

Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 9, WEBISODE 2

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



An unidentified Shoshone woman (around 1880)
Denver Public Library



Segment Overview

Thomas Jefferson persuaded Congress to authorize \$2,500 to fund an expedition to seek a water route from the Mississippi to the Pacific. He selected his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, to lead the expedition. Lewis, a skilled outdoorsman and amateur scientist, had distinguished himself in the army on the frontier before coming to the White House. Lewis believed the expedition required a strong co-leader and tapped William Clark, his former army commander. Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory for fifteen million dollars expanded the scope of the expedition; the men would explore the new territory, establish friendly relations with the Indians, encourage commerce, and communicate to the Indians the sovereignty of their new "great father" in the east. They would also gather information about the land, plants, animals, and tribes of the region. The two leaders selected some two dozen well-seasoned men to join them in forming the Corps of Discovery. They also hired a French trapper and his young Shoshone wife Sacagawea to serve as translators.

The trip, expected to take under two years, stretched longer, and the men endured hunger, cold, danger, and deprivation. Lewis and Clark were the first United States citizens to see the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains; to cross the Continental Divide; and to reach the Pacific by land. They determined that no practicable northwest passage existed. They greatly expanded the scientific knowledge of the region, and mapped much of the new land that had heretofore appeared on maps as a blank space labeled "Unknown."

Teacher Directions

1. Students, in small teams, discuss the following questions.
 - Why did Jefferson buy the Louisiana Purchase?
 - Why did some people criticize this purchase?
 - What were the goals of the Lewis and Clark expedition?
 - What scientific information did the explorers gather?
2. Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions.



Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.



History Sleuth



What do you
Think?

Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the nation, ensured American control of the strategic Mississippi River, and created a vast new "empire for liberty." Critics believed this expenditure would bankrupt the nation, and that America already possessed all the land it needed. The expedition was to seek a water route to the Pacific, explore the new territory, establish friendly relations with the Indians, pave the way for future commerce, and gather scientific information about the land, its plants and animals, and its people. The men drew detailed maps, added two hundred species to the world's list of known plants, and provided detailed information about the geography and animals of the region.

Teacher Directions

Distribute one set of the *Lewis and Clark Adventure Cards* to each team. Students take turns reading aloud the question side of the card and predicting what will happen in the situation described. Students turn the cards over and read the answer side of the cards.

Teacher Directions

Students respond to one of the following writing prompts.

- Would you have volunteered to be part of the Lewis and Clark expedition? Why or why not? What might you experience on such an expedition?
- Can you think of a modern expedition into the unknown that compares to the Lewis and Clark expedition? Would you go on such an expedition? If you, like Lewis, could choose your co-captain, whom would you choose? Why? How might you prepare for such a journey?



Moving Toward Freedom



Connections

Teacher Directions

Activity One

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *York: The African American Member of the Expedition*
2. Students discuss the following questions in small teams.
 - How do you think the expedition changed York's perception of himself?
 - How did the Indians view him? How did the men of the expedition view him?
 - How do you think York felt after the expedition?

Activity Two

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Sacagawea: The Expedition's Invaluable Native Woman.*
2. Students discuss the following questions in small teams.
 - How did Sacagawea help the expedition?
 - How do you think the expedition changed her perception of herself?
 - How do you think she should have been rewarded?

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Math — The Louisiana purchase cost \$.04 per acre. Students research how much land costs in their area per acre. Did Jefferson get a good deal? By what percentage has the price of land increased in your area since 1803?

Geography/Math — Students trace the route of Jefferson and Clark on a map and plan their own trip following in the path of these explorers. Students decide where they will sleep and eat, how far they will drive each day, and what sites they will visit. Perhaps they want to include a white-water rafting trip! Students plan a budget for the trip.

Language Arts — Students read excerpts from Stephen Ambrose's excellent book, *Undaunted Courage* about the Lewis and Clark expedition. Audio tapes of the book are also available at many public libraries.

Language Arts — Students view part or all of the Ken Burns video, *Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery*. Students write a movie review.

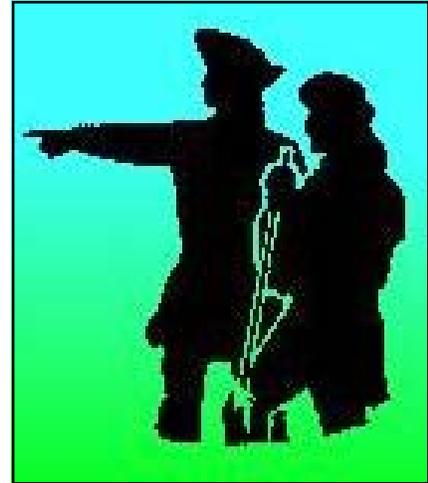
Science — Students research some of the species of animals and plants Lewis and Clark discovered and make illustrated cards.

Geography — Students compare a pre-Lewis and Clark map to a modern map.

York: The African American Member of the Expedition

York was the first African American to journey through the continent north of Mexico. He left St. Louis with William Clark in 1803, and traveled to the shores of the Pacific Ocean and back.

But York was not free. As William Clark's "manservant" and companion, he had grown up with Clark, and the two men were close in age. Clark's father, who owned a plantation in Virginia, had left York to his son in his will.



On the historic expedition, York shared the hardships and dangers with the other men. A large, six-foot tall man, York is described in the men's journals as a strong swimmer and capable hunter. He helped care for one sick member of the expedition, Sergeant Floyd, who died of a ruptured appendix. He accompanied Lewis on several small scouting parties, including one that explored the Yellowstone River.

Native Americans in the West, who had never seen a man with black skin before, marveled at his appearance. Some rubbed his skin to see if the color was permanent. One tribe, whose members painted their bodies with charcoal before battle, called York "strong medicine." The Shoshone were amazed to hear the whites say they had a black man in their party. Lewis wrote, "Some of the party told the Indians that we had a man with us who was black and had short curling hair, this had excited their curiosity very much, and they seemed quite as anxious to see (him)...as they were the merchandize which we had to barter for their horses."

Like other members of the expedition, York had geographic features named after him by the captains ("York's 8 Islands" and "York's Dry River"). When the expedition voted to determine where to set up its winter camp, York's vote—like that of Sacagawea—was counted. With the other men, he enjoyed a hero's welcome when the party returned to St. Louis in 1806.

After the expedition, York returned to the more restrictive life of an enslaved person. Clark later granted York his freedom, and he worked in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Sacagawea: The Expedition's Invaluable Native Woman

An unidentified Shoshone woman (around 1880)



The only woman among the thirty-three members of the permanent party to journey to the Pacific and back, Sacagawea was only seventeen when she strapped her infant son on her back and headed west with Lewis and Clark. The captains

needed her as an interpreter to negotiate with the Shoshone for horses to carry the expedition across the Rocky Mountains. Her presence also helped ensure a peaceful reception from western tribes who had never seen white men before; a war party would never travel with a woman, especially a woman with a baby.

During the expedition, Lewis and Clark's respect for Sacagawea grew tremendously. When she became seriously ill, Lewis treated her illness and moved her to his own tent, which provided more shelter from the wind. Lewis wrote that she had "been of great service

to me as a pilot through this country." As they traveled through her homeland (from which she had been kidnapped by an enemy tribe as a child) Sacagawea acted as an invaluable guide, showing the expedition an important pass through the mountains. The captains gave her one of the few horses purchased from initial contacts

with the Shoshone. She had a horse to ride while her husband had to walk—a reversal of Shoshone tradition, where men rode and women walked! Lewis got mad at Charbonneau when he mistreated his young wife. When the party voted on a location for a winter camp, Sacagawea's vote counted equally.

Even though the captains praised her in their journals, she received nothing for her services. Her husband received a land grant of 320 acres and \$533. She gave birth to a daughter about six years after the expedition, and died at age twenty-five from an unknown illness.

While on sentry duty, Private Alexander Willard falls asleep. This is a serious offense, punishable by death; a sleeping sentry jeopardizes the safety of the entire group. What happens to Willard?

With her forty-seven year-old husband, seventeen-year-old Sacagawea is hired as an interpreter. She negotiates with the Shoshone for horses critically needed to cross the Rocky Mountains, and helps guide the expedition through the mountains. What happens to Sacagawea?

The youngest member of the Lewis and Clark expedition, Baptiste is only 55-days old when his mother Sacagawea straps him on her back and begins the journey toward the Rocky Mountains. Captain Clark becomes so fond of the toddler that he offers to raise the child as his own. What happens to Baptiste?

During a hunting trip, Pierre Cruzatte accidentally shoots Captain Lewis in the "thye"—actually, his rear end. He denies it at first, claiming Indians are nearby. Finally, he confesses. What happened?

The fierce and powerful Teton Lakota Sioux control the flow of trade goods along the Missouri and dominate the Great Plains. The explorers offer them gifts, but the Sioux are not satisfied. Three warriors grab the tow rope of the explorers' boat to prevent them from leaving. Clark draws his sword, hundreds of warriors on shore prepare to fire arrows; Lewis loads the cannon. Will violence erupt?

After six months and sixteen hundred miles of hard travel, the explorers arrive at the Mandan villages on the northern branch of the Missouri River. Winter is coming, and the explorers must build a base camp to survive temperatures that will reach forty degrees below zero. The Mandan villages contain 4,500 people—a greater population than the new nation's capital. Will they be friendly or hostile?

Sacagawea receives nothing for her services. Six years after the expedition, she gives birth to a daughter. She dies at age twenty-five of an unknown chronic illness.

Willard is lucky—he gets 100 lashes. He finishes the expedition, marries and fathers twelve children, and at the age of sixty, moves to California in a covered wagon.

Lewis forgives Cruzatte and gets on with a painful healing process.

When he is six years of age, his mother leaves Baptiste in Clark's care. He is educated in St. Louis and returns to frontier life. A visiting German prince, impressed with Baptiste's blend of formal education and frontier skills, takes him to Europe. For six years, he enjoys the lifestyle of the German court, becoming fluent in four languages. He then returns to America and lives as a mountain man, hunting, trapping, and exploring the West. He looks for gold (unsuccessfully) in the California

The Mandans invite Lewis and Clark to build a fort across the river from their villages. They trade with the explorers, helping to keep them alive during the long, freezing winter.

The Indian chief backs down. The warriors eventually let the explorers leave.

The explorers arrive at the Great Falls of the Missouri, where water cascades eighty feet down into sharp rocks. They must portage, or carry their canoes and all their supplies around the falls. They believe this will take half a day. Are they right?

Clark, York, and another man break away from the main party to find the Shoshone and trade for horses to cross the Bitterroot range of the Rocky Mountains. They are exhausted, and fear that if they don't find the Shoshone and get horses, they will all die. They finally see a Shoshone, and greet him. What happens?

Finally, Lewis and three men from the party meet three Shoshone women. They give them gifts and wait for the rest of the party to arrive to interpret. Suddenly, sixty Shoshone warriors gallop up. When they learn the four whites are part of a larger party, they are suspicious; are the whites enemies? The chief and some of his warriors go to meet the rest of the expedition. What happens?

In early fall, the men begin to cross the Bitterroot Mountains, which one man calls "the most terrible mountains that I ever beheld." They know that one heavy snowfall could trap them and kill them all. Their Indian guide thinks it will only take a few days to cross the mountains. Is he right?

The men stumble out of the Bitterroot Mountains exhausted, weak, and nearly starved after a grueling, dangerous journey. They are found by the Nez Perce Indians, who have never seen whites or an African before. The Indians hold a council to decide what to do with the men. If they kill them and take their supplies, they will become the most wealthy and powerful tribe in the region. What happens?

York, who is enslaved, completes the expedition with Captain Clark. He has shared in the dangers and hardships of the journey and is the first African American to cross the continent north of Mexico. The rest of the men receive money and land grants for their services. What happens to York?

The Shoshone flees. The men must continue to look for the tribe to trade for the horses they need.

They are wrong—almost dead wrong! The portage takes one month, and they face extreme heat, seven-inch hailstorms, and other hardships. Sharp cacti shred the men's moccasins and pierce their feet. Sacagawea and others almost drown when a flash flood sweeps through a gully. Some of the men collapse from exhaustion.

The Indian guide loses the trail, and it takes eleven days to cross the mountains. The men are unable to find animals to hunt and nearly starve.

The chief sits down with Lewis and Clark to negotiate. Sacagawea begins to translate but bursts into tears. The chief is her brother! She had been kidnapped from her people as a child, and has not seen him in many years. The Shoshone agree to sell the expedition the horses they need.

York is not paid for his services. He asks Clark for his freedom, but Clark initially refuses. Finally, Clark frees him. York enters the freighting business.

As the council is debating, a native woman urges the chiefs not to harm the whites. She had been kidnapped by another tribe and sold to whites, who treated her kindly. She later made her way back to her own tribe. The chiefs decide to help Lewis and Clark.