

## **LEWIS AND CLARK: A LEGACY TO REMEMBER**

### **Overview:**

Twenty-eight months after setting out on an odyssey of some 8,000 miles (12,874 kilometers), Lewis and Clark returned to St. Louis as heroes. They were the first United States citizens to see and describe the West, and they had made maps that would guide future pioneers, described hundreds of plants and animals, and created new opportunities for trade. Their journey could not have happened without the generous cooperation and contributions of numerous Native Americans. In this lesson, students will design a memorial that illustrates the legacy of the expedition from a geographic perspective. Conduct the lesson after students study Lewis and Clark, or after they see the large-format film, *Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West*.

### **Connections to the Curriculum:**

history, language arts, fine arts

### **Connections to the National Geography Standards:**

Standard 4: "The physical and human characteristics of places"

Standard 15: "How physical systems affect human systems"

Standard 17: "How to apply geography to interpret the past"

### **Time:**

one hour

### **Materials Required:**

- Photocopies of the map "*Lewis and Clark Expedition: Westward Route, Native Americans, and Forts*"
- Photocopies of memorials: (You can find many images on the sites listed below)
- Blank paper, markers or pencils
- Optional: paint, clay, posters, and other art supplies (to create memorials)

### **Objectives:**

Students will:

- Use the geographic inquiry process
- Examine selected memorials and their components
- Recognize the physical and cultural features of a place
- Represent the significance of the land that was explored by Lewis and Clark
- Represent contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, and members of the Expedition in a memorial

### **Geographic Skills:**

**Asking Geographic Questions**

**Acquiring Geographic Information**

**Organizing Geographic Information**

**Answering Geographic Questions**

## **Suggested Procedure**

### **Opening:**

Have the class discuss different memorials they have seen. What memorials are in their city? What do the memorials represent or commemorate? Have students compare the styles of the

memorials below. What different ways do the memorials convey their message? What geographic elements can students identify in the memorials?

- *Gateway Memorial Arch* (National Park Service)  
The nation's tallest memorial, The Gateway Arch, was built in St. Louis, Missouri, near the place where Lewis and Clark began their journey up the Missouri River. Why is St. Louis a good location for this memorial? Why is an arch an appropriate symbol for this memorial?
- *Mount Rushmore* (South Dakota Department of Tourism)  
Four American presidents—Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt—were carved into South Dakota's Black Hills to commemorate their roles in the development of the United States. Why were these men chosen for this memorial?
- *The Irish Memorial*  
This new monument in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, commemorates the Irish who starved to death as a result of the "Potato Famine," and the Irish who immigrated to the U.S. to escape the famine.
- *Lewis and Clark Memorial* (Heritage Preservation)  
Lewis, Clark, and Sacagawea and her infant are depicted gazing toward the Rocky Mountains, in the direction of the Pacific Ocean. Why does this statue face toward the west?

**Development:**

1. Before conducting this lesson, students should study Lewis and Clark or see the large-format film *Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West*. If they see the film, have them concentrate on the following things and record their observations as a homework assignment:

- What kinds of physical geographic features did expedition members explore and describe? What features did they climb or cross?
- How did they overcome the challenges these physical features presented?
- Who helped the expedition achieve these successes?

2. As a class, discuss how different groups helped the expedition succeed. Why is more known about Lewis and Clark than about the people who helped them along the way? Answers might include:

- Lewis and Clark wrote about the trip and others may not have written anything. Native Americans relied on oral history (storytelling), rather than written records, to record their history.
- Lewis and Clark made copies of their notes and journals, and took extreme care to return with them. Eventually, the notes were preserved as an important part of U.S. history.

3. Have students design a memorial to commemorate the Lewis and Clark Expedition. To help students recall the expedition's route, give them copies of the map "*Lewis and Clark Expedition: Westward Route, Native Americans, and Forts.*" First, they should list everything they know about the expedition, using these categories:

- People (Expedition members, Native Americans, others)
- Kinds of contributions people made
- Places and physical features along the expedition route
- Wildlife and plants of importance to the expedition

Can students think of a symbol to represent any of these things? Students can research other memorials to get ideas, using the related links.

4. Students can draw their memorials in small groups or individually. Memorials can include explicit or symbolic physical features. Students should describe the landscape, people, or other elements depicted. Encourage creativity; the expedition can be “memorialized” in many ways. Explain that they will be graded on their ideas, not their artwork. The criteria for grading: including a variety of people, identifying significant contributions, identifying the physical geography, and describing the legacy of the expedition.

5. Post the sketches (or memorials) around the room and have students discuss the different ways in which they may have depicted the same event.

**Closing:**

Why can an event such as the Lewis and Clark Expedition be represented in so many different ways? Lewis and Clark received most of the praise and honor, but many different groups and individuals ought to be remembered and recognized for their contributions.

**Suggested Student Assessment:**

Have students create a flyer that announces the unveiling of their memorials. The announcement should describe the memorial and specifically mention why they chose to represent the land and the people as they did.

**Extending the Lesson:**

- Have students build a model of their memorial.
- Have students give a persuasive presentation to a “committee,” explaining why their memorial should be built.
- Have students create a memorial that portrays the Lewis and Clark Expedition from the perspective of someone in a particular group (e.g., a Shoshone Indian).
- Have students select a particular location on the Lewis and Clark Trail and create a memorial for that site. Display their designs on a simulated “trail.”
- Have students investigate cultural and geographic features of the trail, either online or through library media materials.

**Related Links:**

[Ableza: Teaching About Native American People](#)

[Discovering Lewis and Clark](#)

[Lewis and Clark Education Center](#)

[Lewis and Clark Memorial](#)

[Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Site](#)

[National Park Service](#)

[Public Broadcasting System \(Lewis and Clark\)](#)

[Public Broadcasting System \(Mount Rushmore\)](#)

[Sgt. Floyd Monument](#)

[The Gateway Arch](#)