three small "boats" (can be plastic food containers, halved pool noodles, large Lego creations, or even just three pieces of paper labeled with the ship names)
- Craft supplies to build a boat: a sponge or small juice box, a craft stick or pencil for a mast, a paper triangle for a sail, crayons/markers, and tape.
- A blue blanket or sheet to be the "ocean"
- A few "treasures" to discover (e.g., a unique-looking rock, a shiny coin, a colorful feather)

## Lesson Activities (30 Minutes)

### Part 1: The Explorer's Mission (5 minutes)

1. **The Spark (2 mins):** Sit with Weston in front of the globe or map. Say, *"Weston, I heard you're interested in a famous explorer named Christopher Columbus! He lived a very, very long time ago. He had a big idea. He looked at a globe, just like this one, and though he could get to a faraway place called Asia by sailing in a new direction—west!"* Trace the general path from Spain westward with your finger.
2. **The Three Ships (3 mins):** Introduce the three pre-made "boats." Say, *"An explorer can't sail without ships! Columbus had three. Let's learn their names with a chant. I'll say it, then you say it back!"*
  - Point to the first boat: **"The Niña!"** (Have him repeat.)
  - Point to the second boat: **"The Pinta!"** (Have him repeat.)
  - Point to the third boat: **"The Santa Maria!"** (Have him repeat.)Chant them together a few times, getting faster and sillier each time. Place the three boats on the "starting point" (Spain) on your map or next to the globe.

### Part 2: Setting Sail! (10 minutes)

1. **Become the Captain (5 mins):** Hand Weston the paper towel tube spyglass. Say, *"Okay, Captain Weston! It's time to set sail across the big Atlantic Ocean. Let's lay down our ocean."* Spread the blue blanket on the floor. Have him stand at one end (representing Europe). Say, *"We need to get our ships ready for the long journey!"*
2. **The Voyage (5 mins):** Encourage Weston to be the explorer. Use commands that promote movement and imagination.
  - *"Captain, look through your spyglass! What do you see?"* (He can describe imaginary things like dolphins or big waves).
  - *"Oh no, a storm is coming! Let's rock the ships back and forth!"* (Gently rock side to side).
  - *"The wind has stopped! We need to row! Let's pretend to row our boats!"* (Make rowing motions).
  - Sing a simple song to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat": *"Sail, sail, sail your ship, across the big blue sea! Niña, Pinta, Santa Maria, exploring you and me!"*Move slowly across the "ocean" blanket with the three named papers/boats.

### Part 3: Land Ho! and Creative Exploration (12 minutes)

1. **Discovering New Land (2 mins):** When you get to the other side of the blanket, shout, **"Land ho!"** Hide the "treasures" around the "island" (the area off the blanket). Say, *"Captain Weston, you've discovered a new land! Let's see what we can find!"* Let him use his spyglass to spot and collect the treasures.
2. **Build Your Own Explorer Ship (10 mins):** Transition to a table with the craft supplies. Say, *"Every great explorer needs a great ship. Now you get to design and build your very own explorer ship to remember your voyage!"*
  - Guide him to tape the craft stick (mast) to the sponge or juice box (hull).
  - Have him decorate the paper sail with his initial, a symbol for his explorer flag, or anything he wants.
  - Help him attach the sail to the mast.
  - Ask questions to spark creativity: *"What will you name YOUR ship? Where will you sail to next on your ship?"*

### Part 4: Explorer's Show and Tell (3 minutes)

1. **Sharing the Discovery:** Have Weston hold up his newly built ship. Ask him to share its name and tell you one thing about his great voyage.
2. **Review and Praise:** Quickly review the key ideas in a fun way. *"Wow! You sailed across the ocean, discovered treasure, and built your own ship! Can you remember the names of Columbus's three ships one last time?"* (Help him with Niña, Pinta, Santa Maria). Give lots of praise for his great work as an explorer.

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