By the time of Coronado's expedition in 1540, the Spanish knew there was gold and silver in the Americas. Although Coronado’s search for the Seven Cities of Cibola led only to impoverished villages in present-day New Mexico, the group he dispatched northward led to European discovery of the Grand Canyon. García López de Cárdenas, with the help of Hopi guides from nearby mesas, became the first European to see this natural wonder. Unable to find water or to cross the canyon, Cárdenas eventually left in frustration.

Exploration Narratives

- Review with students the purpose a writer brings to an exploration narrative: to convey information about a travel expedition to an audience.
- Point out to students that some exploration narratives may be thought of as reports to an employer.
- Ask students the Literary Analysis question: What impression of the group’s efforts is López de Cárdenas trying to convey in his narrative?

**Answer:** By including details relating to the harsh landscape and the Spaniards’ sober determination to explore it, the writer seems to wish to convey an impression of the group’s physical and mental hardiness.

**Reading Check**

**Answer:** Don García López de Cárdenas and approximately twelve other men are dispatched to explore the river.

**Vocabulary Builder**

**dispatched** (di spacht) v. sent off on a specific assignment

**Literary Analysis**

**Exploration Narratives**

What impression of the group’s efforts is López de Cárdenas trying to convey in his narrative?

**Strategy for Less Proficient Readers**

Cultural anthropologists observe peoples of the world: recording what they eat, how they dress, the roles of the young and elderly, relationships with neighbors and outsiders, their values and beliefs, and so on. Ask students to imagine that a cultural anthropologist from another culture is visiting your community. Challenge pairs of students to prepare a list of features of public and private life that would help that social scientist better understand your culture.

**Enrichment for Gifted/Talented Students**

Within the boundaries of Grand Canyon National Park are about 2,000 sites once inhabited by the Anasazi—the name given to the Native American peoples who lived in settlements throughout the plateau country of the Southwest. Encourage students to read further in the library or on the Internet about the Anasazi people. Have students write a poem or a drama about the Anasazi, focusing on what they might have thought upon seeing the European explorers gazing across the Grand Canyon.
**Reading Strategy**

**Recognizing Signal Words**

- **Ask** students the Reading Strategy question: What change do the words “up to that time” signal?

**Answer:** This phrase signals a change in the course of the journey.

**Monitor Progress:** Ask a student volunteer to explain the three most common types of relationships between ideas that are indicated by signal words.

**Answer:** Signal words most commonly indicate time relationships, connections of causality, and contrasts.

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**Critical Reading**

1. **Respond:** How does López de Cárdenas’s description compare with your knowledge of the Grand Canyon?

2. (a) **Recall:** Why do the Spaniards in “A Journey Through Texas” order the Native Americans to travel with them? (b) **Infer:** Why do the Native Americans obey the orders?

3. (a) **Recall:** In “A Journey Through Texas,” why do the Spaniards become fearful when the Native Americans in their company die? (b) **Draw Conclusions:** What do the Native Americans believe is the cause of the sickness?

4. (a) **Recall:** What are López de Cárdenas and his men expecting to explore? (b) **Infer:** Why does Coronado send the group on this mission?

5. (a) **Recall:** How wide does the river appear from the edge? (b) **Hypothesize:** Why does the river seem narrow from above?

6. **Extend:** How might these accounts have been different if they had been written to secure further funding?

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- **Author Link**
  - For: More about Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and García López de Cárdenas
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**Reading Strategy**

**Recognizing Signal Words**

What change do the words “up to that time” signal?

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**ASSESS**

**Answers**

1. Students who have never visited the canyon may be surprised that the Spaniards were unable to descend.

2. (a) They wanted them to serve as guides. (b) The Native Americans may have been afraid of the Spaniards.

3. (a) They are afraid that the Native Americans will flee in terror and leave them stranded—and that other Native Americans will then avoid them. (b) They believe the Spaniards have the power to wish them dead.

4. (a) They are expecting to explore the Colorado River. (b) Possible reasons include meeting and learning about the people reputed to live near the river or exploring the river’s possible use as a means of travel.

5. (a) It appears to be about six feet wide. (b) They are viewing the river from an extraordinary height.

6. The account might contain detailed descriptions of the canyon’s impressive size and beauty in order to convince financial backers that exploration of the canyon could bring them fame, glory, and riches.

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For additional information about Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca or García López de Cárdenas, have students type in the Web Code, then select C or L from the alphabet, and then select Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca or Garcia Lopez de Cardenas.