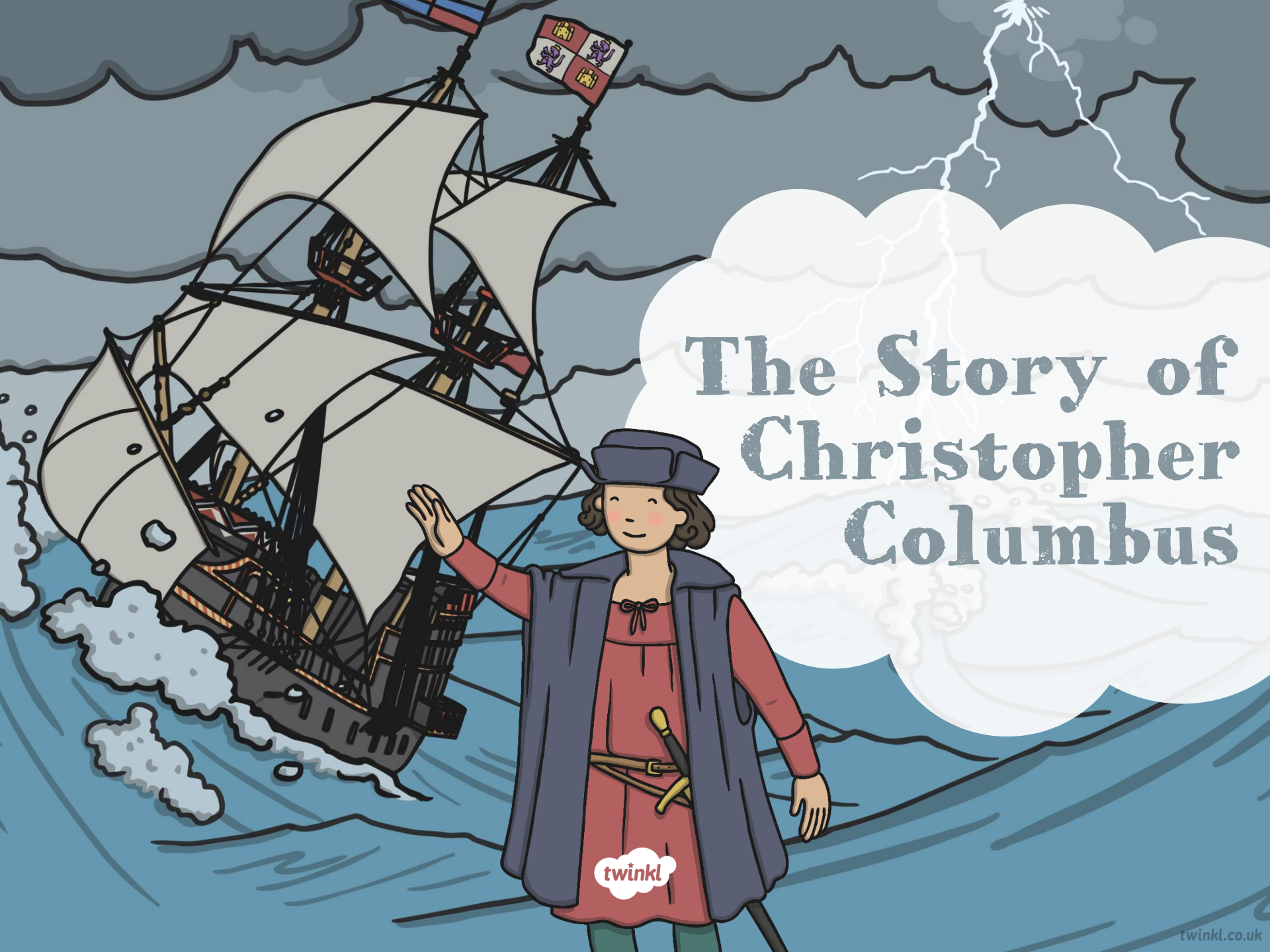
The Story of Christopher Columbus
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Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy, which was a very busy port. His father wove and sold wool, hoping to get rich by selling it to others.

At the age of 13, young Christopher went to sea, hoping to return home a rich man having sold the family wool. Whilst at sea, he learned about the winds and the tide. He also learned how to find his way by looking at the stars and the Sun.

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Later in his life, Columbus realised that people wanted to begin trading with countries in the east, such as China and India, but nobody was quite sure of the fastest way to get there. Columbus' map reading skills told him that sailing west to China was the best idea, but many people thought that this was a ridiculous idea. He tried to persuade rich people to help him, but they would laugh at his plan.

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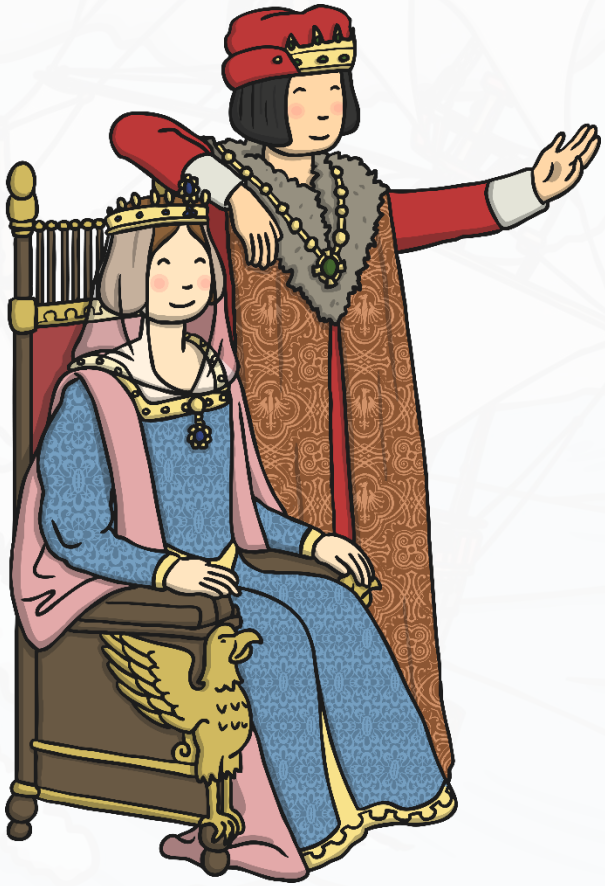
Finally, the King and Queen of Spain gave Columbus the money that he needed for ships.



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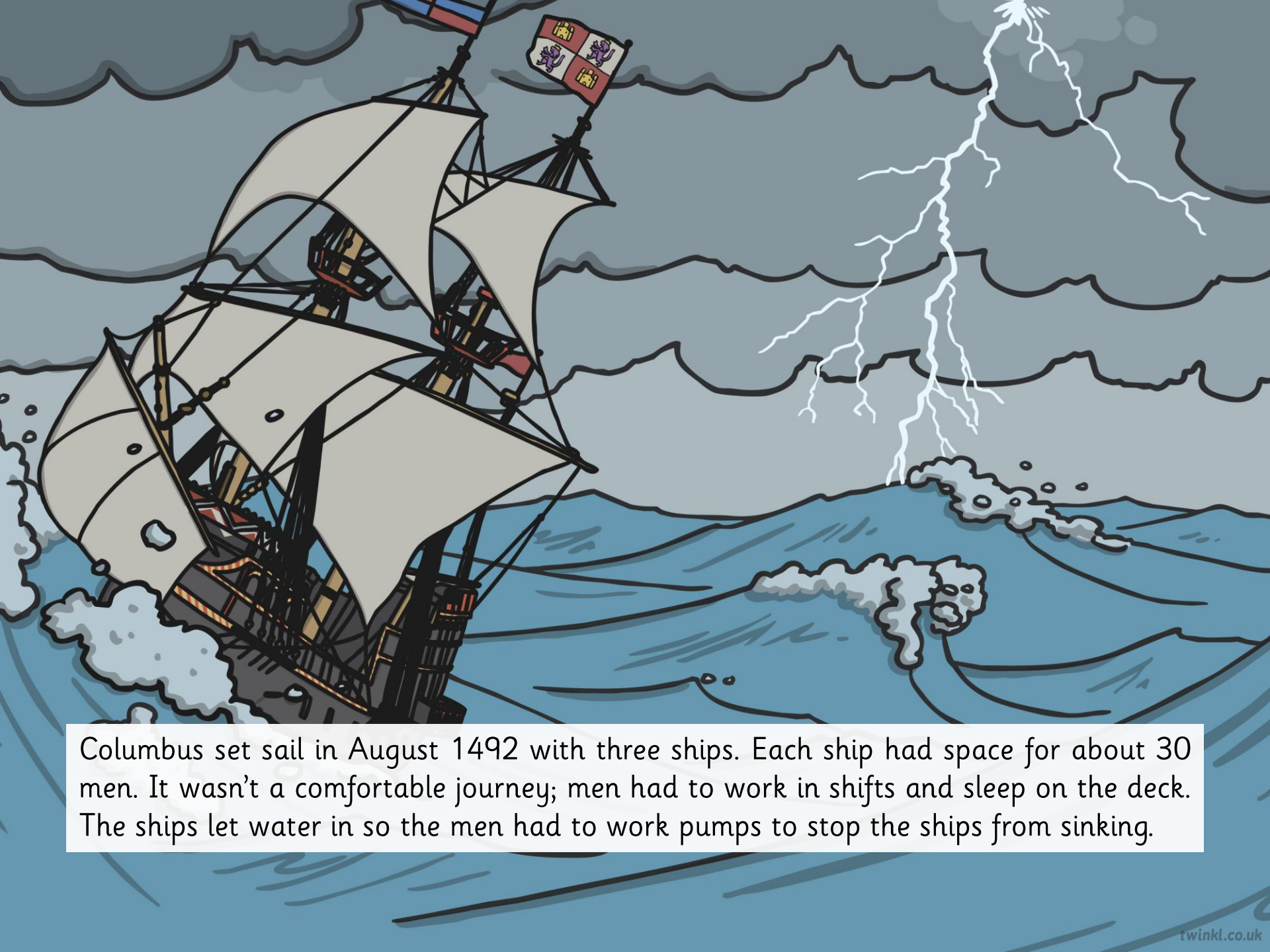

Columbus set sail in August 1492 with three ships. Each ship had space for about 30 men. It wasn't a comfortable journey; men had to work in shifts and sleep on the deck. The ships let water in so the men had to work pumps to stop the ships from sinking.

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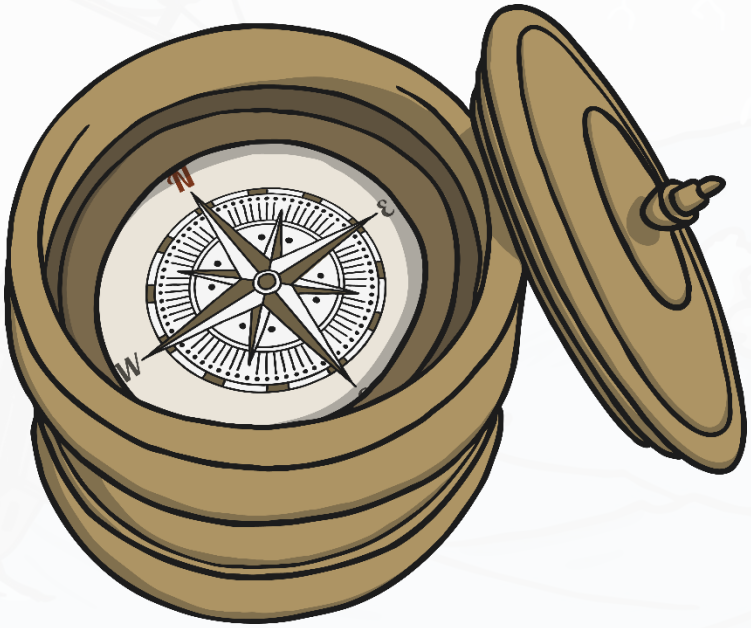
Using a compass, Columbus navigated the way but the journey was taking much longer than anyone had thought. The men got scared because their food and water supplies were running very low.

36 days after setting sail, an island was spotted in the distance. Columbus named the island San Salvador; it was an island in the Bahamas.



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Christopher explored this new world which became known as the 'New World'.

There were people living on the islands. At first, they were pleased to meet the explorer but weren't very happy when Columbus claimed the islands for Spain. He also took some of the native people back with him.

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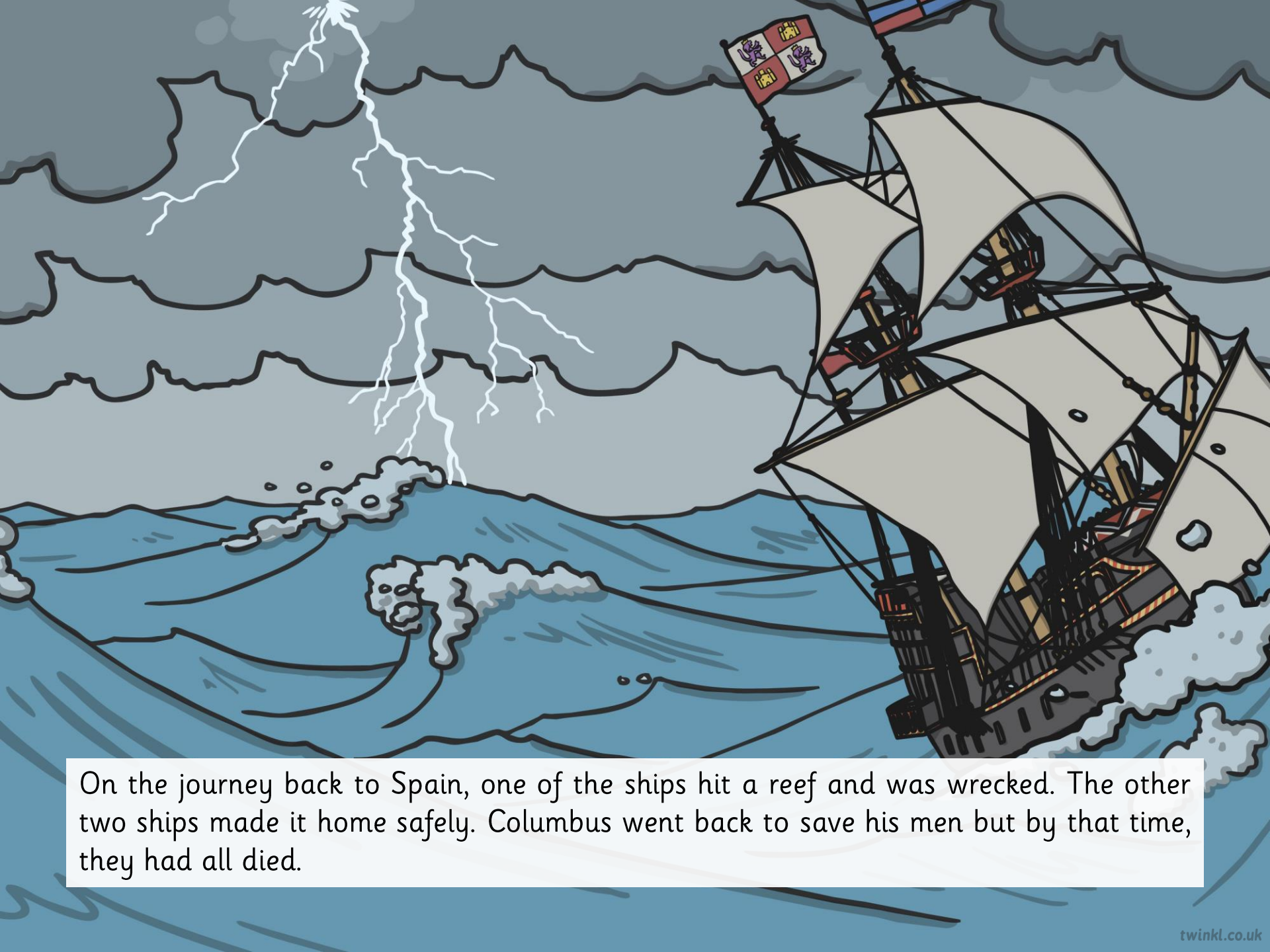

On the journey back to Spain, one of the ships hit a reef and was wrecked. The other two ships made it home safely. Columbus went back to save his men but by that time, they had all died.

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Spain now ruled over the islands which he discovered. Columbus returned a number of times and eventually found **South America**.

He died in 1506.

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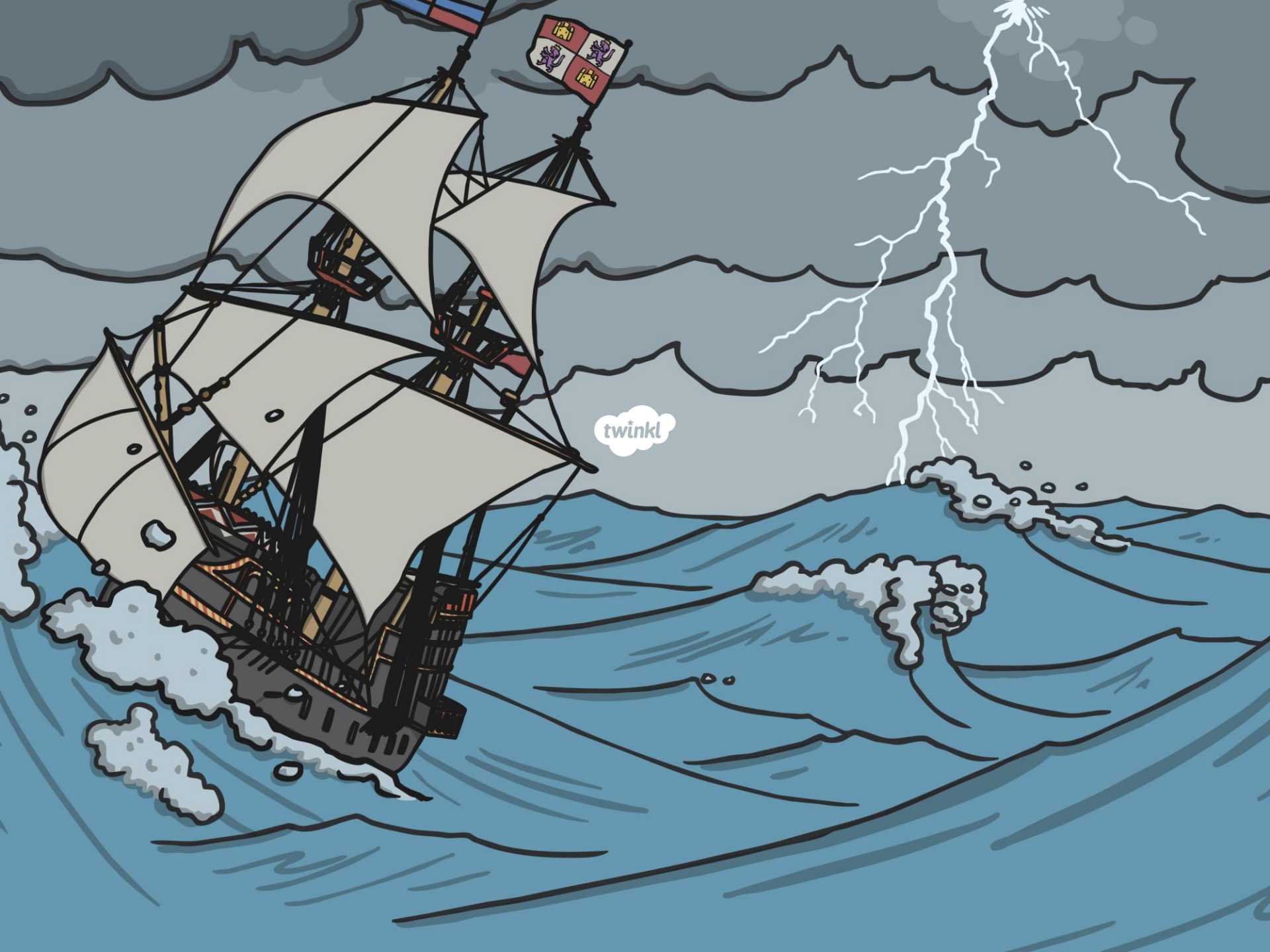
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