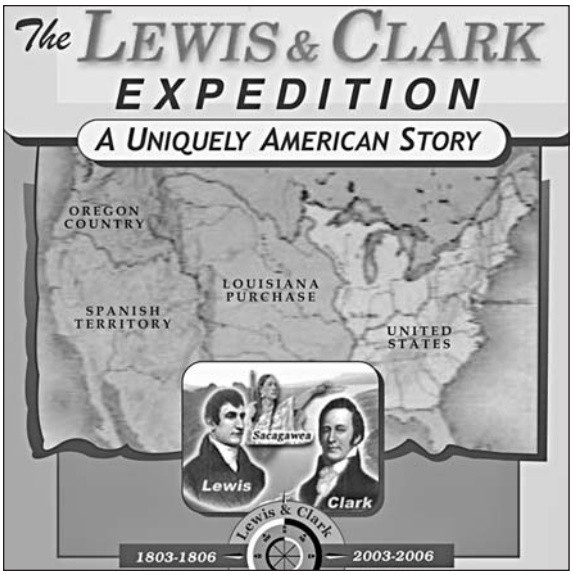
2008



THE LEWIS AND CLARKE EXPEDITION

Social Studies
U.S. History

2 22-min. Programs
Grades 4-6
Teacher's Guide
SOL Correlations Below

In 1803 U.S. President Thomas Jefferson purchased 838,000 square miles of land from France. This famous land deal became known as the Louisiana Purchase and prompted Jefferson to commission Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to lead an expedition through the newly acquired U.S. territory. In May, 1804 these two men, along with approximately 40 other recruits, launched one of the most dramatic and significant explorations in U.S. history. Starting near St. Louis at the mouth of the Missouri River, the entire expedition traveled to the Pacific Ocean and back for 2 years, 4 months and 10 days for a total of nearly 8,000 miles. This unique series allows the students to retrace the adventurous trail of these true American heroes who faced many adversities and sacrificed personal ambitions for the sake of a newly born country 200 years ago.

Part 1 — This program introduces students to the importance and magnitude of a journey so vital to the early growth and development of the United States. Rich in history and geography, this program will help students understand the purpose of the expedition and the sacrifices and adversities these courageous explorers encountered. Students will be surprised to imagine what its like to enter into a foreign land during a different era when pen and paper were today's computers; when creatures known as grizzly bears were only known or seen by native American Indians; or how berries were used for medicine.
Social Studies: VS.1, USI.1, USI.2, USI.3, USI.8

Part 2 — This program illustrates many of the difficulties and triumphs the Corps of Discovery experienced during the second part of their voyage. After surveying the Continental Divide, the Corps faced the most severe terrain along the expedition's route–the Bitterroot Mountains. On September 22, 1805 the Corps emerged from these treacherous mountains in a condition that was described by one as "More Dead Than Alive." Fortunately, the Corps met up with Nez Perce Indian Chief "Twisted Hair" who like many Indian tribes, helped the expedition to discover a river route which eventually lead them to the great river of the west–the Columbia River. Upon cruising along the swift current of the Columbia River, Lewis and Clark noted the lush vegetation, abundance of salmon and large numbers of Yakima and Wanapam Indians lined along its river banks. While continuing to overcome great odds, the Corps also rejoiced in great triumphs. On November 7th, 1805 the expedition draws near one of their main objectives and final west bound destination–the Pacific Ocean. Clark joyfully expresses himself at this magnificent site "Great joy in camp we are in viuew of the Ocian, this great Pacific Octean which we been so long anxious to See".On their return trip home the Corps renewed in confidence, separated themselves into smaller groups. By doing this, the Corps could now explore more thoroughly the Louisiana Territory. Upon successfully achieving the main objectives of the expedition, originally assigned by U.S. President Thomas Jefferson, the Corps of Discovery through much adversity and sacrifice finally arrive home on September 23, 1806 near St. Louis Missouri–after traveling nearly 8,000 miles over a period of 2 years, 4 months and 10 days.
Social Studies: VS.1, USI.1, USI.2, USI.3, USI.8

Additional Resource Information:

The teacher's guides for this series can be found at
www.wvpt4learning.org/ITV/PDF/TG/lewisclark1.pdf
and
www.wvpt4learning.org/ITV/PDF/TG/lewisclark2.pdf

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