

THE GREAT NORTHWEST...

The Journals of Lewis and Clark

INTRODUCTION: In 1804, the Corps of Discovery led by Meriweather Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis to explore the great unknown. They followed the Missouri River and wintered with the Mandan people. The following spring they headed toward the Rockies and late that summer they completed a difficult crossing of the Continental Divide into the Great Northwest. They boated down the Snake and Columbia Rivers. In November 1805, they reached the Pacific Ocean, spent a wet winter at Fort Clatsop, and then returned home in 1806. During the entire journey of discovery, both Lewis and Clark kept very detailed records. Even today, after almost two centuries, their journals make for some very interesting and enlightening reading. So, let's see what they had to say!

PART ONE: *Interpreting the Journals...*

Your teacher will give you a short timeline of the expedition for background information. Then you will be given some short selections from the Lewis and Clark journals. Both sources come from the PBS website on the expedition, filmed by Ken Burns.

First, write down some background information.

Where was the Corps of Discovery when this journal entry was written? _____

What situation did the expedition face during this time period? _____

Find the location of this event on the expedition map. Where were they? _____

Now, read over the journal entry with your partners. As, you will plainly see, they didn't exactly use standard English. In fact, it almost resembles a 21st century chat room. So, your next responsibility is to re-write the entry, with no grammatical errors or creative spelling. Try your "translation" here:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

PART TWO: *Illustrations*

Included in your packet is a photocopy taken directly from the William Clark journal. Not only is it in Clark's own handwriting, but it is also illustrated by him. What animal is the subject of this entry? _____

List two facts about this creature that you learned from his writing: _____

Another artistic masterpiece by William Clark is his map of the Columbia River. Look it over carefully. Where on the Columbia River were they? _____

There is a peninsula of land indicated on this map called Cape Disappointment. Why did Lewis and Clark give it that depressing name (which it still has)? _____

Describe one other landmark visible on Clark's map: _____

ASSIGNMENT: *A Journal Entry of Your Own...*

Your teacher will now explain a journal writing exercise. It should be based on an outdoors experience, such as sitting outside the school, or at a park, or a hike in the woods. Try to write it in the style of Lewis or Clark, but use correct modern English! You should also illustrate the journal entry with a drawing of a plant or animal, or a map of your "expedition." Good luck!

