



Maggie's Weekly Activity Pack!

Name _____

Date _____

Remembering A Great Adventure... The Journey of Lewis and Clark

It has been two hundred years since Lewis and Clark started their journey across America. In February 1803, the Congress approved this great adventure. This was the first step in the story of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Read the article below. You will find out more about the search for the Northwest Passage!

President Thomas Jefferson hoped Americans could travel along rivers to get to the Pacific Ocean. He thought the Missouri and Columbia Rivers would lead to the west coast. He knew that a good route to the west would help with the fur trade. Both the Congress and President Jefferson also wanted to know more about the plants, animals, geography, and climate of the west. They wanted to understand the Indians who made their home in this area.

President Thomas Jefferson chose a neighbor from his home in Charlottesville, Virginia to lead the expedition. As a boy, Meriwether Lewis explored the woods of Virginia. He knew a lot about plants and animals. But he needed to learn more. The president sent Lewis to visit scientists in Philadelphia. He learned how to use the stars to navigate. He found out about field medicine. He also learned more about the natural sciences. While here, Lewis bought a Newfoundland dog. Seaman would go along with him on this journey.

Lewis knew he would need a good partner for this adventure. He asked a friend from the army, William Clark, to be his co-leader. Clark had many skills from his boyhood in the forests of Virginia and Kentucky. He had the ability to make maps. This would be helpful to the expedition.

In December 1803, Lewis and Clark came to St. Louis, Missouri. They camped where the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers meet. Here they asked many men and soldiers to join them.

On May 14, 1804 about 45 men set out. They traveled in 3 boats. Soon they found it was not easy to navigate. The rain, high winds, and even sunken trees made it difficult to travel.

Finally, in early November 1804, they arrived in North Dakota. They spent 4 weeks making a fort. They called it Fort Mandan. They met the Minitari Indians. Here they learned many Indian customs. The group spent 5 months in this area. Some of the men made tools. They traded these with the Indians. The Indians gave them food like corn and beans. The Indians and French gave them advice about their route.

It was here that Lewis and Clark met Sacagawea, a Shoshoni Indian. She came to the camp with her husband. At the age of 12, Sacagawea had been kidnapped from her tribe. She was brought from the Rocky Mountains to North Dakota. Sacagawea spoke several Indian languages. She knew a lot about the land. Lewis and Clark knew she could help them. They also knew that women did not travel with war parties. This would show the Indians that they came in peace. Before the group set out, Sacagawea had a baby boy, Jean Baptiste. William Clark took a special liking to the baby. He nicknamed him Pomp because he liked to dance around.

As the group moved west they saw many herds of buffalo, elk, antelope, and deer. There was always danger, though. Many grizzly bears lived in the area. These bears can charge people. They also faced bad weather.

There were high winds. The boats were often in danger of tipping over. But the group kept on. By the end of May 1805, they saw the Rocky Mountains.

Now Lewis and Clark had a problem. In this area the Missouri River seems to divide in two. It took them 9 days to decide whether to take the south branch or the north branch. Finally the men decided the south branch was the route to take. Later they came to a big waterfall. This was usually a problem. But, this time they were happy to see a waterfall. They had been told to expect falls around this area of the Missouri River. Now Lewis and Clark knew for sure they had taken the right route. Still it was not an easy task to walk around the falls. The weather was hot. There was terrible rain and hail. The group had to climb steep hills. The spines of the prickly pear hurt their feet.

On July 25, 1805, the group reached 3 forks in the Missouri River. They followed the fork that headed west. They even named this river for Thomas Jefferson.

Soon Lewis decided to go on ahead. In August, he reached a very important point. He came to a brook and saw it ran west. He had reached the Continental Divide! This is the place where the continent of North America divides. East of this place, all rivers run east. West of the Continental Divide, the rivers run west.

Before long, Lewis met some Shoshoni women. This was the tribe of Sacagawea! Lewis and several Shoshoni on horses rode back to the main party. They made camp together and called it Camp Fortunate. Imagine Sacagawea's joy when she saw a girlfriend from her childhood. This friend told Sacagawea that her brother was now the chief of the Shoshoni! It must have been quite a scene when she saw her family again after so many years.

Finally the entire group crossed the Continental Divide. They traded with the Shoshoni Indian and got horses. The animals were helpful in following the old Indian trails across Montana and Idaho. Again, though, weather made the

journey hard. There were early snowstorms and very cold air. This made finding food difficult.

They met the Nez Perce in September of 1805. These Indians gave them food. The group was happy to eat the roots, berries, and salmon. Because they were not used to this kind of food, it made them sick. After getting well, the group made new canoes. They left their horses with the Nez Perce and set out again. Huge boulders and dangerous rapids made the trip difficult.

In early October 1805, the group reached the Snake River. Then they came to the Columbia River. Excitement ran high on November 7, 1805. The group thought they saw the Pacific Ocean! But they got a surprise. It was only storm waters on the Columbia River. The Pacific was still 25 miles away. And when traveling on foot, 25 miles is a long way! They couldn't travel for 9 long days because of the storm. It wasn't until the middle of November that the group stood on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. They had reached their goal! This journey had taken 554 days, and they had traveled 4132 miles.

The group had a letter of credit from President Jefferson. It promised to pay any ship that would take them back. It was a good thing Lewis and Clark did not want to do this. There were not any ships to be seen.

A camp was made on the north shore of the river. But there were terrible storms and poor hunting in this area. The group then took a vote. They decided to move to the south side of the river. This was the first time the votes of a black man and a woman were counted in an American election.

The group built a fort. They named it Fort Clatsop for the Indians that lived near-by. Here the group hunted elk and made clothing. Lewis studied the plants, animals, climate, and Indian life. He wrote in his journal. Clark made sure his maps were up to date. One day a whale washed up on the beach. Sacagawea and others took oil and blubber from it.

On March 23, 1806 the group started back. They arrived in St. Louis on September 23, 1806. They brought with them information about Indian life and the plants, animals, and climate of the west. But, they had to tell President Jefferson that there was not an easy northwest passage. They discovered that the Rocky Mountains were just too wide. There was not an easy path between the east and west coast of the young country.

The trip had been difficult, but Lewis and Clark remained friends. Their adventure is still a model for the American spirit. Yet, there are some parts of the journey that cause some embarrassment. The leaders and their men received gifts of land. Sacagawea received nothing. Clark had taken along a black slave, York. His help had been valuable. But it is still not clear if he ever received his freedom. Today we can learn from these mistakes of the past. Perhaps you will want to go further and study these two people who were such an important part of this great American adventure!



Thinking About It

A. Make a list of at least 3 ways Sacagawea was helpful to the Lewis and Clark expedition.

1.

2.

3.

B. You read several ways some Indian tribes were helpful to Lewis and Clark. List 3 of those ways.

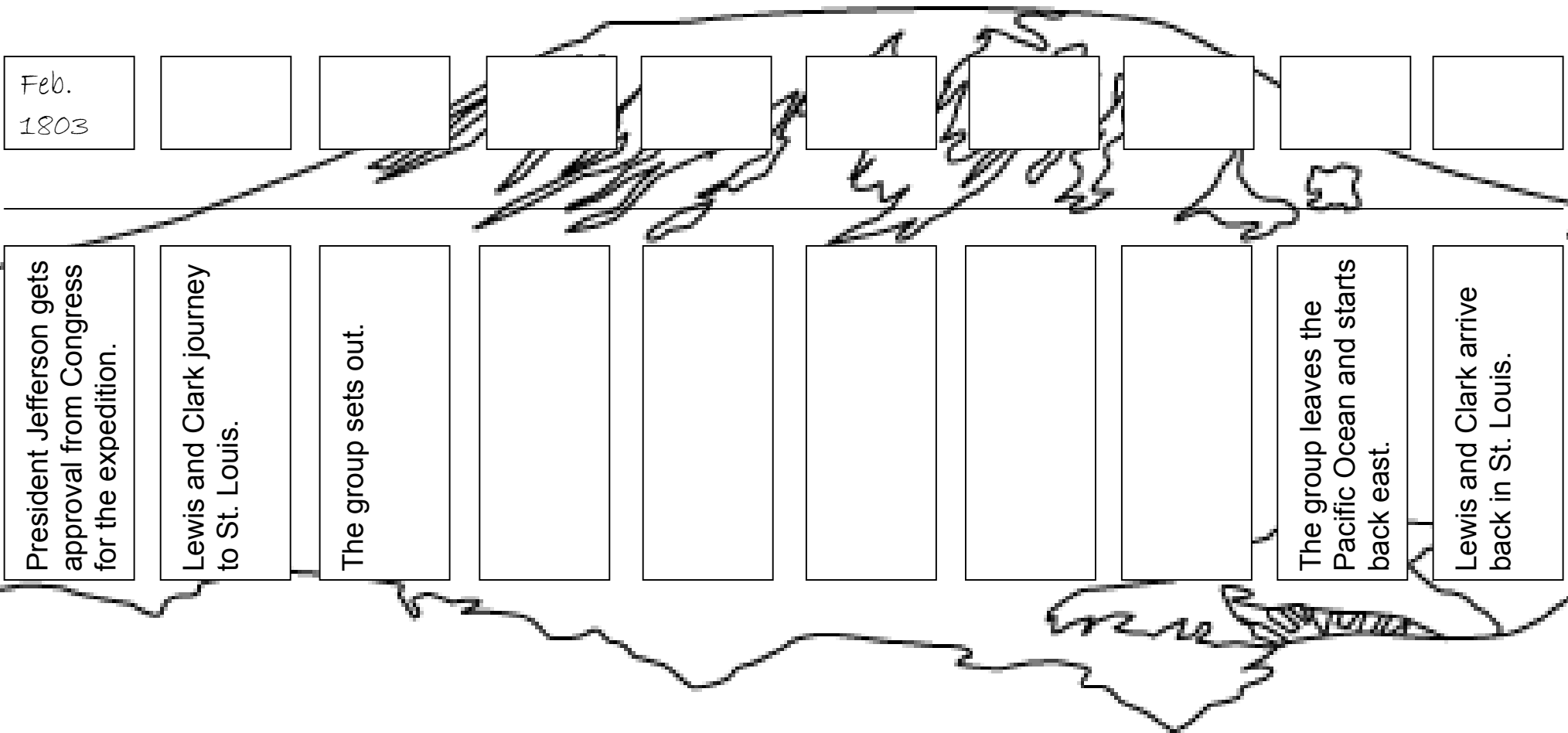
1.

2.

3.

When studying history, it is helpful to know the order in which things happened. Dates are important in helping us to understand how long things took. Look at this time line. Fill in the date boxes. The first one is done for you. When you finish you will have a good “mind picture” of the Lewis and Clark journey.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition



Writing About History

Think about life on the trail with the Lewis and Clark. What might people say to each other? Pick one of these ideas. Write what you think might have been said.

- What might Sacagawea have said to her childhood girlfriend when they met after so many years?
- What might two expedition members have discussed before voting whether or not to move to the south side of the river?
- Imagine Meriwether Lewis standing on the Continental Divide with his dog, Seaman. What might he have said to the dog?
- What do you think President Thomas Jefferson said to Meriwether Lewis when he asked him to go on this adventure?
- What might members of one of the Indian tribes have said to each other about the expedition?



Dear Colleague,

We are all sure to hear quite a bit about the Lewis and Clark expedition in the next few years. The United States Forest Service has wonderful pamphlets and material highlighting the bicentennial of this great American adventure. Many books and movies are available to help your students learn more about this journey. Our activity packet is meant to serve as a beginning overview. Hopefully you and your students will take the opportunity to research more about people such as York who took part in the hunt for the Northwest Passage. I felt it was important to note the way both Sacagawea and York were treated. You may want to have a class discussion about issues such as this. Following are the answers to the time line. You could also point out that making such a line is a good way to study for tests. Of course, answers to the **Thinking About It** and **Writing About History** sections will vary.

Happy teaching!

Kathy

- Box 1 – Answer is given
- Box 2 – Dec. 1803
- Box 3 – May 14, 1804
- Box 4 – Nov. 1804
- Box 5 – May 1805
- Box 6 – Aug. 1805
- Box 7 – Oct. 1805
- Box 8 – Nov. 16, 1805
- Box 9 – March 23, 1806
- Box 10 – Sept. 23, 1806

Goals:

Students will read an article about the Lewis and Clark expedition. They will demonstrate their ability to recall and summarize information by making lists of important facts. They will exhibit their ability to find specific content in a social studies passage by completing a timeline. Students will also demonstrate the ability to understand historic people by imagining their feelings and writing realistic conversations based on historic facts. This activity is available on two levels, primary and intermediate.