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### RESOURCE Book includes:

Student Sheets, Team Sheets, Transparencies, and Documents  
Game Cards, Assessments, and Library and Media Resources

SAMPLE

# Lesson 10

## Lewis and Clark

### Chapter 11

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## Theme

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President Thomas Jefferson, eager to find a water route to the Pacific, explore the Louisiana Territory, and establish peaceful trading relations with the native peoples, appointed Meriwether and his co-captain William Clark to explore and map the newly purchased lands west of the Mississippi River.

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## Overview

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*The object of your mission is to explore the Missouri River, and such principal streams of it, as, by its course and communications with the waters of the Pacific Ocean may offer the most direct and practicable water communication across this continent for the purpose of commerce. Your observations are to be taken with great pains and accuracy.. Other objects worthy of notice will be: the soil and face of the country, its growth and vegetable productions.the animals of the country.the mineral productions.cli-mate..*

Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis

With these words, President Thomas Jefferson authorized the first official over-land expedition to the northwest Pacific coast. In what was surely one of history's most cost-effective expeditions, Jefferson persuaded Congress to allocate \$2,500 to seek a water route from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean. The men would study

the plants, animals, and terrain with an eye to future settlement; bring back scientific specimens; learn about native tribes inhabiting the area; and establish relationships for future trade.

To head this historic undertaking, Jefferson selected his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis. Lewis, a tall, trim, skilled outdoorsman and amateur scientist, had distinguished himself in the army on the frontier before coming to the President's House. Lewis prepared for the expedition by studying navigation, astronomy, botany, zoology, and cartography. From his mother, Lewis had learned how to heal many sicknesses with plants, and noted scientist and physician Benjamin Rush tutored him in medicine. To acquaint himself with existing knowledge of the area, Lewis studied maps and journals of traders who had explored as far as the Mandan villages in present-day North Dakota. Beyond this point, maps bore the word "unknown."

Although Jefferson had envisioned the expedition before buying Louisiana from France, the purchase of this vast tract of land for fifteen million dollars expanded the scope of the trip. American territory now extended to the Rocky Mountains, and as a diplomatic representative of the new "great father" in the East, Lewis would communicate to native tribes the transfer of sovereignty from the French to the United States.

Lewis believed the expedition required a strong co-leader and recruited William Clark, his former army commander. The tall, red-headed, outgoing Clark complemented the more introspective and quiet Lewis.

Clark had learned wilderness skills and natural history from his older brother, Revolutionary War hero George Rogers Clark. An excellent cartographer and a faithful diarist, Clark's journals—though filled with massive amounts of inventive spellings—provided an invaluable record of the historic journey.

Lewis left Washington the day after Independence Day, 1803, writing, "I could but esteem this moment of my departure as among the most happy of my life." After picking up arms at the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, and obtaining a fifty-five-foot keelboat specially designed for the trip, he floated down the Ohio River, meeting Clark near Louisville, Kentucky. Lewis traveled to St. Louis, where he gathered supplies and finished preparations for the journey. They selected over two dozen well-seasoned men to join them in forming the Corps of Discovery, and departed up the Missouri River—propelled by oars, poles, sails, or tow-ropes—to Fort Mandan, North Dakota.

As they passed through the Great Plains, the corps encountered the peaceful Oto, Missouri, Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsas tribes and the aggressive Teton Sioux. They developed a greeting ritual that included presentation of a peace medal and gifts of trade goods, an explanation that the new "great father" Jefferson in the east now owned their land, and a demonstration of military prowess (marching in uniform and shooting guns).

While wintering at Fort Mandan in 1804-1805, the men endured temperatures of more than forty degrees below zero. They hired French trapper Toussaint Charbonneau and his young Shoshone wife Sacagawea to serve as translators. Sacagawea, who had been kidnapped by an enemy tribe some years before, was only seventeen when she strapped her newborn son

Jean Baptiste on her back and headed west with Lewis and Clark. 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.

On April 7, 1805, Lewis and Clark left Fort Mandan and headed west into lands heretofore largely unexplored by white men. In his journals, Lewis marveled over "infinitely more buffaloe than I had ever before witnessed," "the beauty of this majestically grand scenery," and the "sublimely grand spectacle" of the Great Falls of the Missouri. Anticipating a one-day portage around the falls, the expedition endured over a month of heat, wind, rain, hail, prickly pear cactus, mosquitoes, grizzly bears, and difficult terrain.

As winter loomed, the captains realized they were running out of time to find the Shoshone to sell them horses and guide them cross the Rockies. At this critical juncture, one of the most amazing coincidences in history occurred. When the group finally made contact with the Shoshone, Sacagawea recognized the chief as her brother. The Shoshone marveled at the white men, their weapons, and the African American member of the expedition, Clark's servant York. Like many other Native Americans in the West, the Shoshone had never seen a man with black skin before, and some rubbed his skin to see if the color was permanent. After obtaining horses, the expedition began a debilitating, eleven-day passage across the Bitterroot Mountains marked by early snow, bitter cold, extreme hunger, and impassable terrain. The men, who depended on up to eight pounds of fresh meat per man daily, were forced to kill and eat three of their horses.

Emerging from the mountains, they were succored by hospitable Nez Perce, whom

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## The Lesson

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### Focus Activity – 5 minutes

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1. Show the Transparency: *Lewis and Clark at Three Forks*.
2. Working with teammates, students **Brainstorm** for three minutes to list as many details in this painting as possible.
3. Using **Numbered Heads**, each team shares its list to compile one classroom list. Make sure students notice the following points:
  - Sacagawea, the young Native American woman, and her papoose
  - York, an African American, who was enslaved by Captain Clark
  - York, like the other men, is armed
  - The group follows no established path or trail.

Explain that Sacagawea, whom the captains hired as an interpreter, had been kidnapped from her Shoshone tribe as a girl. When the expedition moved through Shoshone territory, she recognized trails and landmarks from her childhood. She helped the party secure horses from the Shoshone to cross the Rocky Mountains.

4. With teammates, students **Brainstorm** to answer the following questions written on chart paper or the chalkboard.
  - Why did President Jefferson send an expedition through this new territory?
  - What dangers might this expedition face?

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### Teaching Activity – 25 minutes

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1. Using information from the Overview, briefly acquaint students with the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the nation.
2. Students use the maps found inside the front cover of *The New Nation* and on pages 60-61 to study the size and shape of the new territory.

Students identify the route of Lewis and Clark. Make sure students understand that the area beyond Fort Mandan

### Notes

(in present-day North Dakota) was largely unknown to white Americans.

3. Introduce the Vocabulary *Words, People, and Places to Remember*.
4. **Reading for a Purpose:** Students silently read or **Partner Read** Chapter 11, “Meriwether and William—or Lewis and Clark” in *The New Nation* to answer the following questions written on chart paper:

- 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?

**Circulate and Monitor:** Visit each team as students read the selection and discuss the questions. Assist students with the reading, ask and answer questions, and encourage oral elaboration.

5. Use **Numbered Heads** for the class to review and discuss the questions.

Make sure students understand that 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 Ocean, 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.

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## Student Team Learning Activity – 25 minutes

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*Analyzing cause and effect relationships*

1. Distribute one set of the *Lewis and Clark Adventure Cards* to each team.

# *The New Nation* Resource Book

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## Lewis and Clark Adventure Cards

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?

## *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.

- How do you think the expedition changed York's perception of himself?
- How did the Indians view York?
- How did the men of the expedition view York?
- How do you think York felt after the expedition?



## *Sacagawea: The Expedition's Invaluable Native Woman*

*An unidentified Shoshone woman (around 1880)*

**T**he 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.

- How did Sacagawea help the expedition?
- How do you think the expedition changed Sacagawea's perception of herself?
- How do you think Sacagawea should have been rewarded?