

## Searching for Cities of Gold

### Main Ideas

1. Fray Marcos and Estevanico believed that they had found the fabled cities of gold called Cíbola.
2. Coronado traveled through Texas and surrounding areas in search of gold and silver.
3. The Moscoso expedition traveled through Texas on its way to Mexico but failed to find riches.

### Why It Matters Today

Conquistadores explored the Americas in search of gold, silver, and other valuable metals. Use current events sources to learn more about the economic importance of minerals and other natural resources today.



**TEKS:** 1B, 2B, 20A, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D, 22D

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes about the Spanish search for gold in Texas.

### Key Terms and People

- viceroy
- Francisco Vázquez de Coronado
- Moscoso expedition

## The Story Continues

A Spanish legend described the Seven Cities of Gold.

According to the story, seven bishops fled Portugal when the country was invaded in the A.D. 700s. After crossing the Atlantic Ocean, they came to a land filled with gold and jewels. There, the bishops built seven fabulously wealthy cities. Although no one knew the cities' location, many Spaniards thought they might be in the Americas. After all, some wealthy empires had already been found there. Surely others lay hidden away.



## The Search for Lost Cities of Gold

Before returning to Spain, Cabeza de Vaca reported his adventures to officials in Mexico. He told of hearing of "mountains to the north, where there were towns of great population and great houses." He also said that he had seen signs of gold in the mountains.

Cabeza de Vaca's report excited the **viceroy**, or royal governor, of New Spain. In 1539 the viceroy sent a Catholic friar named Marcos de Niza north to find these cities. Fray Marcos was an experienced and skilled explorer. Because Estevanico knew the land, the viceroy sent him to serve as Fray Marcos's guide. Some 300 Mexican Indians also went along to provide protection for the explorers.

Fray Marcos and his company crossed what is now Arizona into New Mexico. Estevanico and several others went ahead of the main group to scout the way. This advance group eventually sent word back to Fray Marcos that they had seen a large city. As the friar continued on, he met some of the advance group fleeing his way. They reported that they had reached one of the seven cities and seen people wearing gold jewelry and drinking from golden cups. However, Estevanico had angered the villagers. They had attacked, killing him and many of the others.

To avoid a similar fate, Fray Marcos moved to high ground to view the city from afar. There, he saw it shining in the distance, with buildings that sparkled like gold in the desert sun. Satisfied that he had found great treasure, Fray Marcos returned home to Mexico City. He excitedly reported finding seven wealthy cities, which the Spanish called Cíbola. As wild rumors of Cíbola's wealth quickly spread, officials planned an expedition to claim its treasure.

**Reading Check Analyzing Information** Why might officials in Mexico City have questioned Fray Marcos's description of the cities of Cíbola?

## ★ Coronado's Search for Cíbola

To conquer Cíbola, the Spanish organized the largest force they had ever sent into North America. Some 300 soldiers, several religious officials, and more than 1,000 Mexican Indians led herds of cattle, horses, and sheep. **Francisco Vázquez de Coronado**, a 30-year-old conquistador, commanded this force. Riding a stallion, Coronado made an impressive sight in gold-plated armor and a steel helmet with bright feathers. With Fray Marcos serving as guide, the force set off in April 1540.



## BIOGRAPHY

**Estevanico** (c. 1501–1539) Estevanico was born around 1501 in Morocco. During his late teens, he was a slave for Spaniard Andrés Dorantes. In 1527 Dorantes joined the Narváez expedition and took Estevanico along. Estevanico thus became the first African to explore Texas. Later, in 1539, he guided a small group searching for gold. He was the first in the party to reach a Zuni village. Although Estevanico had gotten along well with many other American Indians, some of his actions angered the Zuni. Outside the village, they killed him. **In what two expeditions did Estevanico participate?**



## Interpreting Visuals

**Searching for gold.** This early map of the Americas shows what Europeans knew of the region. **Based on this map, why do you think Spanish explorers believed they might find the Seven Cities of Cíbola?**





### Interpreting Visuals

**Coronado.** Coronado led his large expedition across the dry regions of what is now the southwestern United States. *How do you think they may have adapted to the environment of the region during their trip?*

When Coronado reached the city that Fray Marcos had seen, he found a force of Zuni Indians waiting. A short but hard-fought battle followed. The Spaniards, with their muskets and swords, soon defeated the Zuni. The conquerors' joy of victory did not last long, however. As they searched the cities, they did not find any gold or silver. The cities of Cíbola were not the legendary lost cities of gold but rather Zuni Pueblo villages. The Zuni had houses made of adobe brick, not gold. It had only looked like gold to Fray Marcos as it sparkled in the sunlight. Coronado was furious and sent the friar back to Mexico City in disgrace.

**Reading Check Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** How did physical and human features lead the Spanish to think Cíbola was made of gold?



## Coronado Hears of Quivira

Although disappointed not to find Cíbola, Coronado nonetheless sent groups out to explore the land and search for treasure. The members of one group, led by García López de Cárdenas, became the first known Europeans to see the Grand Canyon. Another group traveled east to Tiguex (tee-GWAYSH), an area near the Rio Grande in what is now New Mexico. This area was home to the Tigua Indians, who proved friendly to the Spanish. Coronado soon moved his main force to the area.

While at Tiguex, the Spaniards met an American Indian from farther east whom they called the Turk. He told tales of Quivira, a nearby region where the cities were said to be full of gold. After the experience at Cíbola, many Spaniards doubted the Turk's story. Yet Coronado thought


finding Quivira was worth the risk and planned an expedition for the coming spring. That winter, the Spaniards' supplies ran out and they began forcing the Tigua Indians to give them food and clothing. The Tigua grew angry, and fighting soon broke out between them and the Spaniards. The Spaniards killed many Tigua before establishing control.

**Reading Check Finding the Main Idea** Who was the Turk, and why did the story he told interest Coronado?

## Coronado Travels through Texas

Guided by the Turk, Coronado set out in search of Quivira in the spring of 1541. The explorers traveled onto the flatlands of the Texas Panhandle. One soldier described the area's high plains.

### TEXAS VOICES

 "The country . . . was so level and smooth that . . . if a man lay down on his back he lost sight of the ground. . . . Several lakes were found at intervals; they were round as plates. . . . The grass grows tall near these lakes; away from them it is very short. . . . In traveling over those plains, [we left] no more trace . . . than if nothing had been there."

—Pedro de Castañeda, quoted in *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528–1543*

The expedition continued across the Llano Estacado. There the explorers also saw what they thought were strange humpbacked "cows," which were actually American buffalo. As the explorers traveled, they met many American Indians. Coronado and his army noted how skilled these Plains Indians were at hunting the buffalo. Moving east, the expedition crossed onto the Caprock Escarpment. This area of cliffs and canyons divides the Texas High Plains from the lower interior plains. There the explorers came upon another unusual sight—a deep gorge cut into the land. This gorge was likely Palo Duro Canyon.

The explorers camped in this canyon, and then the expedition headed north. Near what is now Wichita, Kansas, they reached Quivira and once again met with disappointment. Instead of treasure, they found only grass huts and corn. Coronado became angry and asked the Turk why he had deceived them. The Turk explained that the Tigua had made him tell the story so that the explorers would leave their village. Coronado had the Turk killed for his actions.

Coronado returned to Mexico City in 1542. In his report of the journey, he described the Llano Estacado as a fine land similar to parts of Spain. He noted that the huge buffalo herds might provide a source of wealth. Because he had not found any gold or other treasure, Spanish officials considered the expedition a failure, however.

**Reading Check Categorizing** What animals and geographic features did Coronado see while crossing the Texas Panhandle?



### Interpreting Visuals

**Armor.** Conquistadores wore armor to protect themselves in battle. **How might this armor have been a disadvantage during an expedition in Texas?**



## Daily Life

### What's for Dinner?

Before a voyage, explorers loaded their ships with barrels of flour, cattle, and other foods and livestock. These supplies often ran out before the ships landed. In such cases, some explorers ate wormy biscuits or rats to stay alive. When traveling overland in the Americas, hungry explorers copied the diets of local American Indians. Depending on where they were, explorers ate corn, fish, prickly pear fruit, and roots. In desperate times, some explorers even ate tree bark or their horses to survive. **How did explorers in the Americas learn which local plants or animals were suitable to eat?**



## Moscoso Explores East Texas

While Coronado marched to the cities of Cíbola from the south, another group led by Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto sought them from the east. De Soto and some 600 soldiers had landed on the Florida coast in 1539. For more than two years they had explored what is now the southeastern United States. Then, in May 1542, De Soto died of fever. Luis de Moscoso Alvarado, another member of the group, took command. As a result, the later portion of the journey has become known as the **Moscoso expedition**.

Because the expedition had not found any treasure, Moscoso decided to head to Mexico City. He led the explorers west into East Texas, where they met many Caddo Indians. Soon, however, the explorers began having trouble finding food, and the Caddo had none to spare. Realizing they had little chance of making it to Mexico City on foot, Moscoso returned to the Mississippi River. Like Narváez, the explorers built small boats to sail to Mexico. Their attempt was successful, and in 1543 some 300 members of the original force of 600 reached Mexico.

In Mexico City, Moscoso made a report of his expedition. Parts of his report sounded much like Coronado's. Moscoso described Texas as a geographically varied land. He also mentioned seeing a thick, black goo seeping from the ground. Although he did not know it, Moscoso had seen petroleum, or oil. This would one day become the "black gold" of Texas and a source of great wealth for many Texans. However, the Spanish were interested only in gold and silver, and neither Coronado nor Moscoso had found any. The expeditions to Texas had failed to produce the riches the Spanish desired.

**Reading Check Making Generalizations and Predictions** After Moscoso's report, do you think Spanish officials were eager to send other expeditions to Texas? Why or why not?



## Section 3 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

### 1. Define and explain:

- viceroy

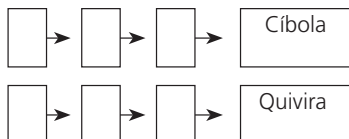
### 2. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

- Francisco Vázquez de Coronado
- Moscoso expedition

### 3. Sequencing

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to identify in order the stories and events that led to Coronado's exploration of the American Southwest.



### 4. Finding the Main Idea

- What happened on the Fray Marcos expedition to Cíbola?
- Compare and contrast the Coronado and De Soto–Moscoso expeditions.

### 5. Writing and Critical Thinking

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**Identifying Points of View** Imagine that you are a Zuni Indian living in the American Southwest. Describe your opinion of the Spaniards looking for Cíbola.

Consider the following:

- Spanish actions toward the Zuni
- Zuni actions toward the Spanish