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The Lewis and Clark Expedition

Directions: Read the selection and answer the twelve questions.

In the early 1800s the people of the United States knew very little about the land west of the Mississippi River. It was necessary to send explorers to learn and map out that part of the country acquired by the Louisiana Purchase. President Thomas Jefferson chose Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to lead



an expedition to find the Pacific Ocean.

Both men were in the army, and they were close friends.

Lewis and Clark set off from St. Louis, Missouri with a group of over thirty men. Their journey began on May 14, 1804 by canoeing up the Missouri River. Along the course, the expedition made journal records

of animals, plants, minerals and weather. Lewis and Clark made careful maps of their route, showing the latitude and longitude of landmarks along the way.

The journey was exciting, but not tranquil. Lewis and Clark depended heavily on Native Americans for help. One, such advisor was the incredible Shoshone woman, named Sacajawea [SAK-uj-juh-WEE-uh]. Sacajawea led the men through rough and risky territory. For part of the journey, she served as guide and interpreter, because she not only knew the lay of the land, but how

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to find food and translate languages. From Native American tribes, she borrowed horses that the group could use on the most challenging portion of the trip, which was crossing the brutal Rocky Mountains.

Once the expedition crossed the Continental Divide, they followed the westward-flowing Clearwater and Snake Rivers. Finally the group floated down the Columbia River. On October 7, 1805 Clark wrote in his journal "Ocean in view! O!

The Joy!" Lewis and Clark had accomplished their objective of reaching the Pacific Ocean.

The group's time on the Pacific coast was miserable because it rained for over one hundred days. They camped in a crude fort they built themselves, called Fort Clatsop. With only a small food supply, they stayed three month, and then departed for their return to Missouri.

The expedition arrived in St. Louis on September 23, 1806, where they were welcomed with admiration and cheering. Having traveled 7,689 miles with only one person's death, the expedition proved to be one of the greatest explorations in

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American history. The work of Lewis and Clark was important to the people of our country, because they were the first Americans to map the land west of the Mississippi River. Thanks to the two mapmakers, America learned a great deal about the northwestern part of the United States.

1. Who were the first Americans to map the land west of the Mississippi River?
 - a. Daniel Boone and Davey Crockett
 - b. Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin
 - c. William Clark and Meriwether Lewis
 - d. Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette

2. What did President Jefferson ask Lewis and Clark to do?
 - a. Map the northwestern territories and reach the Pacific Ocean.
 - b. Meet as many Native American Indian tribes as possible.
 - c. Kill buffalo so the railroads could get through to the west.
 - d. All of the above

3. Lewis and Clark explored the Northwest during the years
 - a. 1800-1802
 - b. 1804-1806
 - c. 1848-1850
 - d. 1904-1906

4. Who acted as a guide and helped Lewis and Clark find their way?
 - a. Charbonneau

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- b. Pocahontas
 - c. Sacajawea
 - d. None of the above
5. The expedition traveled up the
- a. Pacific Ocean
 - b. Mississippi River
 - c. Monongahela River
 - d. Missouri River
6. What was the hardest part of their journey?
- a. canoeing on rivers
 - b. the hard and bumpy wagon ride
 - c. crossing the Rocky Mountains
 - d. none of the above
7. What was shown on the maps made by Lewis and Clark?
- a. animal and plant specimens
 - b. weather reports
 - c. latitude and longitude of landmarks
 - d. sites of mineral deposits
8. Why were the maps that Lewis and Clark made important to the people of the United States?
- a. They were the first Americans to map the land west of the Mississippi River.
 - b. America learned a great deal about the northwestern part of the United States.
 - c. Lewis and Clark depended on Native Americans for help.
 - d. Both a and b.

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9. Sacajawea acted as an interpreter when the group met Native American tribes. What does the word *interpreter* mean?
- a. Person who translates for people speaking different languages.
 - b. Person who handles written messages via several modes of communication.
 - c. Person who purchases land in Louisiana
 - d. All of the above
10. The expedition set out from and returned to
- a. The Rockies
 - b. Fort Clatsop
 - c. St. Louis
 - d. None of the above
11. What kind of qualities does a person have to have to do what Lewis, Clark, and Sacajawea did?
- a. courageous and lazy
 - b. dedicated and undependable
 - c. purposeful and fearful
 - d. daring and determined
12. Would you ever want to join an expedition? If so, where would you like to go? Explain your answer.
