

## Section

# 2

# The Spanish Explore Texas

### Main Ideas

1. Pineda mapped the Texas coast in 1519.
2. The Narváez expedition was shipwrecked on the coast of Texas, but few of its members survived.
3. Cabeza de Vaca and Estevanico traveled widely through Texas in search of a way back to Spanish lands.

### Why It Matters Today

Early Spanish explorers visited the Gulf Coast of Texas. Today the Gulf Coast contains several of our state's cities. Use current events sources to find information about regional growth along the Gulf or in other parts of Texas.



**TEKS:** 1A, 1C, 2B, 8A, 9C, 20A, 21A, 21B, 21C, 22D

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on early Spanish exploration in Texas.

### Key People

- Alonso Álvarez de Pineda
- Pánfilo de Narváez
- Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca
- Estevanico

## The Story Continues

In 1519 Spanish explorer Alonso Álvarez de Pineda sailed with a fleet from Jamaica into the Gulf of Mexico. He had been sent to explore the land between Florida and Mexico, both of which the Spanish already controlled. Sailing west from Florida, Pineda reached a large river—the Pánuco—along which were several American Indian villages. Pineda and some of his soldiers decided to establish a colony there, and he sent his ships back to Jamaica. When the ships returned with supplies, though, they found the settlers had been killed in Indian attacks.



### The Narváez Expedition

**Alonso Álvarez de Pineda** and his crew were the first Europeans to see the Texas coast. In addition, Pineda was the first to map the northern Gulf of Mexico. Although no evidence exists that he and his crew entered Texas, their voyage increased Spanish interest in the region.

In 1527 **Pánfilo de Narváez** (PAHN-fee-loh deh nahr-BAH-ehs) led another voyage to the Gulf of Mexico. Like other Spanish explorers in the Americas, he dreamed of finding riches. The Narváez expedition included five ships with some 600 soldiers, plus horses. The explorers reached Florida in April 1528 and went ashore near Tampa Bay.

### KEY DATE 1519

Alonso Álvarez de Pineda is the first European to map the Texas Gulf Coast.

While exploring the coast, the Spaniards saw some American Indians wearing gold jewelry. They excitedly asked where they could find more of the metal. The American Indians described Apalachee, a northern region that they said was rich in gold. Eager to find treasure, Narváez divided his force. He sent the ships in search of a harbor, while he and 300 soldiers set off for Apalachee.

Struggling through the Florida swamps, the Spaniards soon became lost. They ran out of food and grew weak. Many were wounded or killed in American Indian attacks. When the explorers at last found Apalachee, there was no gold. The discouraged Spaniards slowly began making their way back to the coast.

When the explorers neared shore, they searched for their ships without success. Unknown to the group, the ships had returned home. The stranded and starving explorers had to eat their horses to survive. Explorer **Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca** (kah-BEH-sah deh BAH-kah) described their desperation. “It became clear that we could leave this terrible land only by dying.”

As a last resort, the Spaniards used what materials they could find to build several small, flimsy boats. About a month after they set sail, a huge storm arose. Three of the boats, including Narváez’s, washed up on the Texas coast, probably in or near Matagorda Bay. Narváez, however, disappeared when his poorly anchored boat washed out to sea. The other two boats shipwrecked on a Texas island—perhaps Galveston or San Luis. Only about 80 explorers had survived to reach the island.

Stranded once again, the explorers had lost most of their supplies. Many had even lost their clothes at sea and had nothing to wear. With winter approaching, the situation was grim. Just as they were losing all hope, a group of Karankawa Indians appeared. This meeting in 1528 marked the beginning of the Age of Contact in Texas.

Shocked by the strangers’ condition, the Karankawas took the men in and shared their supplies with them. Food and clothing were scarce, however, and most of the Spaniards died during that winter. The few who lived were held captive and forced to work very hard. For the next few years Cabeza de Vaca worked as a servant, a trader, and a healer. He traveled along the Texas coast gathering sea shells and mesquite beans to trade for animal skins. He later wrote about his experiences in Texas.

### TEXAS VOICES

“Throughout all this country we went naked, and . . . twice a year we cast our skins like serpents. The sun and air produced great sores on our [chests] and shoulders. . . . The country is so broken and thickset, that often after getting our wood in the forests, the blood flowed from us in many places.”

—Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca*

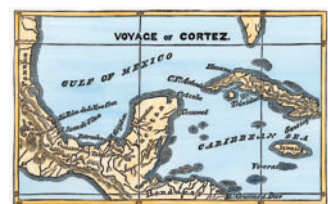
**Reading Check Summarizing** What tragedy struck the Narváez expedition when the explorers tried to sail to Mexico?

## LINKING

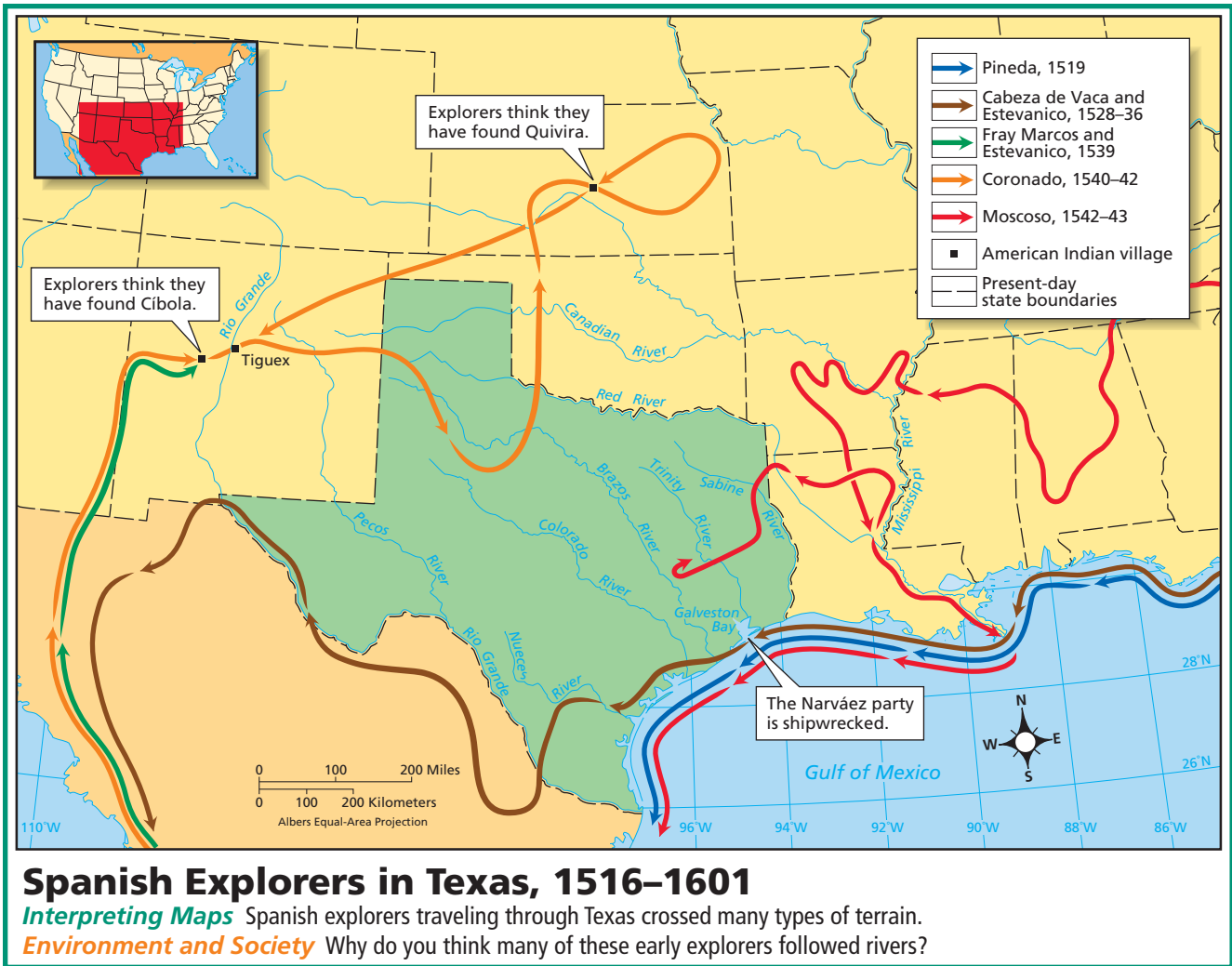
### Past to Present

#### Cartography

In 1519 Alonso Álvarez de Pineda created the first map of the northern Gulf of Mexico. To create the map, he used his observations and simple tools such as a compass. Today mapmakers create extremely accurate maps using computers and satellites. The *Landsat 7* and *GOES* satellites provide detailed images of Earth that are used to make maps. **How have mapmaking techniques improved?**



A map of the Gulf of Mexico made in the 1500s



## ★ The Spaniards' Adventures in Texas

Eventually Cabeza de Vaca was captured by Coahuiltecan Indians. While in captivity, he met three other survivors of the Narváez expedition who had become slaves of the Coahuiltecan. Two of them—Alonso del Castillo and Andrés Dorantes—had served as captains under Narváez. The third was a North African slave named **Estevanico** (eh-steh-bah-NEE-koh).

After two years of planning, the four men escaped and set off along the coast in search of Mexico. During their travels, they encountered the Atakapas and Karankawas in addition to the Coahuiltecan. The Spaniards traveled from one American Indian village to another. At one village, Cabeza de Vaca removed an arrowhead from a man's chest and then stitched up the wound. The operation amazed the American Indians who watched. As a result, the Spaniards became celebrated as healers among some Indian tribes. Cabeza de Vaca later described how the explorers' growing fame as healers helped them survive.

## TEXAS VOICES



"This cure gave us control throughout the country. . . . We drew so many followers that we had no use for their services. . . . Frequently we were accompanied by three or four thousand persons, and . . . had to breathe upon and sanctify [bless] the food and drink for each."

—Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca*

Estevanico's skill at communicating with different American Indian groups also helped the explorers survive. Cabeza de Vaca wrote that Estevanico "talked with [the Indians] constantly, found out about the ways we wanted to go . . . and the things we wished to know." By the end of their journey, the men were escorted from village to village by huge crowds of American Indian men, women, and children.

In 1536, almost eight years after their shipwreck, Cabeza de Vaca and his companions came across a group of Spanish soldiers. The explorers explained who they were, and the astonished soldiers took them to Mexico City. There they met with the viceroy, whom they told of their travels. Cabeza de Vaca later returned to Spain.

In 1542 he published the story of his travels as *The Narrative of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca*. It was the first European description of the land and people of North America. In it, Cabeza de Vaca described the lives and cultures of the American Indian groups he and his companions had met. Among other topics, he discussed what types of food people ate and how they treated their children. He also described the landscapes through which they had traveled. His book contains the first European description of a buffalo and descriptions of many Texan plants.

**Reading Check Identifying Points of View** Why did many American Indians in Texas follow the four Spanish explorers?



## BIOGRAPHY

### Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca

(c. 1490–c. 1560) From an early age, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca heard tales of exploration and conquest. His grandfather had conquered the Canary Islands. As a teenager, Cabeza de Vaca joined the Spanish army, serving in Spain and Italy. After the disastrous Narváez expedition, Cabeza de Vaca became governor of a colony in Paraguay. When the settlers rebelled, he returned to Spain in disgrace. **How did Cabeza de Vaca's early experiences help him on his travels through Texas?**



## Section 2 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

### 1. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

- Alonso Álvarez de Pineda
- Pánfilo de Narváez
- Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca
- Estevanico

### 2. Summarizing

Copy the chart below. Use it to describe the actions and results of each expedition.

Pineda	Narváez
ACTIONS	ACTIONS
↓	↓
RESULTS	RESULTS

### 3. Finding the Main Idea

- Based on the map, which explorers passed through each region of Texas?
- What adventures did Cabeza de Vaca and Estevanico have during their time in Texas?

### 4. Writing and Critical Thinking myWriteSmart

**Supporting a Point of View** Imagine that you are second-in-command of the Narváez expedition. Write a memo to Narváez giving your opinion about the division of his forces. Provide reasons to support your position.

Consider the following:

- the swamps the Spaniards would have to cross
- other actions Narváez might have taken