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The Lewis and Clark Expedition

In 1803 the United States President, Thomas Jefferson, bought the Louisiana territory from France. He paid \$15 million for this immense piece of land.



President Jefferson liked science. It was very interesting. He wanted to learn about the plants and animals of the new territory.

In May 1804 President Jefferson asked Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the Louisiana Purchase. Lewis and Clark

were the first white men to see this land.

This important **expedition** began in St. Louis, Missouri.

About 50 men traveled up the Missouri River. They explored the territory and made maps.

After six months they stopped and built Fort Mandan. They spent the long winter there.



In the spring of 1805 the **expedition** continued. An Indian woman called Sacagawea went on the **expedition** with the explorers. She was a friendly Shoshone Indian. Sacagawea spoke English and other Indian languages. She was very helpful.

Sacagawea's brother was a Shoshone chief. A Shoshone guide helped the explorers cross

the high mountains. The journey was difficult and dangerous. Grizzly bears and other animals attacked the explorers.

The explorers built canoes. They traveled down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. They arrived at the Pacific Ocean in November 1805. They built a fort there.

The **expedition** returned to Missouri in September 1806. The explorers traveled 8,000 miles (12,800 kilometers) from May 1804 to September 1806.



made the first scientific map of the West.

Another important pioneer was Davy Crockett. He fought for the independence of Texas.

This was the beginning of the great movement to the West.

The Lewis and Clark **expedition** was very successful. Lewis and Clark made many maps. They brought back a lot of information about the West.

In the 1840s John Fremont and Kit Carson explored the land between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. They visited California and Oregon. Fremont



Answer the following questions.

1. What is the Louisiana Purchase?

2. Why did the president, Thomas Jefferson, send Lewis and Clarke in an expedition?

3. In your words, what is an expedition?

4. Where did the expedition begin? _____

6. When did their expedition continue? _____

7. Who helped them along the way? _____

8. Who was she? _____

9. Why was the expedition so dangerous?

10. How did they travel down the Columbia River?

11. Where did they build another fort? _____

12. What did Lewis and Clarke bring back at the end of their expedition?

13. Who made the first scientific map of the West? _____

14. Why was Davy Crockett an important pioneer?