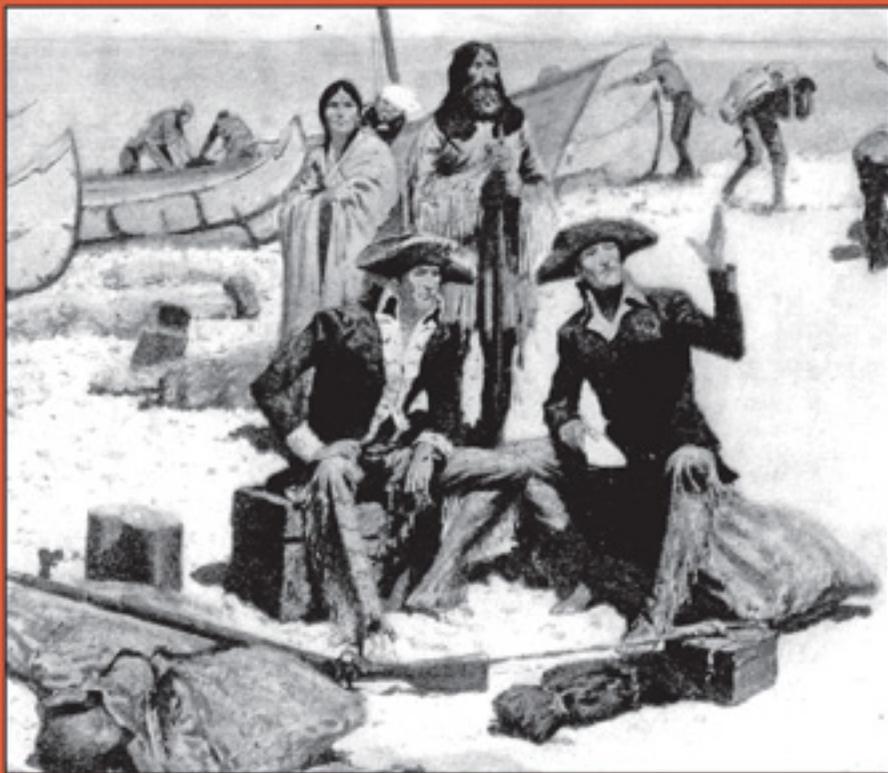


History  
UNFOLDING

# THE JOURNEY OF LEWIS AND CLARK



MindSparks  
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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# Introduction

## Lewis and Clark and the Young Republic

Many admirable acts get labeled “heroic” these days. Perhaps the word has been cheapened by overuse. Yet when it comes to the journey of Lewis and Clark, no lesser term of praise would be appropriate. Their journey is one of history’s great and truly heroic adventures.

First and foremost, it was an amazing feat of planning and sheer physical exertion for this group of Americans, in 1803, to travel up the Missouri River, across the Rocky Mountains, down the Columbia River to the Pacific, and back again. Fur traders had explored some of this territory before. Many native tribes were familiar with parts of it. But no one knew its full extent or the awesome challenges it would present to anyone trying to travel across it. Lewis and Clark and their men made this journey with the loss of exactly one life, and that one only from natural causes.

Along the way, the men made endless discoveries about the flora and fauna, topographical features, and the many native cultures inhabiting these lands. And they made discoveries of a different sort about themselves. In their dealings with many Native American groups, and in their relationships with one another, the group came to adopt a democratic practice that in many ways was decades ahead of its time.

It is impossible to do justice to this great adventure through just twelve illustrations. But the twelve we have chosen focus on some of the key aspects of the journey of Lewis and Clark. The illustrations are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three of the illustrations to explore one broad topic in the overall story. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

### **The Land**

The illustrations here focus on the unique landscapes encountered by the expedition, and on the challenges and disappointments presented by some key natural obstacles.

### **The Corps of Discovery**

Lewis and Clark set out with a crew made up largely of white males. But it also included Clark’s black slave, York, some French Canadian guides and a remarkable young Indian mother named Sacagawea. The harmonious and effective functioning of this diverse team is one of the many inspiring facets of this incredible adventure.

### **The Inhabitants**

Without the assistance of several Native American tribes, the Corps would not have succeeded in reaching the Pacific or making it home again safely. The illustrations here call attention to their contributions.

### **The Discoveries**

The expedition returned with journals, maps, and hundreds of plant, animal, and mineral specimens. Its scientific discoveries were a crucial aspect of its success. So, too, was the knowledge gained about the land and its Native American cultures — not to mention what all of the members of Corps of Discovery learned about themselves.

## Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

## How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

**A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET** This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

**DIGITAL IMAGES** The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

### **DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS**

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

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**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will better understand the natural environments that Lewis and Clark had to cross on their journey to the Pacific.
  2. Students will better appreciate the many physical challenges the expedition faced.
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# The Land

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

In 1804, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and a small band of explorers set off up the Missouri River and across the Rocky Mountains. Their goal was the Pacific Ocean. That journey was to be as great an adventure as the voyages of Columbus or the moon landing. Most U.S. citizens still lived east of the Appalachian Mountains in 1800. The western boundary of the U.S. was still the Mississippi River. Americans were familiar with rivers, woodlands, and coastal ports. But the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 changed that. At once, the nation's size doubled. President Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark to find out what this new territory was like. As this painting and map suggest, many wonders and surprises awaited these explorers.

**Illustration 2**

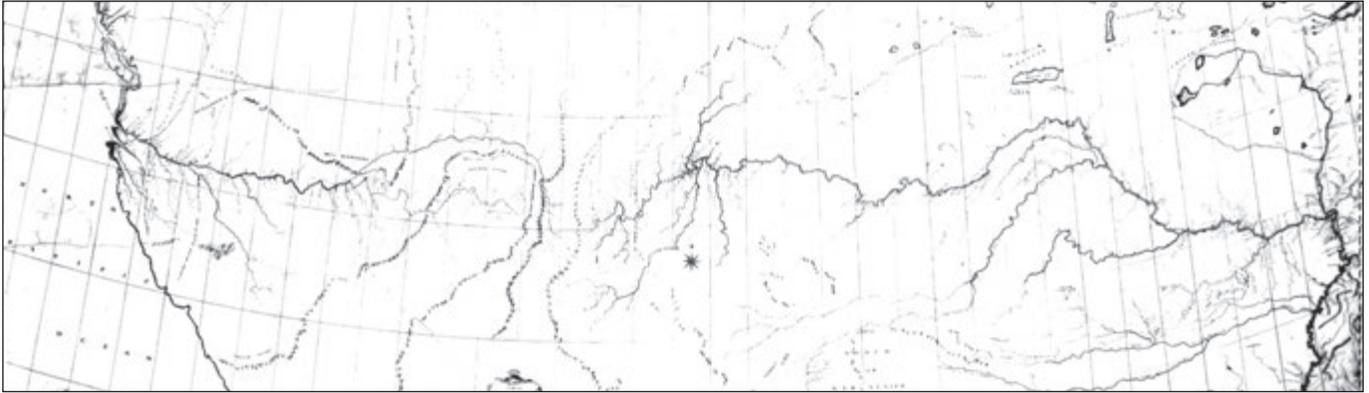
The top drawing is of the Great Falls of the upper Missouri, in Montana. It took Lewis and Clark more than a year to reach these falls, which were the toughest challenge they had faced so far. They had to carry all their supplies over land, around what were actually five sets of falls spread over many miles. After this, the group made its way to the Three Forks of the Missouri, also shown here. At this point, the Missouri River phase of the trip was over. The men then had to decide which fork to follow to the Rockies. After crossing a thin line of Rockies, they still hoped to find the Columbia River quickly and sail down it easily to the Pacific Ocean.

**Illustration 3**

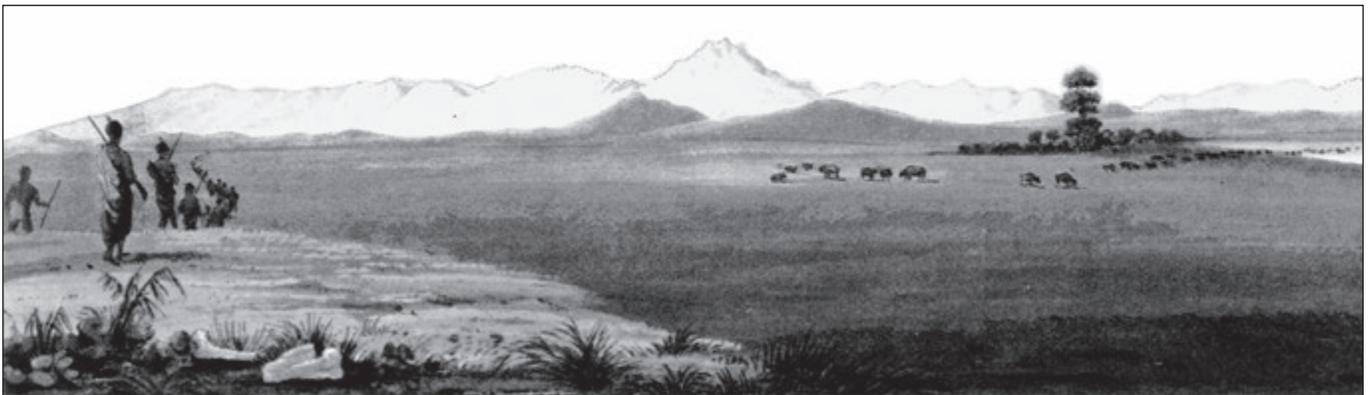
By 1803, Americans already knew about the Columbia River from ships sailing along the Pacific coast. But they did not know how easily it could be reached by traveling overland from the east. Jefferson hoped the river would lie just over a single, thin line of Rocky Mountains. His hope was a last version of the long-held dream of a "Northwest Passage" — an easy route across North America to the Pacific. On August 12, 1805, this dream of a "Northwest Passage" finally died. At Lemhi Pass, high in the eastern Rockies, Lewis "discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow." This painting shows Lewis and his group at Lemhi Pass. He knew then that an easy portage to the Columbia was impossible. Only with enormous effort, help from the Indians, and a lot of luck would they make it to the Pacific. And it would take them four more months to do this.

## Lesson 1 – The Land

# Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### ***Discussing the Illustrations***

1. In 1804, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark set out on a great journey. They were asked to explore a huge new area of land in the west that the United States had purchased from France in 1803. What was that “purchase” called?
2. Which president sent Lewis and Clark to explore the newly acquired lands?
3. The map on top shows the course Lewis and Clark took. They set out to follow one big river all the way to the Rocky Mountains. What river is that?
4. Lewis and Clark hoped to cross the Rocky Mountains quickly and find another big river that they knew could take them all the way to the Pacific. What river is that?
5. The Louisiana Purchase included lands that were vastly different from what most U.S. citizens in 1804 were familiar with. From bottom picture here, and from what you know about the American West, in what ways were these lands different?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

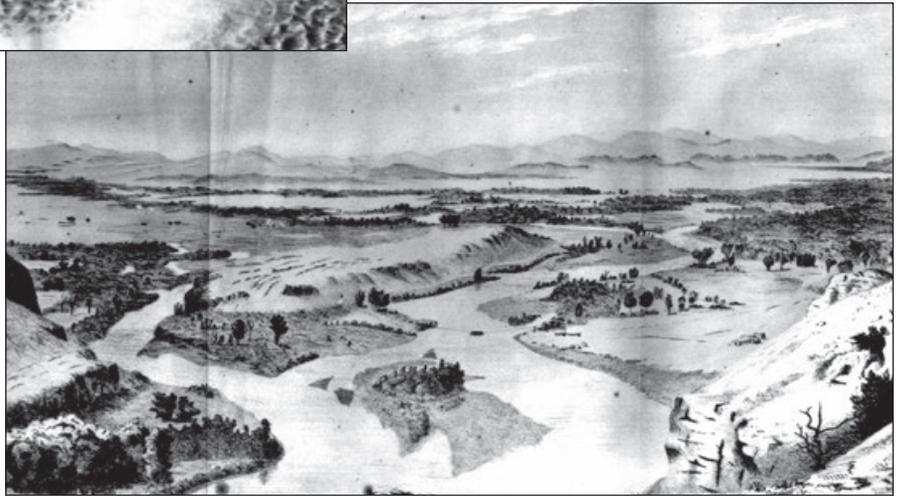
1. **Small-group activity:** Find a more up-to-date map of the route Lewis and Clark took from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean. Also, find present-day photos of at least five towns, cities, or interesting geographical spots along their route. Draw versions of what you think each spot must have looked like when Lewis and Clark passed by. Write a paragraph about each spot. In a bulletin board display, draw arrows or use string to connect your drawings, paragraphs, and present-day photos of each spot to your map.
2. The lands Lewis and Clark explored were totally different from what most Americans at the time were familiar with. In the journals of Lewis and Clark, find three short passages that describe such lands. Pretend you are the author of these passages. Include them in a long letter to friends back home telling them about the journey as whole. Tell your readers where the expedition was at the time of each passage and explain what made that particular spot seem so unusual or unique.

## Lesson 1—The Land

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustrations**

1. Nearly all the way across the Great Plains, Lewis and Clark traveled up a relatively flat and wide Missouri River. But near the end of the journey up the Missouri, they came upon a series of huge waterfalls known together as the Great Falls. In what present-day state are these falls located?
2. One part of the Great Falls is shown in the upper left. Why would steep falls such as this be found near the western end of the Missouri?
3. It took almost a month to get the entire crew and supplies around the Great Falls of the Missouri. Why do you suppose the portage was so difficult?
4. After the portage at the Great Falls, the crew headed up river to a spot called “Three Forks,” shown below. From the picture and what you know of the Lewis and Clark expedition, can you explain the name, “Three Forks”?
5. Three Forks was a major turning point in the journey. Can you explain why?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. At the Great Falls, Lewis and Clark missed a big chance to take a much shorter route. They would learn about this later from Indians they met along the way. Make a detailed map of this area showing Western Montana and Idaho. Use your map to explain to the class the route Lewis and Clark took, the better one they missed, and how much time that better route could have saved them.
2. **Small-group activity:** At Great Falls, Lewis had to decide whether or not to send three men back with his journals and all the new plant and animal specimens he had collected so far. Find out why he wanted to do this. (Stephen Ambrose discusses this in his book *Undaunted Courage*, Simon and Schuster, 1996. p. 245.) Divide your group in two. Have one side argue in favor of sending the men back, with the other side arguing against this. As a group, hold your debate in front of the class. After the debate, explain what Lewis actually decided to do, and why.

## Lesson 1 – The Land

# Illustration 3



Robert F. Morgan. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society

### ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. After leaving Three Forks, Lewis and Clark headed up to the mountains. They soon crossed the Continental Divide at the spot shown here. What is the Continental Divide?
2. This painting shows Lewis and Clark on the Continental Divide at a point called Lemhi Pass, on today's Montana-Idaho border. Up to this point, Lewis and Clark had great hopes of finding a quick route down the Columbia River to the Pacific. From this painting and what you know about the Rocky Mountains, can you guess what happened to these hopes at this point in their journey?
3. Lewis and Clark's realization at Lemhi Pass that the Columbia River was nowhere to be seen was very disappointing to them. It was also very disappointing to President Jefferson when he learned of it. Can you explain why? Why do you suppose Jefferson thought it would be easy to cross the Rockies, find the Columbia, and float down it to the sea?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

1. Ask your teacher or librarian to help you find out more about Lewis and Clark and the purpose of their expedition. In particular, learn what you can about President Jefferson's hopes about the route the expedition would take over the mountains to the sea. Now pretend you are Meriwether Lewis in the above painting. You are standing at the summit of Lemhi Pass. You ask one of your men to take a letter back to President Jefferson. In the letter, you will explain what you have just learned about the likely challenges still ahead of you. Now, write that letter.
2. The dream of finding a Northwest Passage through or around North America had a long history even before the time of Lewis and Clark. Read more about the concept of the Northwest Passage. Who were some of the earlier explorers who had searched for it? What became of them and their quest? Prepare a brief report to the class in which you talk about at least three explorers who hoped to find a Northwest Passage to the Pacific.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will better understand how the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition depended on the entire Corps of Discovery.
2. Students will appreciate the unusual make-up of the Corps and the level of tolerance that developed among its members.

# The Corps of Discovery

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

Key to the success of the expedition were its two commanders and its remarkable crew, known as the “Corps of Discovery.” Meriwether Lewis, on the right here, had been President Thomas Jefferson’s personal secretary. He was also an army officer and a skilled naturalist—perfect for the job of leading a group across a continent while learning as much as possible about the plants, animals, rivers, mountains, and native cultures of the new lands. But Lewis needed William Clark, on the left, to make up for his weaknesses. Clark was a forceful leader, a boatman, and a mapmaker. Clark was supposed to be given a captain’s commission, which would make him co-commander. Instead, he was only given a lieutenant’s rank. Lewis never let the group know this. And the two men acted throughout with equal authority over the expedition.

**Illustration 2**

The Corps of Discovery left St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1804. Their main vessel was a large keelboat designed by Lewis. Farther up the Missouri, they used only large canoes, similar to those in the upper left. For three years, they were on their own and had to provide all their own clothing, food, and shelter. The other drawing here shows the men building a hut along the way. More than 40 men started up the Missouri. Who were these adventurers, and how were they able to work so well together? The Corps was made up mainly of young, unmarried army recruits, expert woodsmen in perfect physical condition. They were America’s best.

**Illustration 3**

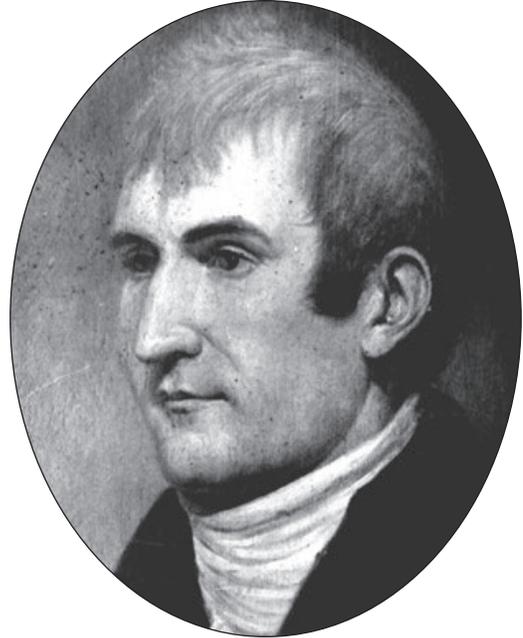
The Corps left behind an America in which blacks were slaves, women still lacked many rights, and Indians were deeply mistrusted. White males made up most of the Corps. Yet something remarkable took place along the way—as these two paintings suggest. The top one shows Clark’s slave York. The other painting shows Lewis, Clark, York, and the Indian wife of a French guide. Her name was Sacagawea. York and Sacagawea became important members of the Corps, working side by side with the others. Sacagawea was especially helpful. At key points, the ability of the Corps to communicate with various Indian tribes depended on her. And as the only woman and mother in the group, she probably also reassured native tribes along the way of the expedition’s peaceful intentions.

## Lesson 2—The Corps of Discovery

# Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustrations**

1. These paintings show the two men who led the Lewis and Clark expedition—William Clark is on the left, and Meriwether Lewis is on the right. What abilities or character traits do you think the leaders of such an expedition in 1804 would have needed?
2. In what ways would the leadership skills needed for the Lewis and Clark expedition have been different from the skills a group of space explorers would need today? In what ways would they be the same?
3. Most historians agree that Jefferson could not have chosen a better man to lead the expedition than Meriwether Lewis. What do you know about him? From what you know, why do you think he was such a good choice?
4. William Clark was different from Lewis in character and background experience. What do you know about him? In what way was Clark different from Lewis? How do you think those differences helped Lewis to lead the expedition?

### **Follow-up Activities**

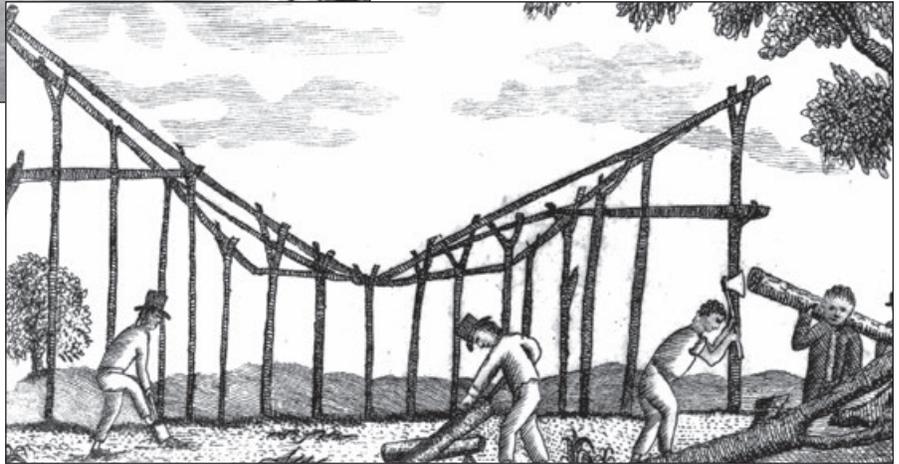
1. **Small-group activity:** Read about one other famous explorer — such as Columbus, Daniel Boone, Marco Polo, Robert Peary, or David Livingston. Each member of your group should choose a different explorer. Prepare a report to class on the similarities and differences between each of these men and Lewis and Clark. Do any important, common traits stand out that you think made them all successful explorers?
2. Read the chapter, “Faithful Friends: Lewis and Clark” in Stephen Ambrose’s book, *Comrades: Brothers, Fathers, Heroes, Sons, Pals* (Simon and Schuster, 1999, pp. 99-107). Then write a brief essay that answers this question: Was the unique friendship between Lewis and Clark a crucial factor in the success of the Corps of Discovery?

## Lesson 2—The Corps of Discovery

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustrations**

1. Lewis and Clark's expedition was known as the Corps of Discovery. It started up the Missouri in 1804 with a keelboat and two large pirogues, or canoes, much like the ones in the upper left. More than 40 men set out from St. Louis. Later, the number was reduced to 27 permanent members, not including Lewis and Clark. Why do you suppose Lewis and Clark took so many men with them? Could a smaller expedition have succeeded? Why or why not?
2. Lewis and Clark took on young adventurers, army soldiers and some others, such as French Canadian guides. From what you know of the exploration of America, why would Lewis and Clark have wanted to take French Canadians as guides?
3. In the lower right some of the men are shown building a hut. Besides knowing how to build a shelter, what other skills would the men of the Corps have needed? What character traits would they have needed? Do you think you would have done well on this three-year-long journey? Why or why not?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. **Small-group activity:** The Corps of Discovery only travelled on water for a part of its journey. Learn more about all of the transportation methods the Corps used. Design a mural or bulletin board display based on five or six scenes your group will create. Each scene should show the expedition at a different point traveling on water or land. Write a few paragraphs to explain each scene. Organize your artwork and writing in a bulletin board display called "Crossing a Continent with the Corps of Discovery."
2. Read more about the Lewis and Clark expedition. Pay attention to the experiences of many of the recruits in the Corps of Discovery. Now, pretend you are a newspaper reporter in 1836, 30 years after the Corps returned. You have located one member of the Corps and are planning to do a long story on him. Write out ten questions you will ask him when you interview him. Share your questions with the class and discuss the kinds of answers you might expect to get from an ordinary member of the Corps of Discovery.

## Lesson 2—The Corps of Discovery

# Illustration 3



Charles M. Russell.  
Courtesy of the Montana  
Historical Society,  
Gift of the Artist.



Edgar S. Paxson. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society

### **Discussing the Illustrations**

1. Nearly every member of the Corps of Discovery was a white male. In 1804, it would have been highly unusual for this NOT to be so. Can you explain why?
2. However, not all the members of the crew were white males, as these illustrations show. Can you identify the black man with the Indians in the illustration in the upper left and Indian woman in the lower right?
3. Whites often relied on Indian guides in exploring the West. Still, the role of York and Sacagawea in the Corps was unusual. Why do you think they were accepted as well as they were by the others?
4. It has been suggested by some historians that the presence of Sacagawea—more than any other member—may have helped soothe uneasy feelings among the native tribes that the Corps encountered along the way. Can you explain why this might have been the case?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. In the upper left is a watercolor by Charles M. Russell. In the lower right is a mural by Edgar S. Paxson. These works portray York, Sacagawea, Lewis and Clark, and others in the Corps, as well as some of the Native Americans they encountered. How realistic do you think these paintings are? Should they be realistic? What point of view, or attitude, about the Lewis and Clark expedition does each work of art present? How does each get its view across? Write an essay about one or the other work of art, or both, answering these questions.
2. Read more about York and Sacagawea. Think about what the trip might have meant to them. Now pretend you are one of these two members of the Corps of Discovery. Write a long letter to the artist who drew either one of these paintings. In the letter, recall your own best and worst experiences on the trip. Then explain why you do or do not like the artist's painting.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will understand more about some of the key Native American cultures encountered by Lewis and Clark.
2. Students will better appreciate the key aid some Native tribes gave the expedition, and why.

# The Inhabitants

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

The Corps of Discovery did not travel through empty wilderness. Along the way, it had many encounters with Native American tribes of the Great Plains and mountains. Many of these tribes were helpful. For instance, some of them traded with the Corps, shared local hunting tips, and helped them find their way west. Among their early contacts were the Mandans, in the area of present-day North Dakota. These scenes show a Mandan village and the inside of a Mandan hut. The Corps must have become quite familiar with huts such as this one, since the crew stayed with the Mandans through the winter of 1804-05. The Mandans hoped to trade with the U.S., and they hoped for protection from their traditional enemies, such as the nearby Sioux.

**Illustration 2**

This is a village of one band of Sioux Indians. Rivals of the Mandan and other Plains Indians, the Sioux were nomads who lived primarily off of the buffalo. The Sioux were among the fiercest warriors on the Plains. And at one point, a Sioux leader threatened to stall the expedition. But the swivel cannon on the keelboat, and the men's muskets, rifles, and bayonets kept the Indians from attacking. Still, Lewis and Clark were never able to convince the Sioux to deal with the Corps or accept the U.S. as a friendly trading partner. In this sense, the tensions between the Sioux and the Corps were one of Lewis and Clark's big failures. This painting is titled "The Sioux Ceremony of the Thunder Birds." The Thunder bird was a mythic creature associated with storms and thunder.

**Illustration 3**

After the Corps reached the Rocky Mountains, two tribes played key roles in helping them reach the Pacific. One was Sacagawea's tribe, the Shoshones, whom the Corps encountered near Lemhi Pass. Sacagawea was reunited with her people, including her brother. And at this point, she may well have saved the Corps from attack. Instead, the Shoshones equipped the Corps with badly needed horses and gave them directions for crossing the treacherous mountains. Later, the Nez Percé Indians helped the Corps find its way along the Snake River to the waters of the Columbia. This painting of the Nez Percé shows these Indians in their forest environment in what is now the state of Idaho.

## Lesson 3—The Inhabitants

# Illustration 1



George Catlin. National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC/  
Art Resource, NY



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### ***Discussing the Illustrations***

1. During the winter of 1804-05, one Native American tribe gave the Corps shelter along the upper Missouri River. Can you name that tribe?
2. The Corps of Discovery gave the name of Fort Mandan to its camp that winter along the Missouri River. In what present-day state was Fort Mandan located?
3. Mandans lived in villages of lodges with domed earth roofs. On top here is one such village. Below it is a scene of the inside of one of these lodges. In what ways do these settlements seem well suited for life on Great Plains?
4. The Mandans were unusual Plains Indians in that they were permanently settled farmers who engaged in a great deal of trade with others around them. From what you know about the Native Americans of the Great Plains, why was that unusual? How might it help explain why the Mandans were especially anxious to help the Corps of Discovery?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

1. Unlike many of other tribes on the Great Plains, the Mandans were mainly farmers who traded with their neighbors as well as with the British and other whites. This made them very important in the plans that Lewis and Clark had for Indians throughout the Great Plains. What were these plans? Learn more about the hopes Lewis and Clark had for cooperation between the U.S. and the Indians of the Great Plains. Then write a brief essay about these hopes and plans. In your essay, explain why you think the plans could or could not have been made work.
2. The fate of the Mandans is a sad one. Read more about the Mandan Indians. Your teacher or librarian can help you find books to use in your research. Learn of the fate of these Indians, and especially find out what happened to them in 1837. Then pretend you were a member of the Corps of Discovery. It is 1838, and you have just heard the latest news about the Mandans. Write a long diary entry expressing your memories and feelings about these Indians.

## Lesson 3—The Inhabitants

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustration**

1. At time of the Lewis and Clark expedition, the Mandans had several enemies, a key one being the Sioux Indians. A Sioux village is shown here. In what ways does this village seem different from the Mandan village in the previous illustration?
2. Unlike the Mandans, the Sioux were primarily a nomadic people. What does that mean?
3. The illustration shows a ritual called the “Ceremony of the Thunder Birds.” The Thunder bird was a mythical creature connected with storms and lightening. The Sioux were powerful in part because of their skill at hunting buffalo. To do this, they used an animal that actually only came to North America with the Europeans. What animal is that?
4. Lewis and Clark never made friends with the Sioux, as they did with the Mandans. Why do you suppose that was so? It was a big disappointment to Lewis that he was unable to establish friendly ties with the Sioux. Why do you think this was so disappointing to him?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. The Sioux depended on the buffalo for food and many other things. Find out more about all of the ways in which the Sioux made use of the buffalo. Draw at least five pictures showing these uses, and include them in a bulletin board display. One source of information on this is *America’s Fascinating Indian Heritage* (Reader’s Digest Association, 1978, especially pages 174-176).
2. **Small-group activity:** Your group is a government advisory committee set up by President Jefferson. It is September 1806, and Lewis and Clark have just returned from their journey. Based on what you learn from them, you must decide how the government will deal with the Sioux in the future. Conduct research into the Sioux nation at the time of Lewis and Clark. Also, find out what Lewis and Clark themselves had to say about the Sioux. Write a report outlining your recommendations to Jefferson. Present the report to the class as if you are presenting it to the president.

## Lesson 3—The Inhabitants

# Illustration 3



Courtesy of Library of Congress

### ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. Another tribe of great importance to Lewis and Clark is shown here. These Indians lived in the Rocky Mountain plateau region of the Northwest near rivers that feed into the Columbia. No one actually knows for sure, but these Indians may have regularly pierced their noses. From this, can you name them? What else do you know about this tribe?
2. The Nez Percé were not the only tribe in the Rockies who helped Lewis and Clark. Earlier in their journey, for example, they were aided by Sacagawea's Shoshone tribe. Lewis and Clark depended a great deal on these two tribes, and not simply for temporary shelter. What other key kinds of help did the Nez Percé and the Shoshones give the expedition?
3. These tribes did not help Lewis and Clark simply because they were kind. Can you guess what some other reasons might be for their helpfulness? Do you think they were right to help the Lewis and Clark expedition as they did? Why or why not?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

1. The Nez Percé are one of several Native American tribes of the high country around the Columbia River. Learn more about these and other Indians of this Northwest Plateau country. How did their unique natural environment—of rivers, mountains, and high plateau lands—affect their ways of life. Write an essay on these Indians. In it, try to compare them to the Indians of the Great Plains.
2. Not all of Lewis and Clark's dealings with Indians on their journey were favorable. In addition to troubles with the Sioux, Lewis had a serious clash with the Blackfeet tribe in present-day Montana. This took place on the return trip. Learn more about this clash. Then prepare a brief talk to the class about it. In your talk, explain how the trouble came about and what exactly happened. Also, discuss with the class your own views as to how much of what happened was Lewis's fault, how much was the fault of the Blackfeet Indians, and how much was due to a simple misunderstanding.

**OBJECTIVE**

1. Students will better appreciate the enormous efforts Lewis and the others made to bring back useful information about the lands they explored, as well as the plants, animals, and native cultures of the region.

# The Discoveries

*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

The journey of Lewis and Clark was not just a great adventure. It was an amazing feat of scientific discovery. Lewis had an endless curiosity about the new lands he explored. And the maps, the animal and plant samples, and the journals he brought back helped the rest of the world learn about half a continent. During the journey, Lewis would often go off by himself and set down in his diary everything he had seen and heard that day. Here, two pages of his journals show the care he took in writing and in sketching new animal species. Lewis saw the scientific information he recorded as the most important part of his journals. Scores of plants and animals new to science were carefully described in those journals.

**Illustration 2**

With the Louisiana Purchase, President Jefferson more than doubled the size of the U.S. overnight. But he knew little about the value of these lands to the young nation. He hoped to establish a vast fur trading empire with the Indians in these territories. This could win the loyalty of the Indian tribes and lure their trade away from the British in Canada. Jefferson also believed the area would one day become a paradise for the small farmers he favored. Over and over, the journals of Lewis and Clark show how amazed they were at the abundance of the land. They had not found an easy passage to the Pacific, it is true. But they believed their explorations would set the stage for the development of a great nation.

**Illustration 3**

This scene shows the Corps near where the Columbia River empties into the Pacific Ocean. It took 19 months to get there. After spending the winter in camp, it then took six months to return. By their own reckoning, Lewis and Clark traveled 4,134 miles on the outward journey, 3,555 miles by a shorter route on their return. In some ways, their greatest discoveries may have been about themselves, their strengths, and their ability to get along in a remarkably fair and democratic way. They had been gone for two years and four months. Everything they saw was already familiar to various native nations. But, as historian Gary Moulton put it, Lewis and Clark “were the first to see the land and the people along the Missouri and Columbia rivers with the eyes and attitudes of a new nation, grounded in the science and philosophy of the Enlightenment.”

## Lesson 4—The Discoveries

# Illustration 1



Courtesy American Philosophical Society



Courtesy American Philosophical Society

### Discussing the Illustrations

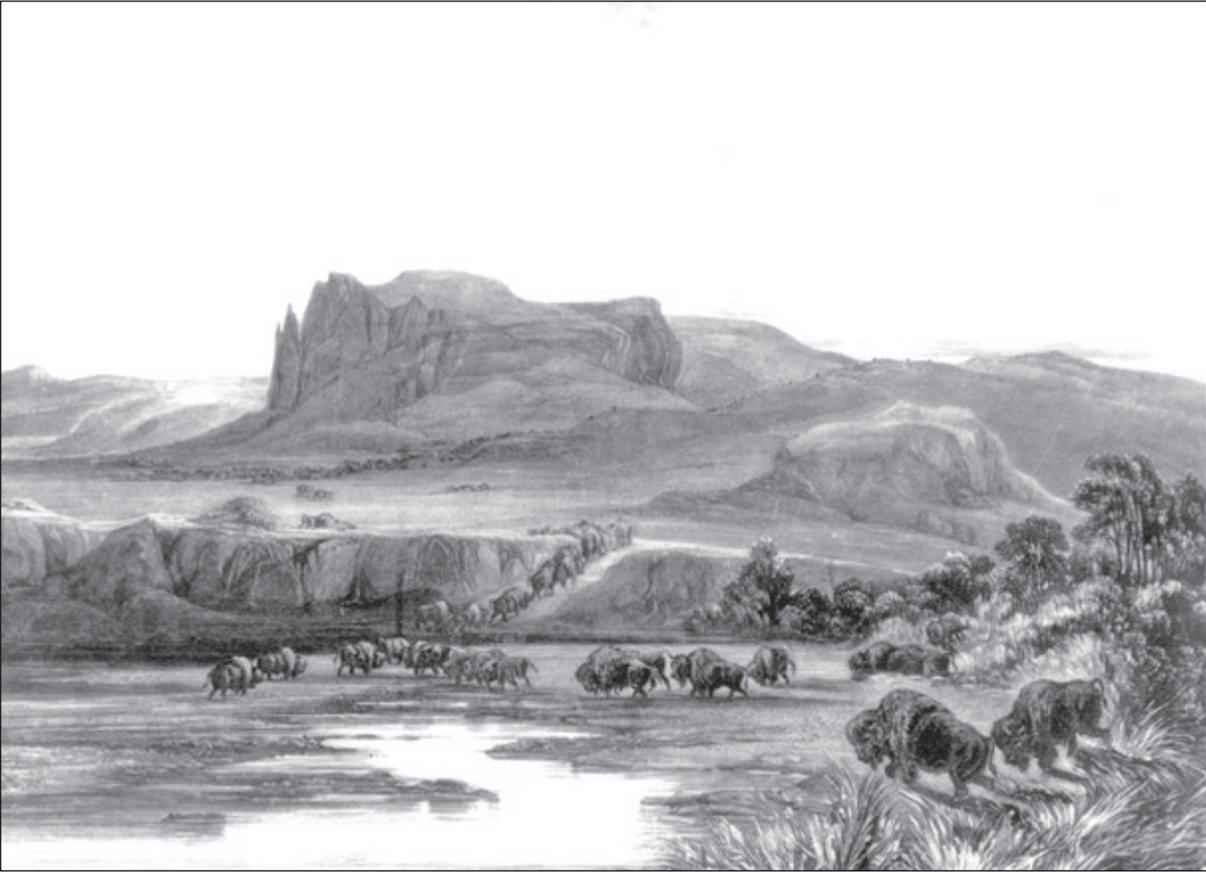
1. Meriwether Lewis did much more than simply lead a group of men into the wilderness. One reason the Lewis and Clark expedition was so amazing has to do with the sample pages shown here. Can you guess what these pages are from?
2. During the entire expedition, Lewis kept filling one journal after another with his thoughts and sketches. From what you see, what kinds of things do you suppose he recorded in that journal?
3. Why do you think Lewis was so careful in the way he drew his sketches, such as those of the trout and vulture shown here?
4. What problems do you think he faced in keeping the kind of journal he did here?
5. Actually, there were long periods during which Lewis wrote in his journal every day, followed by other long periods when he wrote nothing. Why do you suppose that was so?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Historian Gary Moulton has written: "Lewis was blessed with those qualities most important in a naturalist: an unquenchable curiosity, keen observational powers and a systematic approach to understanding the natural world." How good an observer of natural surroundings are you? Go on a hike in some natural setting. Spend at least an hour or two observing plant and animal life. Write a long journal entry about your observations similar to the ones Lewis wrote as shown above. Include one or two sketches.
2. Learn more about Lewis's scientific observations. Summarize for the class the discoveries he made under the following headings: animals, plants, geographical features, Native American cultures. Choose two or three discoveries that you think were particularly important and explain in detail why you think these were so important.

## Lesson 4—The Discoveries

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustration**

1. Lewis and Clark learned a great deal about the plants and animals of the American West. They also learned more about the possible value of the region to the United States. They did not expect many settlers to move to the Great Plains or mountain regions very quickly. Why do you think they believed these regions were unlikely to see many settlers for a long time?
2. Lewis and Clark hoped instead to see a huge trading empire in the West develop. With whom do you think they expect the U.S. to trade? What goods do you think they expected to be the main part of this trade?
3. Lewis and Clark's dream of a trading empire was a vision of the U.S. working peacefully with the native peoples of the West. But things did not work out that way. Why not? Looking back, do you think the history of the U.S. and its dealings with the tribes of the West in the 1800s could have worked out differently? If so, explain how?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. Lewis and Clark were amazed at the huge numbers of animals they found on the Plains. "We can scarcely cast our eyes in any direction," wrote Lewis in his journal, "without perceiving deer, Elk, Buffalo, or Antelopes." The buffalo especially was present in huge numbers. What happened to the buffalo in the late 1800s? Read more about the fate of the buffalo. What would Lewis have felt about this? Pretend to be Lewis and write a letter to the class on this topic.
2. **Small-group activity:** One thing Lewis and Clark did not expect was the development of the railroad. How did the railroad affect what happened to the West in the 1800s? As a group, read more about this. Find at least five illustrations of railroads in the West to use in a bulletin board display about the impact the railroad had on the region. (A good source is *The American West in the Nineteenth Century*, John Grafton, Dover Publications, 1992.) Write a paragraph explaining each illustration. Call your display "The Iron Horse: How it Changed the West."

## Lesson 4—The Discoveries

# Illustration 3



Courtesy of Library of Congress

### ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. This painting shows Lewis and Clark at the farthest westward point in their expedition. From this, can you guess where they are? In planning their return, what special problems would they face? Briefly summarize what you know about the return journey of the Lewis and Clark expedition.
2. The Corps discovered many things on its amazing journey. But some say that what these adventurers learned about themselves may have been their most important discovery. Do you agree with this idea? Why or why not?
3. In addition to Lewis and Clark and the army recruits, the Corps included a slave, a young Indian woman, French guides — even Lewis's black Newfoundland dog. All the people worked together. Only one man died, and he died from natural causes. Why do you think this diverse group was able to work so well together at a time when blacks were slaves, Indians were deeply mistrusted, and women lacked most civil rights?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

1. Pretend you are one of the men on the shores of the Pacific in the above picture. You have a son back in your home state. Write a long letter to be delivered to him by others in the group in case you do not make it back yourself. Sum up what the journey has been like so far, and its meaning to you, to the nation, and to future generations.
2. Meriwether Lewis was hailed as a hero after his return in 1806. However, he suffered a tragic end just a few years after the expedition. Read a biography of Lewis. Summarize in a brief talk in class what experiences Lewis and Clark had after they returned from their journey. Pay specific attention to Lewis and to what happened to him in his remaining years. Explain what is known about the mystery of his death. Give your own views as to what actually happened during the last days of Meriwether Lewis.

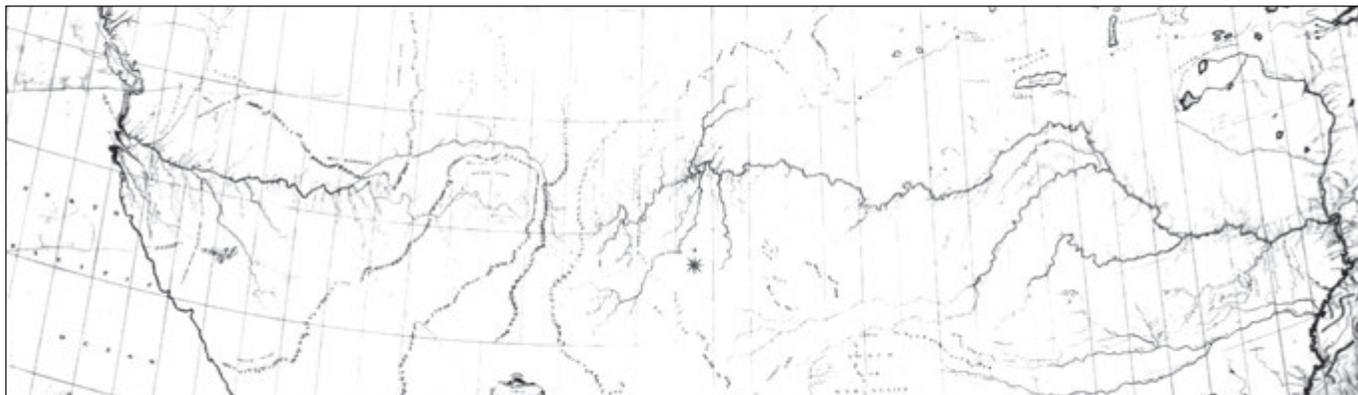


# **Image Close-ups**

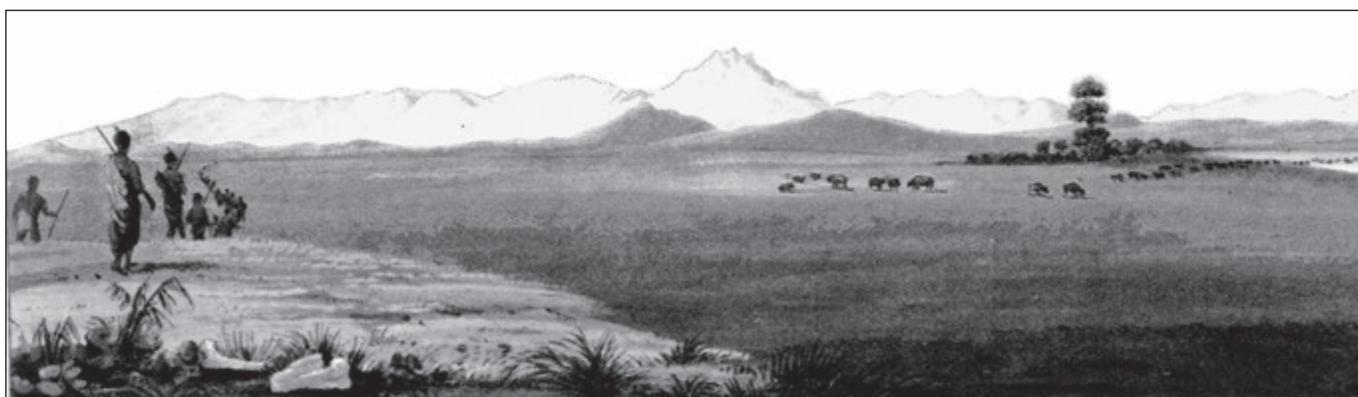


## The Land

# Illustration 1

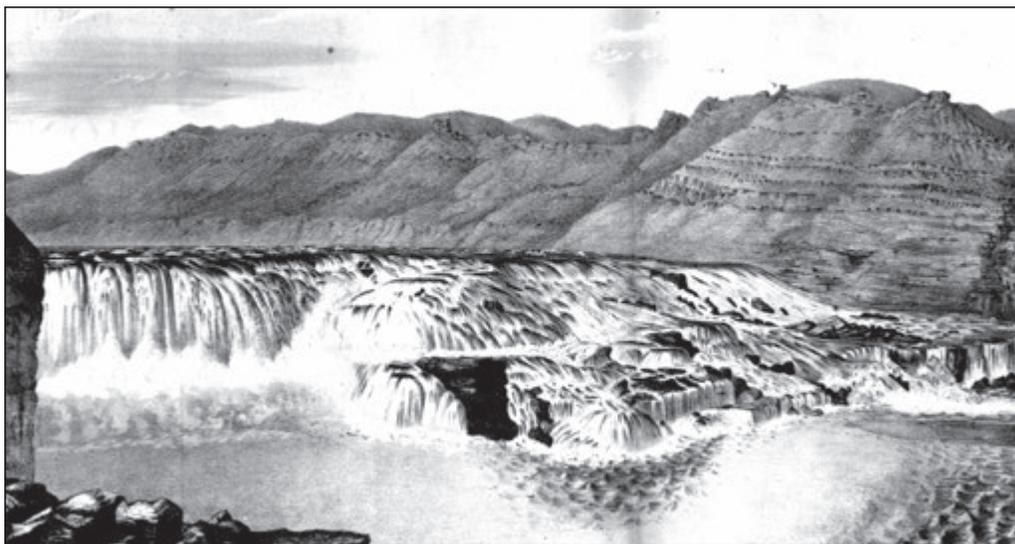


Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

## The Land **Illustration 2**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The Land  
**Illustration 3**

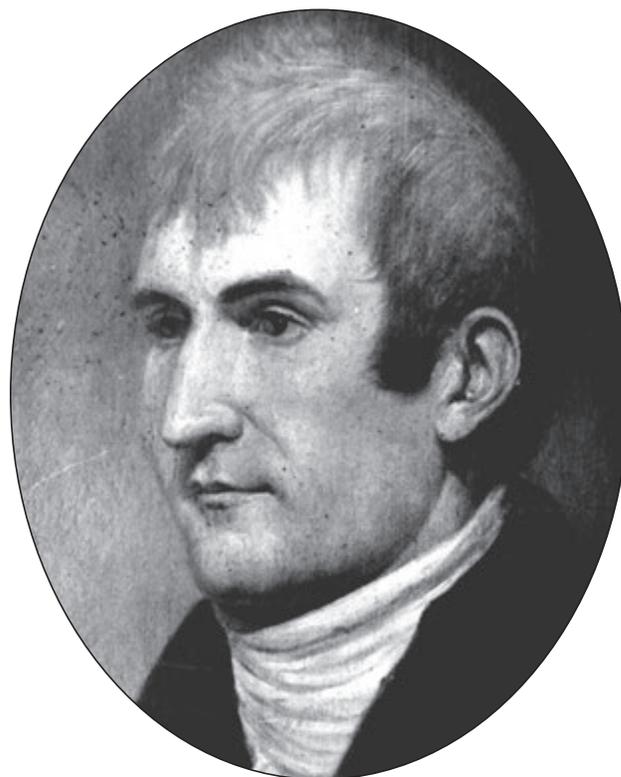


Robert F. Morgan. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society

The Corps of Discovery  
**Illustration 1**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

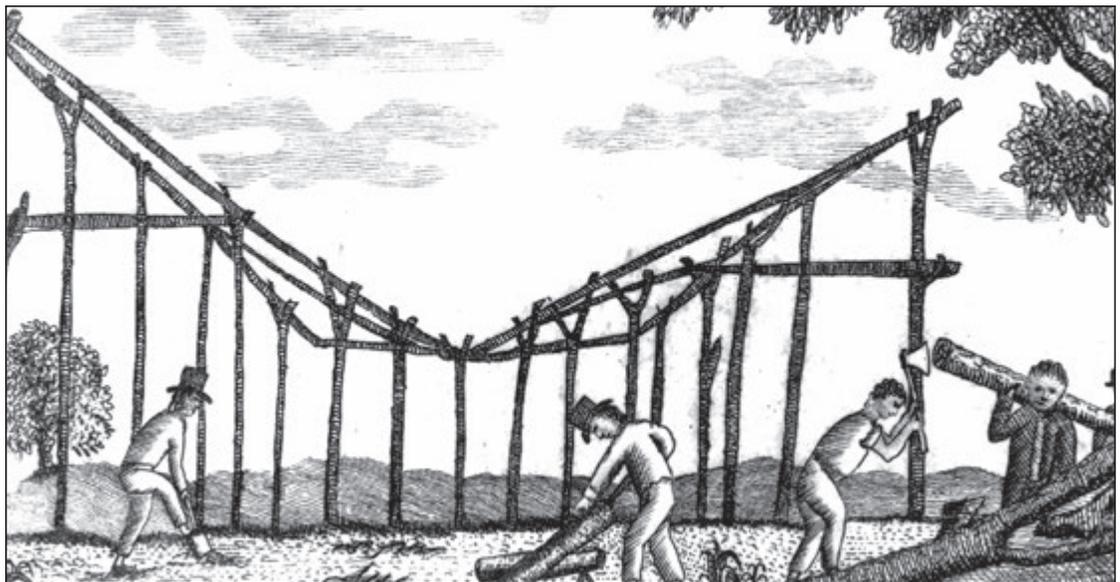


Courtesy of the Library of Congress

## The Corps of Discovery **Illustration 2**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

## The Corps of Discovery **Illustration 3**



Charles M. Russell. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Gift of the Artist.



Edgar S. Paxson. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society

## The Inhabitants

# Illustration 1



George Catlin. National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC/Art Resource, NY



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

## The Inhabitants **Illustration 2**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The Inhabitants  
**Illustration 3**



Courtesy of Library of Congress



The Discoveries  
**Illustration 2**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The Discoveries  
**Illustration 3**



Courtesy of Library of Congress



