

The Quest For El Dorado

Answer the following questions

- a. What made explorers undertake a hazardous journey to South America?

Explorers would undertake the hazardous journey to South America due to the promise of immeasurable wealth that was held out by tales of a mythical city of gold, El Dorado, said to be located in the unexplored interior.

- b. How did people come together for the expedition?

People would come together for the expeditions usually when some influential or charismatic person announced his intention to look for El Dorado. Then anywhere from a hundred to seven hundred Europeans would sign up to go along, and would bring with them their own armour, weapons and horses.

- c. What were the difficulties faced by the explorers?

The early explorers in South America were faced with unfamiliar terrains such as mosquito-infested swamps, blazing hot plains, flooded rivers and dangerous mountain passes. Their numbers dwindled due to illnesses, attacks from hostile natives and desertion. The natives would sometimes mislead them just to get rid of them. The journeys were long and arduous and many men died or were killed on the way.

- d. Why was Antonio de Berrio forced to give up research?

Antonio de Berrio was forced to give up his search because the few men who had survived the hostilities of the natives along with the

challenging and arduous journey had become weary and eager to return home.

e. What difficulties did Berrio face immediately after setting out?

Berrio set out with seven hundred horsemen, but their route was difficult and exhausting. They met many hostile natives, and many men and horses died or were killed along the way.

f. How did Berrio help Walter Raleigh?

Berrio helped Raleigh when Raleigh arrived in Trinidad, where Berrio had settled as Governor. Berrio treated him with great courtesy, extending hospitality, giving him advice and sharing information about his expedition.

g. What difficulties did Walter Raleigh face?

The first difficulty that Walter Raleigh faced was stormy weather on the ocean. Having escaped the ocean, it was only with the help of the pilot and three other natives that they were able to find their way through the labyrinth of rivers. They guided the expedition and helped it move forward. However, the oppressive tropical heat nearly stifled them and it took all Raleigh's powers of persuasion to encourage the explorers to continue their journey. The Spaniards had told the natives that the English were robbers and cannibals, so Raleigh at first found the natives very hostile. He had to win them over with great care and effort.

h. How did Raleigh win over the natives?

Raleigh had to overcome the natives' suspicion which stemmed from the rumour that all Englishmen were robbers and cannibals. He won them over by treating them with great kindness and gentleness.