

More than 200 years ago, in 1804, two explorers made an important journey. They were named Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Today, people know a lot about the places they visited, but 200 years ago there were no maps of that part of the United States. They would travel by boat most of the way and they would make the first maps of that part of our country. They were going to trace where a great river went. The river they were mapping is a very big one called the Missouri River. They wanted to find out where it went. They hoped it would take them to the ocean.

They took many people with them to help with the exploration. There were more than 40 people on the trip. They also carried many supplies, including a lot of food. They hoped they would find food along the way, but this was long ago and they did not know what the territory would be like. The explorers had three boats to carry them and their supplies. It was summer when they started on this long trip.

They traveled slowly, each day traveling a short distance because they had to row their boats on the river. They would only travel a few miles every day. They traveled for months and were still far from their destination. In winter it was difficult to travel, so they camped along the river. There they would wait for spring when traveling would be easier. Snow and ice made it very hard to travel in winter.

Native Americans helped them along the way. They helped them get food, and they showed them where places were. The explorers had never been to this area before, so they were not sure where to find food or even where the river went. The Native Americans had lived there for many years, so they knew the area and how to survive there, even in the hard winter.

A Native American woman named Sacajawea helped them travel. She became their guide, and she traveled with them for months. It was hard work for everyone, including Sacajawea. The explorers needed her help to find their way to the West. They wanted to find out how to get to the ocean.

As they traveled, they made maps. Their maps showed the way the river went. It passed through grasslands, and then they were in mountains. When they got to the mountains, they had to leave their boats and walk.

It took more than a year for the explorers to get to the ocean. When they got there they had made maps that would help many people. But they had to bring the maps back. It had taken more than a year to make this first part of the trip. It also took a long time to get back. When the explorers came back, in 1806, they had been gone two years, and people said they were heroes. They would not make such a great journey again. They had done their job.

Their maps would help people settle in the new land. Long after their trip, people would build roads to the west. They would travel quickly by car. Today people can travel their route by plane. If you look out the window from the plane you will see those high mountains, you will see what a difficult journey it was.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What is the first thing the explorers did?

- a. Traveled by boat.
- b. Got food.
- c. Met Sacajawea.
- d. Made a map.

2. What happened the first winter?

- a. They got lost.
- b. They were in the grasslands.
- c. They set up a camp.
- d. They reached the ocean.

3. What happened after they reached the ocean?

- a. They camped.
- b. They started the trip back.
- c. They traveled by boat.
- d. They found gold.

4. How did their trip end?

- a. They stayed for months.
- b. They brought the maps back.
- c. They went on another trip.
- d. They made more maps.

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

What was a problem that the explorers had in winter?

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	c	b	b

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. The weather made it hard to travel.

It has been months since we left St. Louis. Before we left, I said goodbye to my family, and I told them it would be at least a year before I came back. I was going on a great journey. I was one of forty men who were going where no explorer had gone before. I was going to the ocean with Lewis and Clark.

If I had known how hard the trip would be, I would have stayed home. Every day we woke up early, and then we would row and row up the river. We only traveled about three miles a day. We were going hundreds of miles, a few miles each day, so it would take more than a year.

The first week of the trip was exciting, and I thought it would be such an adventure. I was careless and fell off the boat, but the other men helped me get back in the boat. After that I was careful, but it still was exciting.

We had brought food with us, but we used that food. We needed more food, so we had to stop to get it. There were no stores along the way; in fact there were no settlements. We had to hunt and fish to get the food, and then we would make a fire to cook it. At night we were exhausted and slept on the ground. It was getting so cold that I worried.

After a while it was too hard to travel on the river, because it was icy. Our hands would get so cold we could not hold the paddles. Lewis and Clark told us we would camp for the winter because the snow and ice would make it too hard to travel. This was much harsher than I had expected the trip to be.

That was weeks ago. We made a camp with tents, and then we hunted to get more food. We met some Native Americans who helped us--they really rescued us. They showed us where to hunt and they even gave us some food they had grown. If they had not helped us, I don't think we could have survived. Being an explorer is really challenging, and I am sorry I joined this group. I should have stayed at home and not taken this risk.

We are all so very cold. We go to get wood every day so we can keep the fire burning. We have enough water because that is the one thing we can get without any trouble. We have camped along the river so we are near water, and even when it is ice we can melt it near the fire.

They say it will be a few more weeks before we move. Then it will be time to travel again. I wish I could turn back, I want to return home to my family, but I made a promise. I said I would make the journey and reach the ocean.

When I do get home, I will stay there. I never will travel this far again. I will get an indoor job, and I will not have to hunt and fish to get food. I will buy it at the store, and I will never have to camp outside again.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

6. What happens first in the story?

- a. They leave St. Louis.
- b. They travel west.
- c. They run out of food.
- d. They set up camp.

7. What happens in winter?

- a. They travel through ice.
- b. They set up camp.
- c. They keep going west.
- d. They return to St. Louis.

8. What do they do when they set up camp?

- a. They go to get food.
- b. They get water from the river.
- c. They cut down trees.
- d. They make plans.

9. What happens after they set up their camp?

- a. They go back.
- b. They meet Native Americans.
- c. They decide to leave.
- d. They get new jobs.

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*

What do they do when they run out of food?

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Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	a	b	a	b

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. They go to get it by hunting and fishing.