

A Short Biography of Great People in History

This biography has:
459 words

Reading time:
4:03 min.



Simón Bolívar

(1783-1830)

Simón José Antonio de la Santísima Trinidad Bolívar y Palacios, known throughout history as Simón Bolívar, was born in Caracas on July 24th, 1783. His parents were the land owners Juan Vicente Bolívar and lady María Concepción Palacios. He enjoyed a privileged childhood, but he became an **orphan** when he was nine years old. During his **childhood**, he was a student of Simón Rodríguez and although history says he was also Andrés Bello's student, the truth is that due to his young age of the time, Bello's influence was not relevant in any way to Bolívar's life.

In 1799, he traveled to Spain to complete his education. A little time after that, he married María Teresa Del Toro, who died during their honeymoon in Venezuela. Simón Bolívar returned to Europe and, in Austria, he came upon his old teacher Simón Rodríguez and together they visited Rome. While on Monte Sacro on August 15th, 1805, Bolívar expressed his wish to fight for the freedom of his country. Upon arriving

in Venezuela, he joined the patriotic conspirators, who overthrew Captain General Vicente de Emparan in 1810. From that moment on, he made himself an important part of future successes and battles for the independence of New Granada, - today Venezuela and Colombia - which, united with Ecuador, was named the Republic of Gran Colombia.

In spite of diverse **setbacks** and defeats in the military's plans, Bolivar never abandoned the struggle and he was the main motivator and driver of the independence of five countries which today are now known as: Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Perú, and Bolivia.

In 1823, he arrived in Perú where he organized the United Army which achieved brilliant victories in Junín and Ayacucho in 1824. He lived in Lima until 1826 where he organized the Andes Federation, a project which would make up the now independent republics of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Perú and Bolivia, and it would be called "The Gran Colombia". Once back in Bogota, he could not overcome Caracas' and Quito's nationalistic plans. Lima and La Paz also revolted.

Disappointed, surrounded by his enemies and ill with tuberculosis, Simón Bolivar gave up his power once and for all in April 1830, and in a grueling trip, he withdrew to Santa Marta, where he thought about going to Europe. It was there where he aggravated his lungs and, while gravely ill, he wrote his will. In his will, telling the "Colombians" to form "La Gran Colombia", he again called on them to move forward toward a union because if his death contributed to the end of the political parties and toward a union, then he would go happily to his grave, his dream and greatest wish that still had not been fulfilled.

Suggested activities to develop your understanding of English:

1.-Listen to the CD while reading the biography. Do this three times.

2.- Close the book and just listen to the biography. Try to understand as clearly as possible every sentence that the narrator reads. Do this exercise three times.

3.-Look up in a dictionary the meaning of the following words.

Orphan: _____

Childhood: _____

Setbacks: _____

NOTES
