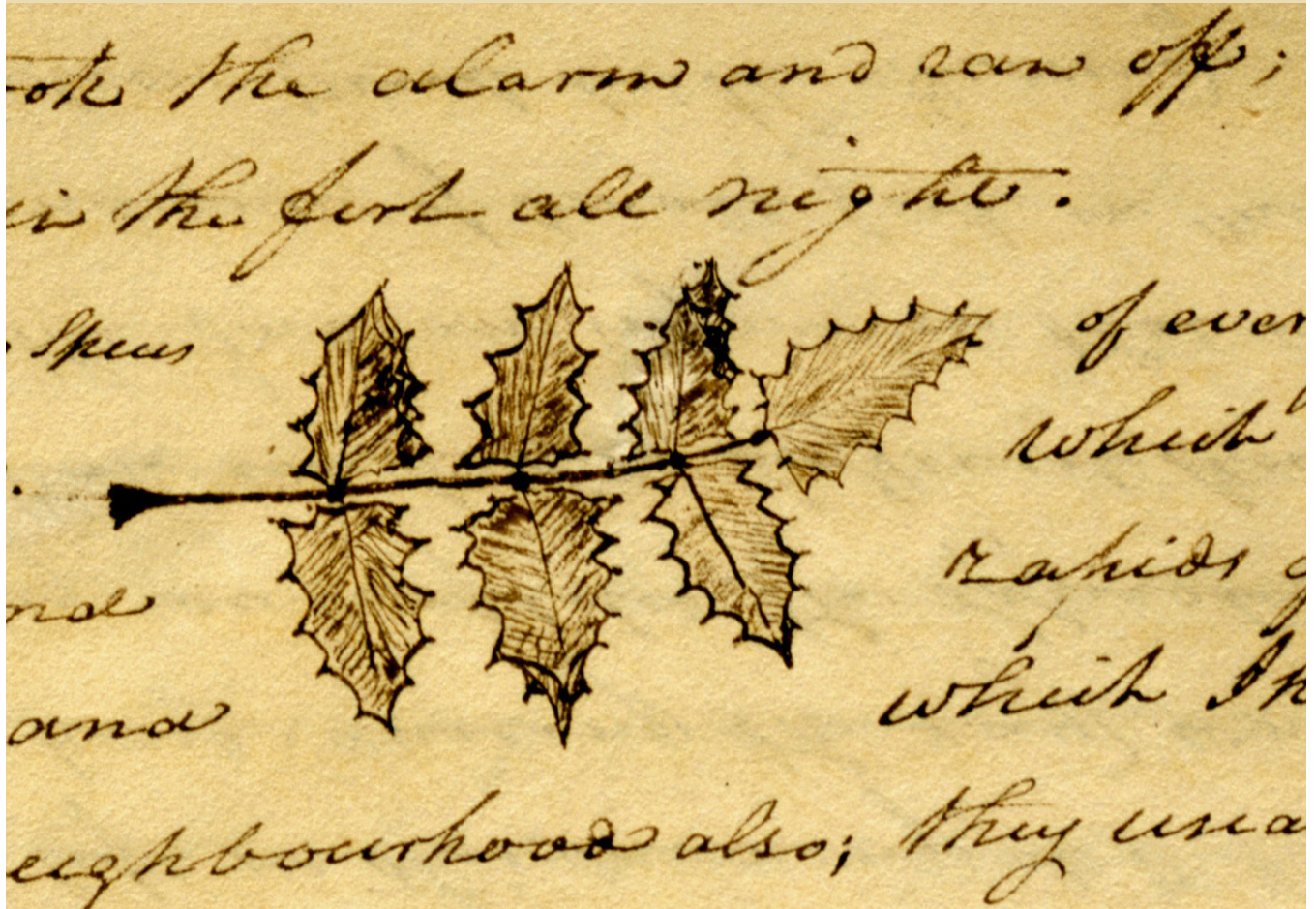


Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery, 1804–1806



Evergreen Shrub Leaf, February 12, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

TL TEACHING LITERACY
TH THROUGH HISTORY

Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery, 1804–1806

BY TIM BAILEY (CREATED IN 2024)

Tim Bailey taught middle school and elementary school in Utah for over two decades. Named the 2009 National History Teacher of the Year, he is the Gilder Lehrman Institute's director of curriculum development and instructional design.

UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on textual and visual primary source materials. These skills will enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate original documents of historical significance.

The four lessons in this unit explore the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which mapped the Louisiana Purchase. Students will read entries from the journals written during the expedition and analyze drawings made during the journey. You will assess students' understanding through classroom discussion and completed activity sheets.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary sources using close-reading strategies
- Demonstrate understanding of primary sources by answering critical thinking questions, citing evidence from the text
- Discuss, defend, and if appropriate, amend their answers based on class discussion
- Identify a transformative moment in American history (e.g., the Louisiana Purchase) and the changes it exemplified (e.g., westward expansion, tension and alliance building between White Americans and Native Americans)
- Identify key people in American history (e.g., Sacagawea, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark)

NUMBER OF CLASS PERIODS: Four 45-minute class periods

GRADE LEVEL(S): 3–5

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What challenges did the explorers face?
- What did the explorers see and record?
- What were the explorers' accomplishments?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2 Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.


CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.5 Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1.b Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

MATERIALS

- Historical Background: “The Lewis and Clark Expedition” by Jay H. Buckley, Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University
- Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from the Corps of Discovery Journals, May 14, 1804–October 24, 1804, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu
- Activity Sheet 2: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from Corps of Discovery Journals, December 25, 1804–August 12, 1805, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu
- Activity Sheet 3: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from Corps of Discovery Journals, October 16, 1805–September 23, 1806, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu
- Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition, from Voorhis Journal No. 2 and Voorhis Journal No. 3 from the Missouri Historical Society
 - o Image 1: White Salmon Trout (coho salmon, *Oncorhynchus kisutch*), March 16, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis Journal No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 2: Cock of the Plains (sage grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*), March 2, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 3: Head of a Vulture (California condor, *Gymnogyps californianus*), February 17, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307

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- o Image 4: Maple Leaf (vine maple, *Acer Circinatum*), February 10, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 5: Evergreen Shrub Leaf (Oregon grape, *Berberis aquifolium*), February 12, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 6: Canoe with Carved Images, February 1, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 7: Fish Net, May 11, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 3, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20308
 - Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition
 - Teacher's Resource: "Summaries of the Expedition's Movements and Activities" adapted from "A Timeline of the Trip," *Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery*, PBS, pbs.org/lewisandclark/index.html



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

by Jay H. Buckley, Brigham Young University


On January 18, 1803, President Thomas Jefferson sent a secret message to Congress requesting \$2,500 for a military expedition to explore the Missouri River to its headwaters and find an all-water route to the Pacific Ocean. On July 4, 1803, he announced that the United States had purchased from Napoleonic France the “right of discovery” to 828,000 square miles of territory beyond the Mississippi River for \$15 million. Jefferson asked his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, to lead the expedition, called the “Corps of Discovery.” He sent Lewis to Philadelphia for professional training in science and medicine and to purchase supplies.

Lewis contracted for a 55-ft keelboat in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and procured weapons at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). He invited William Clark, his former military commander, to join him as the expedition’s principal navigator and mapmaker. They joined forces in October 1803 in Louisville, Kentucky, recruited men, and traveled to their winter encampment at Camp River Dubois (Illinois).

Their entourage—consisting of four dozen men (soldiers, hunters, interpreters, French voyageurs [boatmen], and York, an enslaved man)—embarked from St. Louis, Missouri, on May 14, 1804. Ascending the Missouri against the current in their ten-ton keelboat and two pirogues (dugout canoes) required herculean efforts to cover ten to twenty miles a day. The expedition consumed nine pounds of meat per person per day. They experienced dysentery, venereal disease, boils, tick bites, and injuries from prickly pear; and yet only one man perished. The captains, sergeants, and two enlisted men kept journals. As instructed by President Jefferson, Lewis observed latitude and longitude and kept detailed notes about the soil, climate, animals, plants, and Indigenous peoples. He identified 178 plants and 122 animals new to science.

The corps passed through 55 native homelands. They held councils with Indian peoples, distributed gifts, and requested intertribal peace. Most tribes welcomed trading opportunities and provided the expedition with food, shelter, intimacy, guides, knowledge, and entertainment. This assistance was integral to the success of the expedition. The British-allied Lakotas, however, did not view American competition favorably because it would make their enemies stronger. Their attempt to prevent the expedition from proceeding upstream nearly turned violent, but Chief Black Buffalo’s diplomacy defused the impasse.

The expedition arrived at the Knife River villages (Mandan and Hidatsa) near present-day Bismarck, North Dakota, in November 1804 and constructed Fort Mandan. The captains prepared maps, artifacts, mineral samples, plant specimens, and papers to send to Jefferson. On April 7, 1805, a small crew departed to St. Louis on the keelboat laden with materials for Jefferson that included live magpies and a prairie dog. Meanwhile, the 33 people in the permanent party, including soldiers, boatmen, York, the French Canadian interpreter Toussaint Charbonneau, his teenaged Shoshone wife Sacagawea, and their new baby boy Jean Baptiste, proceeded up the Missouri in six canoes and two pirogues.



Near the Three Forks of the Missouri River (the confluence of the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin Rivers in present-day Montana), Sacagawea informed the captains they were entering Shoshone territory. Sacagawea's brother Cameahwait, the Shoshone leader, provided the expedition with horses to cross the Bitterroot Range. The Nez Percé helped the expedition after they exited the mountains on the recommendation of a respected elderly Nez Percé woman, Watkuweis. Leaving their horses with Chief Twisted Hair, the explorers floated down the Clearwater and Snake Rivers to the Columbia in five cottonwood dug-out canoes.

“Ocian in view! O! the joy” Clark exclaimed in his journal when they arrived at the Pacific Ocean in mid-November. Fierce winter storms raged as the party voted on where to spend the winter. The corps built Fort Clatsop near present-day Astoria, Oregon, and endured a wet, miserable winter by writing journals, drying meat, making salt, and sewing moccasins. Since they did not encounter ocean-going vessels that could transport them home, they began their inbound return via the Columbia and Missouri waterways on March 23, 1806.

After recrossing the Bitterroots, the expedition divided on July 3, 1806. Several groups floated down the Missouri to the Great Falls while Clark explored the Yellowstone River. In the meantime, Lewis and three men met eight Blackfoot teenagers on July 26 near present-day Cut Bank, Montana. This turned deadly when Lewis stabbed Side Hill Calf, who was stealing their horses and guns. The four men fled on horseback for 24 hours, rejoining other expedition members at the Missouri River. The groups reunited at the Mandan villages, bade farewell to the Charbonneau family, and continued downstream, arriving in St. Louis on September 23, 1806, having traveled nearly 8,000 miles.

Congress rewarded the expedition members with double pay and public land grants. The captains each received 1,600 acres, and their men received 320 acres. The final cost for the expedition totaled \$38,000. Jefferson appointed Lewis governor of Upper Louisiana Territory and appointed Clark Indian agent for the western tribes. The expedition members returned to military service, entered the fur trade, became lawyers, or began farming.

The expedition contributed significant geographic and scientific knowledge of the West, aided the expansion of the fur trade, and strengthened US claims to the Pacific Northwest. Clark's 1810 and 1814 maps portraying the geography of the West were the best available until the 1840s. In 1978 Congress established the 3,700-mile Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, recently expanded eastward in 2019 to include the stretch from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to the Mississippi River. While Lewis and Clark took great pains to document Indian cultures, they represented a government whose policies contributed to Indian dispossession and cultural genocide. The attempt by both the Indian tribes and the federal government to resolve this dichotomy was on display during the expedition's Bicentennial (2003–2006) when both sides agreed to call the bicentennial a “commemoration” and not a “celebration.”

Jay H. Buckley, an associate professor of history at Brigham Young University, is the author of William Clark: Indian Diplomat, and co-author of By His Own Hand? The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis and Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West.



Selected Bibliography

Editor Gary E. Moulton's 13-volume *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (1979–2001) remains the definitive edition, with an atlas (vol. 1), herbarium (vol. 12), and index (vol. 13); Moulton also produced a one-volume version, *The Lewis and Clark Journals: An American Epic of Discovery* (2003).

The best primary source of the correspondence is Donald D. Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783–1854*, 2nd ed., 2 vol. (1978).

Larry E. Morris, *The Fate of the Corps: What Became of the Lewis and Clark Explorers after the Expedition* (2004), examines the post-expedition lives. David Lavender, *The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark across the Continent* (1988, reissued 2001), is an engaging narrative account. Elin Woodger and Brandon Toropov, *Encyclopedia of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (2004), provides a helpful general reference. A useful teacher's guide is Alison Schmitke, Leilani Sabzalian, and Jeff Edmundson, *Teaching Critically about Lewis and Clark: Challenging Dominant Narratives in K–12 Curriculum* (2020).

Selected Websites

Discovering Lewis & Clark, lewis-clark.org

Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

Scholarly articles on Lewis & Clark, lewisandclark.org/wpo/article_index.php

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION, 1804

BY TIM BAILEY (CREATED IN 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson the students will read several of the expedition's journal entries. These entries follow the Corps of Discovery from St. Louis to Fort Mandan. Students will use critical thinking questions to facilitate a close reading of the text and to track their understanding. You will assess students' comprehension through how they answer questions and through discussion.

Tim Bailey taught middle school and elementary school in Utah for over two decades. Named the 2009 National History Teacher of the Year, he is the Gilder Lehrman Institute's director of curriculum development and instructional design.

GRADE LEVELS: 3–5

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: Four 45-minute class periods

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on textual and visual primary source materials. The four lessons in this unit explore the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which mapped the Louisiana Purchase.

MATERIALS

- Historical Background: “The Lewis and Clark Expedition” by Jay H. Buckley, Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University
- Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from the Corps of Discovery Journals, May 14, 1804–October 24, 1804, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu
- Teacher's Resource: “Summaries of the Expedition's Movements and Activities” adapted from “A Timeline of the Trip,” *Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery*, PBS, pbs.org/lewisandclark/index.html

PROCEDURE

1. We have provided additional resources for teachers:
 - a. Historical Background by Professor Jay Buckley on page 5 to provide some context for the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition
 - b. “Summaries of the Expedition's Movements and Activities” on page 30 to provide more detail about where the expedition was and what its members were doing on specific days in the journal entries in the student handouts

2. You may choose to provide the students with the basic historical context for the exploration of the Louisiana Purchase; however, the goal is for the students to develop ideas and conclusions based on the textual evidence in the journal entries themselves, so you should share only as much as necessary for them to understand who wrote the journals and why.
3. Hand out Activity Sheet 1. The excerpts from each journal entry are reproduced with the original spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This will be challenging for many students but can be an interesting puzzle as they tease out the meaning from the text.
4. The text level may be too challenging for independent reading. If so, “share read” the text by having the class follow along silently while you read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Ask the students to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud. This technique will support struggling readers and English language learners (ELL).
5. This lesson can be done as a whole class, in small groups, or with partners. The students should do a close reading of the journal entries and answer the critical thinking question for each entry as they re-read the text. They must use evidence from the text in their answers. Show them how to pull a quote from a journal entry and use it in their answer. If you are having students work with partners or in groups, let them negotiate the best answer for each question. Students can brainstorm as partners or small groups but must fill out their own activity sheet to complete the assignment.
6. Class discussion: Have the different groups or individual students share out and compare their answers to the critical thinking questions. Share information from the Historical Background or the “Summaries of the Expedition’s Movements and Activities” as necessary.

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION, 1804-1805

BY TIM BAILEY (CREATED IN 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson the students will continue reading entries from expedition journals. These entries follow the Corps of Discovery from their winter quarters near the Mandan tribe in present-day North Dakota until the expedition crossed the Continental Divide. Students will use critical thinking questions to facilitate a close reading of the text and to track their understanding. You will assess students' comprehension through how they answer questions and through discussion.

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GRADE LEVELS: 3–5

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: Four 45-minute class periods

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MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 2: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from Corps of Discovery Journals, December 25, 1804–August 12, 1805, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

PROCEDURE

1. Briefly review what the class did in the previous lesson and discuss the information in the Historical Background that will place today's texts in historical context.
2. Hand out Activity Sheet 2.
3. You can share read the text as described in Lesson 1 or have the students go right into a close reading of the excerpts, answering the questions as they read. Remind them to use evidence from the text to support their answers. If you are having students work with partners or in groups let them discuss possible answers, but they must fill in their own activity sheet to complete the assignment.
4. Class discussion. Have different groups or individual students share out and compare their answers. Share information from the Historical Background or the "Summaries of the Expedition's Movements and Activities" as necessary during the discussion.

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION, 1805-1806

BY TIM BAILEY (CREATED IN 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson the students will continue reading entries from expedition journals. These entries follow the Corps of Discovery as they canoed west toward the Pacific Ocean and then returned to St. Louis. Students will use critical thinking questions to facilitate a close reading of the text and to track their understanding. You will assess their comprehension through how they answer questions and through discussion.

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GRADE LEVELS: 3–5

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: Four 45-minute class periods

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on textual and visual primary source materials. The four lessons in this unit explore the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which mapped the Louisiana Purchase.

MATERIALS

- Activity Sheet 3: Critical Thinking Questions: Selected Entries from Corps of Discovery Journals, October 16, 1805–September 23, 1806, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

PROCEDURE

1. Briefly review what the class did previously and discuss the information in the Historical Background as necessary.
2. Hand out Activity Sheet 3.
3. Share read the text with the class as described in Lesson 1 or have the students do a close reading on their own. Remind them to use evidence from the text to support their answers to the critical thinking questions. If you are having students work with partners or in groups, let them discuss possible answers, but they must fill in their own activity sheet to complete the assignment.
4. Class discussion: Have the different groups or individual students share out and compare their answers. Share information from the Historical Background or the “Summaries of the Expedition’s Movements and Activities” as necessary.

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION, 1804–1806

BY TIM BAILEY (CREATED IN 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson the students will review drawings made by members of the expedition. They will use the details from these drawings to answer critical thinking questions. The drawings included here were made by William Clark while the expedition was spending the winter on the Pacific coast waiting to make the return trip in the spring. You will assess students' comprehension through how they answer questions and through discussion.

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GRADE LEVELS: 3–5

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MATERIALS

- Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition, from Voorhis Journal No. 2 and Voorhis Journal No. 3 from the Missouri Historical Society
 - o Image 1: White Salmon Trout (coho salmon, *Oncorhynchus kisutch*), March 16, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis Journal No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 2: Cock of the Plains (sage grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*), March 2, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 3: Head of a Vulture (California condor, *Gymnogyps californianus*), February 16, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 4: Maple Leaf (vine maple, *Acer Circinatum*), February 10, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
 - o Image 5: Evergreen Shrub Leaf (Oregon grape, *Berberis aquifolium*), February 12, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307

- o Image 6: Canoe with Carved Images, February 1, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 2, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20307
- o Image 7: Fish Net, May 11, 1806, by William Clark, Voorhis No. 3, Clark Family Collection, Missouri Historical Society, mohistory.org/collections/item/A0289-20308
- Completed Activity Sheets 1–3
- Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition

PROCEDURE

1. Distribute Images 1–7 from the Lewis and Clark Expedition or display them so that all students can easily see them, and distribute Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
2. Demonstrate how to use the images to answer the questions by doing the first one with the whole class. Now students may fill out the Activity Sheet as a whole class, in small groups, or with a partner.
3. After completing the activity sheet students should compare their answers and discuss their reasoning.

Activity Sheet 1: Critical Thinking Questions
Selected Entries from the Corps of Discovery Journals
May 14, 1804–October 24, 1804

William Clark, May 14, 1804

"a Cloudy morning fixing for a Start. . . . Set out from Camp River a Dubois at 4 oClock P. M. and proceded up the Missouri under Sail to the first Island in the Missouri and Camped on the upper point opposit a Creek on the South Side below a ledge of limestone rock Called Colewater, made 4½ miles, the Party Consisted of 2, Self one frenchman and 22 Men in the Boat of 20 ores, 1 Serjt. & 7 french in a large Perogue [boat], a Corp and 6 Soldiers in a large Perogue. a Cloudy rainey day. wind from the N E. men in high Spirits"

Critical Thinking Question 1: What was the attitude of the men as they started their journey?

William Clark, September 7, 1804

"a verry Cold morning Set out at Day light . . . near the foot of this high Nole we discovered a Village of an annamale the french Call the Prarie Dog which burrow in the grown . . . The Village of those little dogs is under the ground a considerable distance we dig under 6 feet thro rich hard clay without getting to their Lodges Some of their wholes we put in 5 barrels of water without driving them out, we caught one by the water forceing him out. ther mouth resemble the rabit, head longer, legs short, & toe nails long ther tail like a ground Squirrel which they Shake and make chattering noise . . ."



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Critical Thinking Question 2: The expedition wanted samples of the plants and animals that they discovered. How did they try to catch a prairie dog?

William Clark, October 24, 1804

"Set out early a Cloudy day Some little Snow in the morning . . . we Saw one of the Grand Chiefs of the Mandins, with five Lodges hunting, this Cheif met the Chief of the *Ricares* who accompanied us with great Cordiallity & Sermony Smoked the pipe & Capt. Lewis with the Interpeter went with the Chiefs to his Lodges at 1 mile distant, after his return we admited the Grand Chief & his brother for a few minits on our boat . . . Soon after our landg. 4 Mandins Came from a Camp above, the Ricares Chief went with them to their Camp."

Critical Thinking Question 3: How did the explorers try to make friends with the Mandan people?

Source: The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu.

Activity Sheet 2: Critical Thinking Questions
Selected Entries from the Corps of Discovery Journals
December 25, 1804–August 12, 1805

Patrick Gass, December 25, 1804

"The morning was ushered in by two discharges of a swivel, and a round of small arms by the whole corps. Captain Clarke then presented to each man a glass of brandy, and we hoisted the American flag in the garrison, and its first waving in fort Mandan was celebrated with another glass.— The men then cleared out one of the rooms and commenced dancing. At 10 o'clock we had another glass of brandy, and at 1 a gun was fired as a signal for dinner. At half past 2, another gun was fired, as a notice to assemble at the dance, which was continued in a jovial manner till 8 at night"

Critical Thinking Question 1: In what ways did the expedition celebrate the Christmas holiday?

Meriwether Lewis, February 11, 1805

". . . about five oclock this evening one of the wives [Sacagawea] of Charbono was delivered of a fine boy . . . her labour was tedious and the pain violent; Mr. Jessome informed me that he had freequently adminstered a small portion of the rattle of the rattle-snake, which he assured me had never failed to produce the desired effect, that of hastening the birth of the child; having the rattle of a snake by me I gave it to him and he administered two rings of it to the woman broken in small pieces with the fingers and added to a small quantity of water."

Critical Thinking Question 2: How did Lewis and Jessome try to help Sacagawea with her difficult childbirth?

Meriwether Lewis, April 7, 1805

"... we were now about to penetrate a country at least two thousand miles in width, on which the foot of civilized man had never trodden; the good or evil it had in store for us was for experiment yet to determine ... I could but esteem this moment of my [our] departure as among the most happy of my life. The party are in excellent health and spirits, zealously attached to the enterprise, and anxious to proceed; not a whisper of murmur or discontent to be heard among them, but all act in unison, and with the most perfect harmony."

Critical Thinking Question 3: With over 2000 miles to go to the Pacific Ocean, what was the attitude of the explorers?

Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

"... after refreshing ourselves we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow. I now descended the mountain about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile which I found much steeper than on the opposite side, to a handsome bold running Creek of cold Clear water. here I first tasted the water of the great Columbia river ... the men in the water almost all day. they are getting weak soar and much fortiequed"



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Critical Thinking Question 4: After climbing to the top of the Continental Divide Lewis expected to see a river running to the Pacific Ocean. What did he see instead? How were the men in the expedition doing?

Source: The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

Activity Sheet 3: Critical Thinking Questions
Selected Entries from the Corps of Discovery Journals
October 16, 1805–September 23, 1806

Joseph Whitehouse, October 16, 1805

" . . . we passed over several bad Rapids, which lay quite across the River, which were full of rocks. One of our Canoes struck on a rock, which was in a rapid, & swung round and remained fast . . . The Men from the two Canoes got the load out of the Canoe, & got her off the rock & to the shore . . . we found a very bad Rapid by far the worst that we had yet seen on this River; & we halted our Canoes above the Rapid. We carried a considerable quantity of our baggage about a Mile by land below this rapid.— We got all our canoes safe over this (rapid) difficult place & loaded them and proceeded on down the River; & passed several more Rapids."

Critical Thinking Question 1: How did the explorers deal with the dangerous rapids they encountered?

William Clark, November 7, 1805

"Great joy in camp we are in *View of the Ocian*, this great Pacific Ocean which we been So long anxious to See. and the roeing or noise made by the waves brakeing on the rocky Shores (as I Suppose) may be heard distinctly"



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Critical Thinking Question 2: What was the reaction of the explorers when they thought they had finally reached the Pacific Ocean?

Patrick Gass, November 24, 1805

“ . . . At night, the party were consulted by the Commanding Officers, as to the place most proper for winter quarters; and the most of them were of opinion, that it would be best, in the first place, to go over to the south side of the river, and ascertain whether good hunting ground could be found there.”

Critical Thinking Question 3: The expedition built Ft. Clatsop to spend the winter. How did Lewis and Clark decide on the best place to spend the winter?

Meriwether Lewis, March 23, 1806

“ . . . we accordingly distributed the baggage and directed the canoes to be launched and loaded for our departure.— at 1 P.M. we bid a final adieu to Fort Clatsop. we had not proceeded more than a mile before we met Delashelwilt and a party of 20 Chinooks men and women. this Cheif lea[r]ning that we were in want of a canoe some days past, had brought us one for sale, but being already supplied we did not purchase it. I obtained one Sea Otter skin from this party.”



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Critical Thinking Question 4: What kind of relationship did the expedition have with the Chinook tribe?

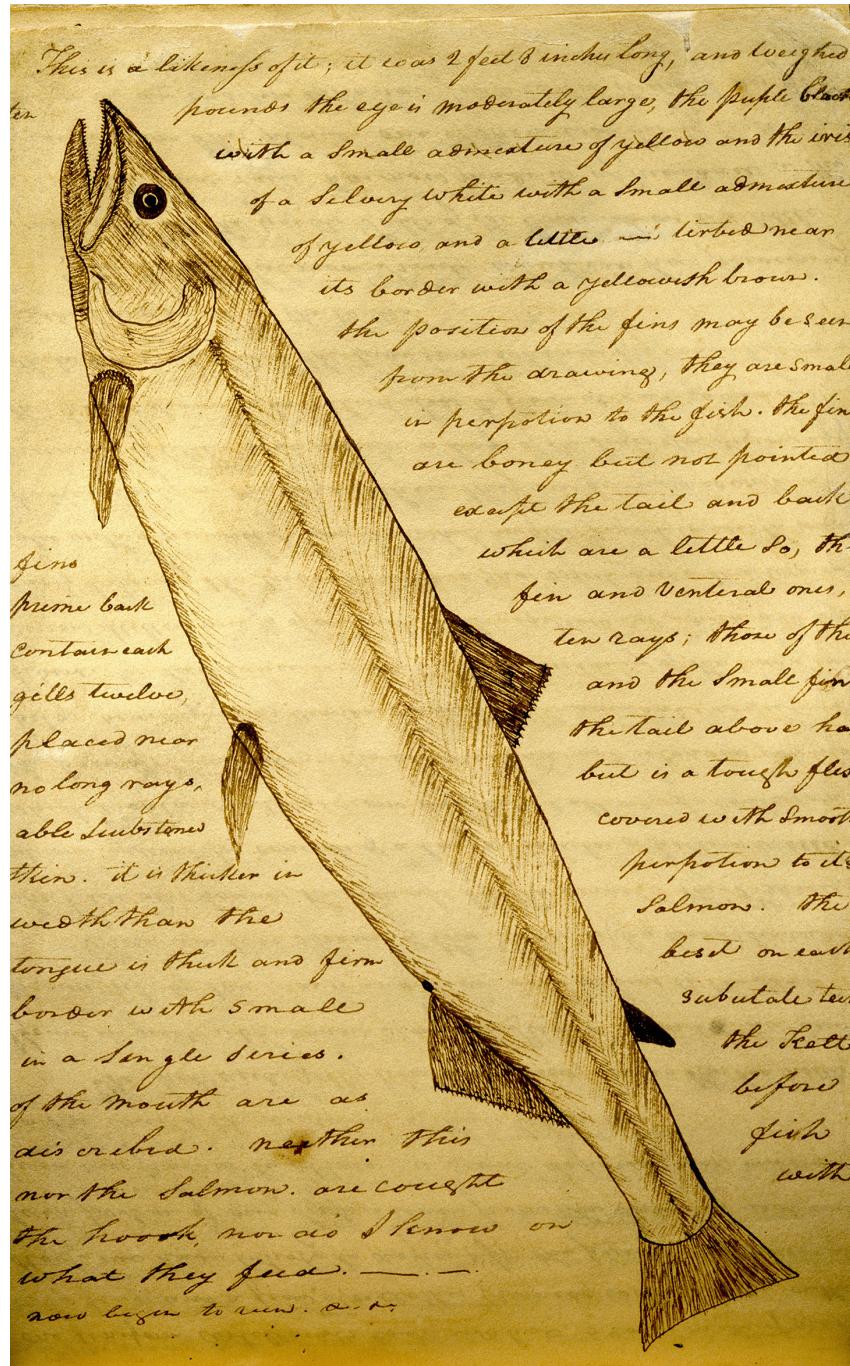
William Clark, September 23, 1806

"... Set out decended to the Mississippi and down that river to St. Louis at which place we arived about 12 oClock. we Suffered the party to fire off their pieces as a Salute to the Town. we were met by all the village and received a harty welcom from it's inhabitants."

Critical Thinking Question 5: How did both the members of the expedition and the citizens of St. Louis react to the Corps of Discovery's return after they had been gone for 2 ½ years?

Source: The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu

Image 1



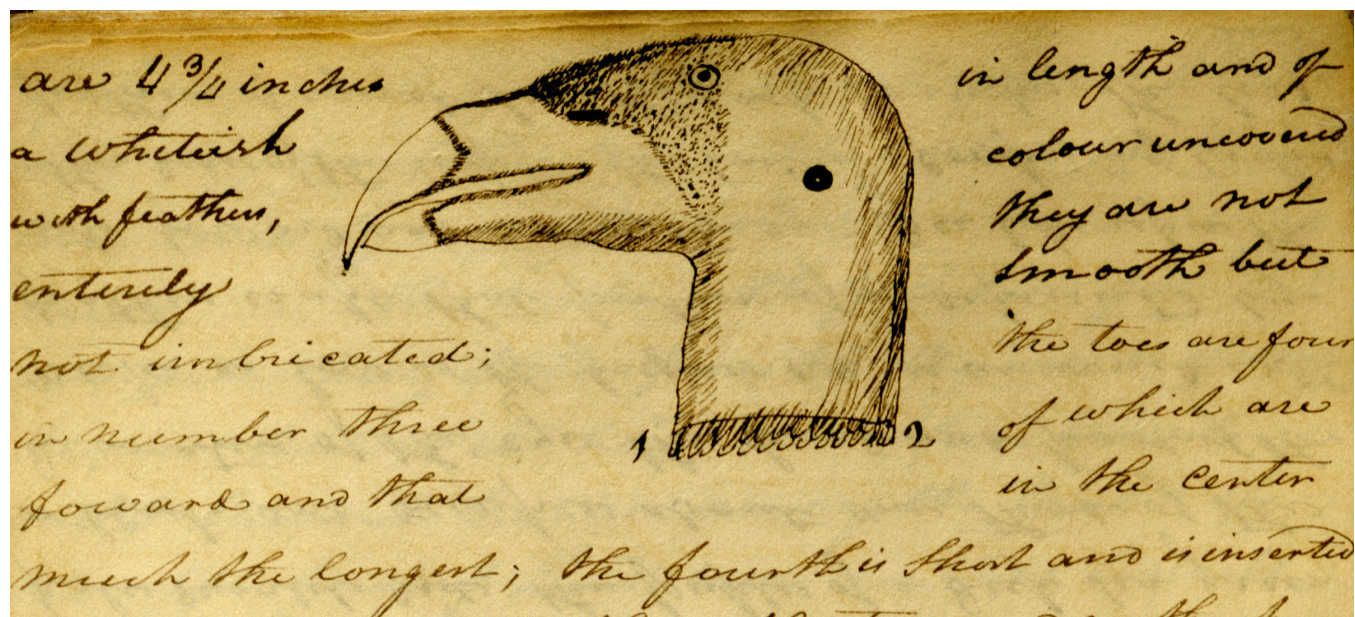
White Salmon Trout, March 16, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 2



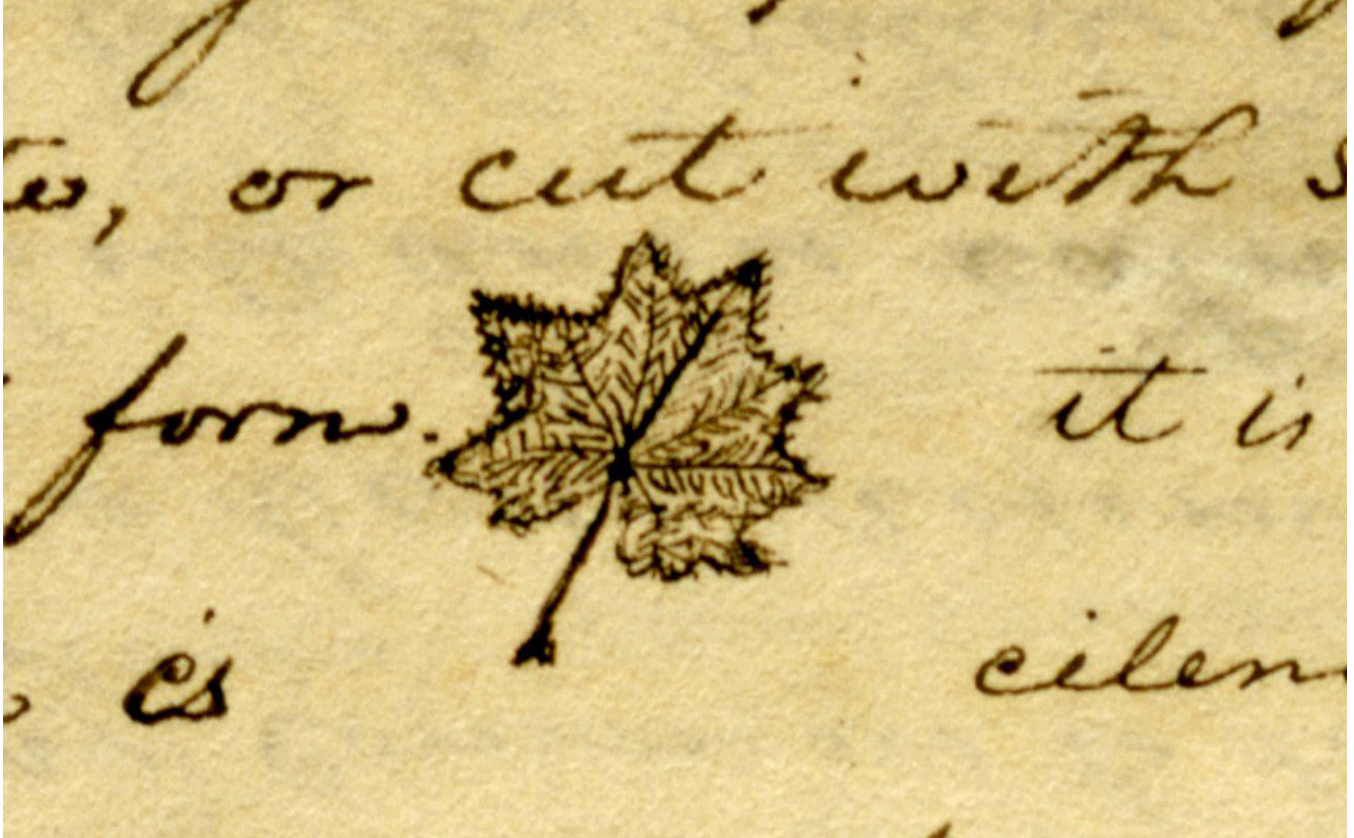
Sage Grouse, March 2, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 3



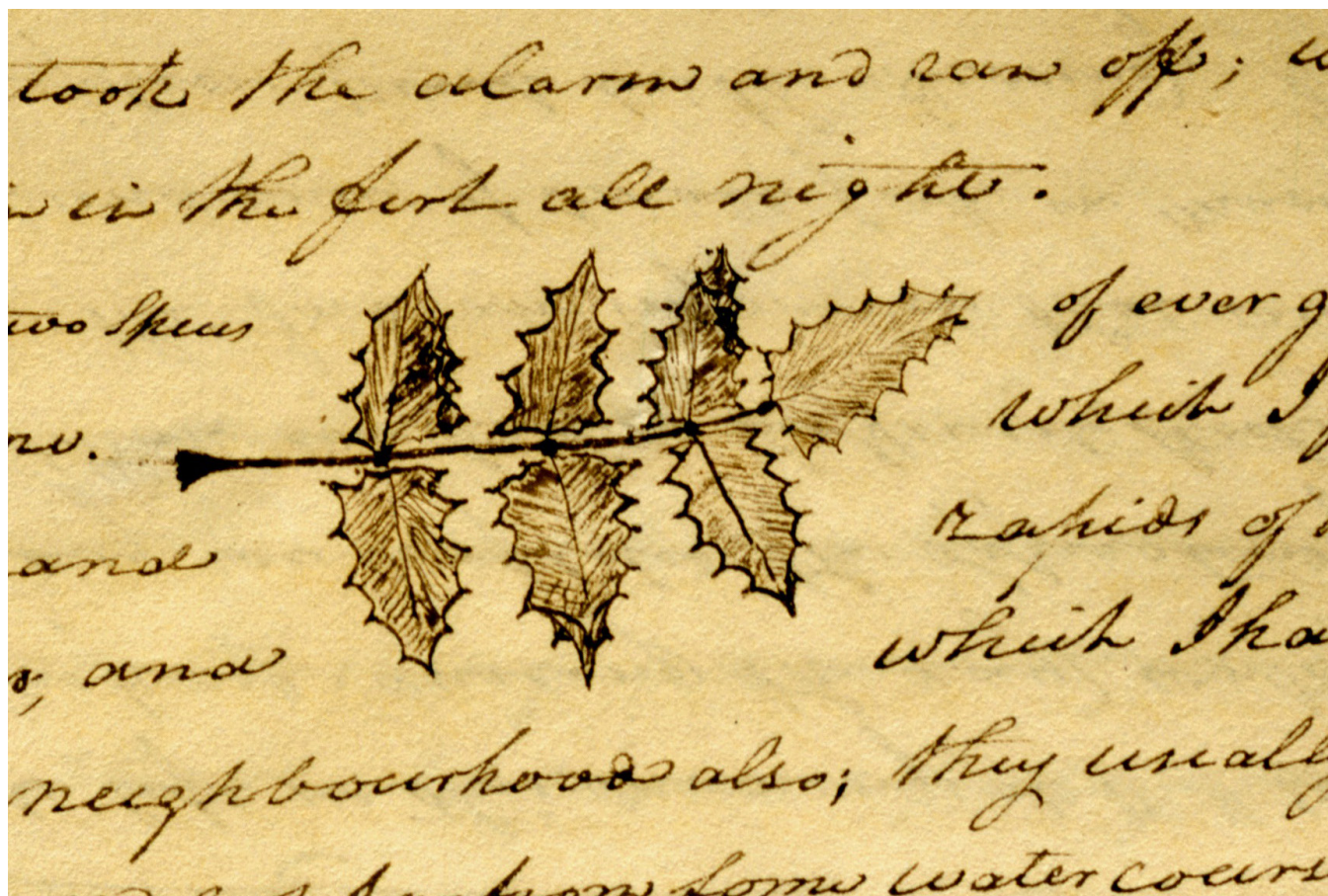
Head of a Vulture, February 16, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 4



Maple Leaf, February 10, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 5



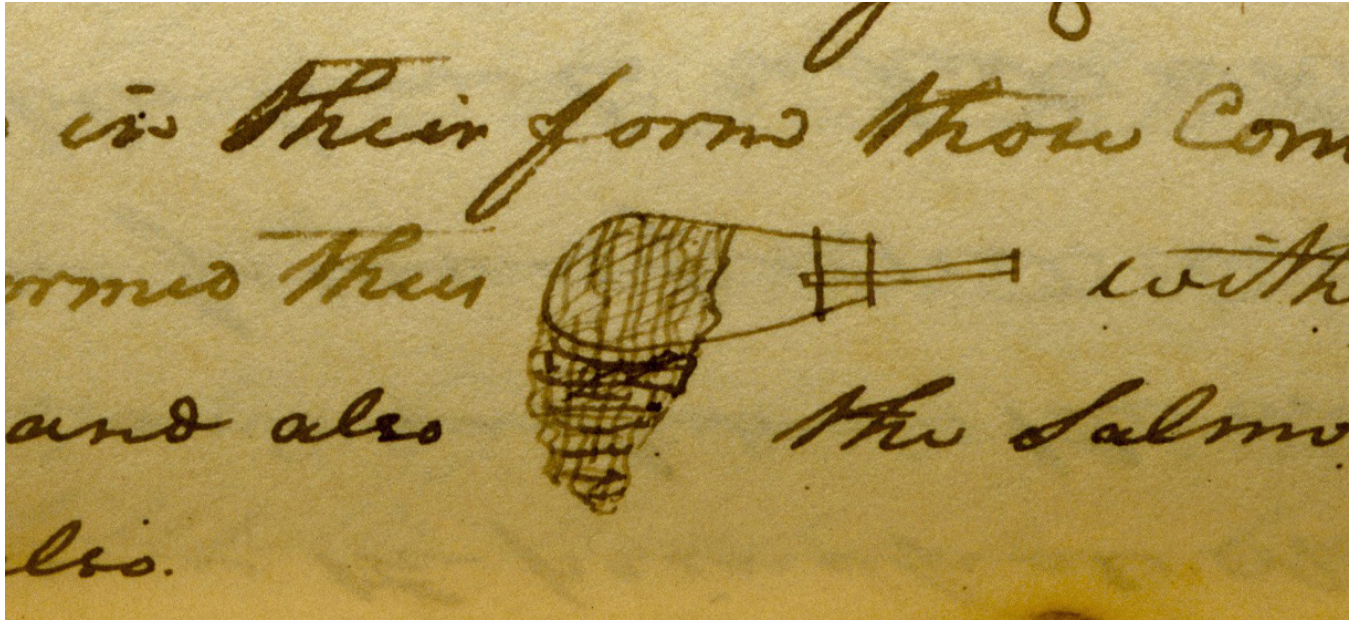
Evergreen Shrub Leaf, February 12, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 6



Canoe with Carved Images, February 1, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)

Image 7



Fish Net, May 11, 1806 (Missouri Historical Society)



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions Images from the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Use the journal entries that you have read to help understand the drawings made by William Clark, one of the leaders of the expedition.

Critical Thinking Question 1: Why did the expedition members draw pictures in their journals?

Critical Thinking Question 2: Look at the dates on the images and compare them with the journals and what the expedition was doing. What do these dates tell you about why so many of the drawings were done at that time?

Critical Thinking Question 3: What are the differences in the drawings of the leaves? What does that tell you about the different regions the expedition traveled through?

Critical Thinking Question 4: What clues from the expedition's journals tell you why they included a drawing of a canoe and a fish net?



Summaries of the Expedition's Movements and Activities

Lesson 1

May 14, 1804

The expedition set off from St. Louis with about four dozen men (the precise number is unknown) from every corner of the young nation. Reuben and Joseph Field were brothers. George Drouillard, Pierre Cruzatte, and François Labiche were sons of French Canadian fathers and Indigenous mothers. Besides the captains, other diarists were John Ordway, a young soldier from New Hampshire; Patrick Gass, a carpenter of Irish stock from Pennsylvania; Joseph Whitehouse, a tailor from Virginia; and Charles Floyd of Kentucky, a “young man of much merit,” Lewis wrote.

They traveled in big keelboat (55 feet long, 8 feet wide, capable of carrying 10 tons of supplies) and two smaller boats called pirogues. Proceeding up the Missouri River involved sailing, rowing, using setting poles, and sometimes wading along the bank to pull the boats with cordelling ropes. Fourteen miles was a good day’s progress.

September 7, 1804

Moving into the Great Plains, the expedition began seeing animals unknown in the East: coyotes, antelope, mule deer, and others. On this particular day, all the men were employed drowning a prairie dog out of its hole for shipment back to Jefferson. In all, the captains would describe in their journals 178 plants and 122 animals that previously had not been recorded for science.

October 24, 1804

North of what is now Bismarck, North Dakota, the Corps of Discovery reached the earth-lodge villages of the Mandans and Hidatsas. Some 4,500 people lived there—more than lived in St. Louis or even Washington, DC, at the time. The captains decided to build Fort Mandan across the river from the main village. In this entry Clark mentioned both the Ricares (Hidatsa) and Mandin (Mandan) tribes.



Lesson 2

December 17–25, 1804

Clark noted a temperature of 45 degrees below zero—“colder,” John Ordway added, “than I ever knew it be in the States.” A week later, on Christmas Eve, Fort Mandan was considered complete and the expedition had moved in for the winter. This entry referred to “a swivel” or a small cannon mounted on the boat.

February 11, 1805

Sacagawea gave birth to a boy, Jean Baptiste. The men assisted in speeding the delivery by giving her a potion made by crushing the rings of a rattlesnake’s rattle into powder.

April 7, 1805

Lewis and Clark dispatched the keelboat and roughly a dozen men back down river along with maps, reports, Indian artifacts, and boxes of scientific specimens (Indian corn, animal skins and skeletons, mineral samples, and five live animals including the prairie dog) for President Jefferson. The same day, the “permanent party” headed west, traveling in the two pirogues and six smaller dugout canoes. The expedition totaled 33, including Charbonneau, Sacagawea, and their baby. Lewis described the use of a tepee as a shelter.

August 12, 1805

The shipment sent from Fort Mandan arrived in the East. President Jefferson planted the Indian corn in his Monticello garden, hung elk antlers in his foyer, and sent the surviving animals—a magpie and the prairie dog—to a natural science museum located in Philadelphia’s Independence Hall. Reading Lewis’s confident letter, he imagined that the expedition had already reached the Pacific Ocean. That same day, Lewis ascended the final ridge toward the Continental Divide. Climbing the rest of the ridge—Lemhi Pass, on the present-day border between Montana and Idaho—he expected to see from the summit a vast plain to the west, with a large river flowing to the Pacific: the Northwest Passage that had been the goal of explorers since the time of Columbus. Instead, all he saw was more mountains.



Lesson 3

October 16, 1805

Having raced down the Clearwater and then the Snake Rivers, they reached the Columbia. The expedition needed to navigate series after series of dangerous rapids, and sometimes had to carry their canoes around the whitewater.

November 7, 1805

Thinking he sees the end of land in the distance, Clark wrote his most famous journal entry: “Ocian in view! O! the joy.” (His spelling.) But what he saw was actually only the eastern end of Gray’s Bay, still 20 miles from the sea. Fierce Pacific storms, rolling waters, and high winds pinned them down for nearly three weeks, “the most disagreeable time I have experienced,” according to Clark.

Later, Clark estimated that they had traveled 4,162 miles from the mouth of the Missouri to the Pacific. His estimate, based on dead reckoning, turn out to be within 40 miles of the actual distance.

November 24, 1805

To make the crucial decision of where to spend the winter, the captains decided to put the matter to a vote. Significantly, in addition to the others, York, the enslaved man held by Clark, was allowed to vote—nearly 60 years before enslaved people in the US were emancipated and enfranchised. Sacagawea voted too—more than a century before either women or American Indians would be granted the full rights of citizenship.

The majority decided to cross to the south side of the Columbia, near modern-day Astoria, Oregon, to build winter quarters.

March 23, 1806

The expedition set off for home after turning over Fort Clatsop to the local Native Americans.



September 23, 1806

This was their last day as the Corps of Discovery as they reached St. Louis. Having been gone nearly two and a half years, they had been given up for dead by the citizens, who greeted the explorers enthusiastically. "Now," young John Ordway wrote, "we intend to return to our native homes to see our parents once more, as we have been so long from them."

Adapted from "A Timeline of the Trip," Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery, PBS, pbs.org/lewisandclark/index.html.