



# Discovery Worksheets

## The Road to El Dorado

**T**he *Road to El Dorado* (DreamWorks 2000, PG 89 minutes) is an animated film set in the 16th century. It tells the story of two scam artists called Miguel and Tulio who come into possession of a map to El Dorado, the Lost City of Gold. They stow away on the ship of Spanish conqueror Cortes and use the map to find El Dorado. Here they come in contact with a strange new culture and are forced to choose between wealth and doing the right thing.

### 1. Reasons for exploring new lands:

- In the movie, what reason does Cortes give for sailing to the New World? (The real Hernando Cortes actually lived in Cuba in the Caribbean, and sailed only a few hundred kilometres to begin his conquest of central and South America.)
- Why did Tulio and Miguel want to find El Dorado?
- Turn to pages 64 and 156 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. Why did people come from all over the world to travel to Ballarat and Klondike?

### 2. Travel over the oceans:

- Make a sketch of the ship used by Cortes (and the stowaways, Tulio and Miguel). Pay particular attention to the shape of the sails.
- Turn to pages 42–43 of the *Atlas of Discovery*.
  - What type of ship do you think is shown in the movie?
  - Which Spanish explorer was the first European to sail to South America and in what year did he sail? Over which ocean did he sail?

### 3. Meeting new cultures:

- How were Tulio and Miguel welcomed by the people of El Dorado? Why do you think they reacted in this way?
- Look at the painting 'Entrance of Cortes into Mexico' on page 35 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. How were Cortes and his army greeted? What did the Aztecs believe Cortes to be?

### 4. Customs and beliefs:

- Who were the two most important people in the city of El Dorado?
- What animal was worshipped by the people of El Dorado? Which people wore hoods in the likeness of this animal? Turn to page 160 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. What is the fate of this animal today?
- What beliefs were Tulio and Miguel happy to accept?
- What customs did they find difficult to accept?
- Turn to page 160 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. What name did the Mayan people give to the ball game played in the film? Why wasn't it good to be the winning captain?



*Atlas of Discovery*, pp. 35, 42–43, 64, 156, 160, 162–163, 164–165



**5. Spanish conquerors:**

- (a) When the guards return to El Dorado with news that the army of Cortes is near, what does Miguel tell them about their chances in a battle against Cortes?
- (b) Why did the people of El Dorado have little chance against the invading Spanish army?
- (c) What plan does Tulio come up with to stop Cortes and his army from discovering El Dorado?
- (d) Turn to page 35 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. Which empire did Cortes conquer and how long did it take him?

**6. Remaining hidden from the invaders:**

- (a) Look at the satellite image of South America on pages 162–163 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. What features shown on the satellite image would help cities remain hidden from invaders?
- (a) Turn to pages 164–165 of the *Atlas of Discovery*. Look at the information and photograph of the lost city. What is its name and why do you think it remained hidden from the Spanish invaders?