

Lesson 25

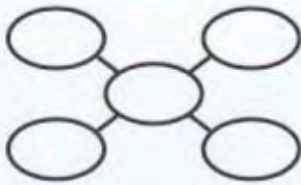
ANCHOR TEXT



TARGET SKILL

Main Ideas and Details

Determine the main ideas of the text. Find details that support the main ideas.



GENRE

Narrative nonfiction tells about people, events, or places that are real. As you read, look for:

- ▶ factual information that tells a story
- ▶ features such as photographs and captions
- ▶ events in time order



RI.5.2 determine two or more main ideas and explain how they are supported by details/summarize; **RI.5.3** explain the relationships

between individuals/events/ideas/concepts in a text;

RI.5.10 read and comprehend informational text

MEET THE AUTHOR

R. Conrad Stein



R. Conrad Stein knew from the time he was twelve years old that he wanted to be a writer.

After serving as a Marine, he studied history at the University of Illinois. A few

years after he graduated, his background in history helped him get assignments writing history books for young readers. He has published more than eighty books; many of them are biographies or are focused on history. Stein believes his job is to express the drama of historical events.

LEWIS AND CLARK

by R. Conrad Stein



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How did explorers help
America become the
country it is today?

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the United States after completing an agreement with France called the Louisiana Purchase. He had acquired the vast Louisiana Territory west of the Mississippi River. Jefferson decided to form an expedition through the unexplored Territory to the Pacific Ocean. He asked Meriwether Lewis to lead a group called the Corps of Discovery. Lewis chose William Clark to help him as co-leader. In 1804, Lewis and Clark began their journey from St. Louis, Missouri. They traveled through the Great Plains and then stopped for the winter season. A trader and his wife, a Native American named Sacagawea (sak uh juh WEE uh), joined the expedition when it resumed its journey in April 1805.

Lewis considered the Mandan (MAN duhn) Indians' stories about huge bears to be fanciful tales until one of the explorers was chased by a grizzly bear.





The Great Falls of the Missouri River were a beautiful sight, but also were difficult to travel around.

William Clark had perhaps the best eyesight of any crew member. On May 26, he saw the outline of a great mountain **range** to the west. In the next few days, all of the explorers could see the snow-covered Rocky Mountains on the horizon. The sight was inspiring as well as troubling. The explorers knew that they would have to find a way to cross the incredible **barrier**.

Before they could cross the Rockies, the Corps of Discovery faced the Great

Falls of the Missouri River in present-day Montana. Here the river tumbled down a bluff that was as high as a modern six-story building. The roar of the water was deafening. Lewis called it, "the grandest sight I ever beheld." But the waterfall meant that the explorers had to carry their boats and supplies up steep cliffs before they could set out again on quieter waters upstream. Traveling around the falls took the party twenty-four days, and left everyone exhausted.



Sacagawea quickly proved to be a valuable asset to the expedition.

Carrying her baby boy on her back, Sacagawea won the admiration of the crew. She carefully scanned the riverbank to find **edible** roots and fruit. These foods provided a welcome relief from the customary diet of meat and water. And in the mountain country, the Missouri River became a crooked stream that split into many small **tributaries**. Sacagawea pointed out landmarks that she remembered from a journey as a slave child, and she helped the captains choose the correct river branches on which to travel.

Soon the members of the party began to wonder why they had not yet seen any Shoshone (shoh SHOH nee) or other American Indians. They had seen signs of Indian settlement—hunters' trails and abandoned campsites—but since they left the Mandan and Hidatsa (hee DAHT suh) villages, the Corps of Discovery had not encountered any other people at all.

ANALYZE THE TEXT

Explain Historical Events What does the author do to make historical events easy to understand? How does this help you see relationships between the events and people described in the text?

In mid-August, Meriwether Lewis, hiking ahead of the party with a few other explorers, came upon three Shoshone women and several children. Lewis had carried an American flag in his pack for just such a meeting.

He waved the banner and walked slowly toward the group. One of the children fled. The women sat very still as if frozen with fear. Lewis explained that he was an explorer, and the women led him to their village.

The Shoshone were a small tribe who were almost always at war

with their powerful neighbors, the Blackfeet. They had never seen white people, but constant warfare made the Shoshone suspicious of all outsiders. Lewis hoped to buy horses from the tribe. Now that the rivers had all but disappeared, he needed horses to cross the peaks of the Rocky Mountains. But the chief, Cameahwait (kuh MEE uh wayt), would not part with any of the animals. Lewis did persuade Cameahwait to send a few Shoshone to find Clark and the rest of the party and bring them to the village.

At first, the Shoshone were cautious of Lewis and Clark, but the explorers soon realized that they were fortunate to encounter the Indians.



The next morning, Clark and the others arrived at the village, and a meeting was held with Chief Cameahwait. Sacagawea prepared to serve as the translator. When the meeting began, Sacagawea stared intently at the chief. Then she broke into tears of joy. Lewis wrote, "She jumped up, ran, and embraced him, and threw her blanket over him, and cried profusely." Sacagawea recognized Cameahwait as her brother, whom she had not seen in six years. Cheers and laughter rose from the village. The Shoshone hailed Sacagawea as a lost daughter who had come home.

On September 1, 1805, the Corps of Discovery left the Shoshone territory. Chief Cameahwait not only provided the party with horses, he also gave them a guide to show them the best route through the mountains. Crossing the Rockies proved to be a difficult ordeal. The trails were too rugged to ride on, so the party walked and used the horses as pack animals.

ANALYZE THE TEXT

Primary Sources The author uses a primary source, a direct quote from Lewis's writing, in the first paragraph. What can you conclude about Lewis from his words?

The expedition crossed the Rockies on foot, using the horses to carry their equipment and supplies.





Upon reaching the Clearwater River Valley, the expedition built new canoes to continue their journey west.

In mid-September, a blinding snowstorm struck. Even the Shoshone guide got lost. Worst of all, the once-abundant wild game could not be found on the high mountain peaks. The explorers were forced to kill some of their pack animals for meat. The explorers' journals report that the men laughed out loud when they finally crossed the mountains and reached grasslands on level terrain.

The Lewis and Clark expedition emerged from the Rocky Mountains into the lovely valley of the

Clearwater River in present-day Idaho. The waters were so clear that the river bottom and schools of fish were visible **despite** the river's depth. In the Clearwater country, Lewis and Clark abandoned their pack horses and built new canoes. They reasoned that the streams on this side of the Rockies would all eventually flow into the Columbia River, the major river of the Pacific Northwest. American Indians called the Columbia River the *Ouragon* or *Origan*. The land around it was later called the Oregon Territory.

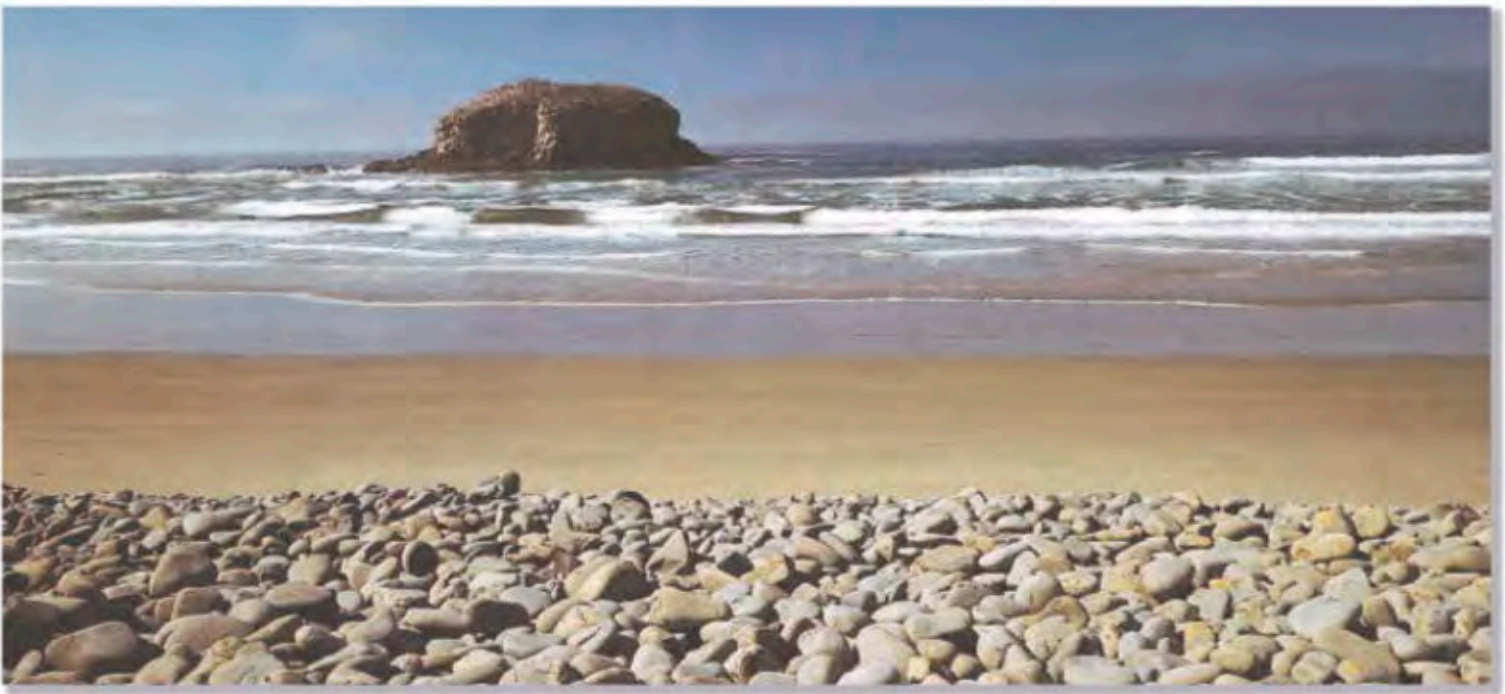
Traveling the rivers, the voyagers met the Nez Perce (NEZ PURS) Indians, who taught them valuable techniques for building and sailing log canoes. Less friendly were the Chinook (shih NOOK), who drove hard bargains when trading for goods. But encountering the Chinook meant that the Pacific Ocean was not far away. One of the Chinook wore a black navy coat that he may have bought from a North American or European sailor.

A dismal rain pelted the travelers in early November as they sailed

down the Columbia River. They made a camp near an Indian village and spent a restless night. On the morning of November 7, 1805, the rain stopped and the fog cleared. A chorus of shouts suddenly went up from the camp. William Clark scribbled in his notes, "Ocean in view! O! the joy." On the horizon, still many miles to the west, lay the great Pacific Ocean. Upon seeing the ocean, some of the explorers wept, and others said prayers of thanksgiving.

The explorers experienced some difficulty in dealing with the Chinook Indians, but their encounter brought signs that the Pacific Ocean was near.





The explorers saw the Pacific Ocean for the first time near present-day Astoria, Oregon.

But arriving at the Pacific Ocean did not end the Lewis and Clark expedition. The party still had to return home to St. Louis. President Jefferson had provided Meriwether Lewis with a letter of credit guaranteeing payment to any ship captain who would take the explorers to the eastern coast. The party made a winter camp at the mouth of the Columbia River near present-day Astoria, Oregon, and kept a watch for ships. No vessels were spotted. Finally, on March 23, 1806, the crew broke camp and began the long trek east toward St. Louis.

To the explorers, the six-month return journey seemed to be easier than their first journey because they knew what to expect in the river and

mountain country. When the crew reached the Mandan village, they said good-bye to Sacagawea and her husband and continued back to St. Louis.

On September 23, 1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition arrived safely back in St. Louis, Missouri, where their journey had begun more than two years earlier. The travelers had gone a distance of just less than 4,000 miles (6,400 km) from St. Louis to the mouth of the Columbia River and back. But the twisting rivers and mountain trails meant that the Corps of Discovery had actually covered about 8,000 miles (13,000 km) on the history-making trip. Throughout the explorers' travels, they encountered more than fifty American-Indian tribes.

The journals kept by Captains Lewis, Clark, and several members of their expedition have been compiled into many published accounts since the journey ended in 1806.



The expedition returned with numerous samples of plant and animal life that had never before been seen by American scientists. Before the expedition, President Jefferson had hoped that the explorers would find a broad river that ships could use to sail directly to the Pacific Ocean. Lewis and Clark failed to find such a river, and the expedition was final proof that an inland waterway in North America did not exist.

From St. Louis, Lewis and Clark traveled to Washington, D.C. Almost every town they passed through brought out bands to welcome them as heroes. In Washington, D.C., the explorers delighted President Jefferson with tales of grizzly bears and high mountain passes. The president said, "Lewis and Clark have entirely fulfilled my expectations....

The world will find that those travelers have well earned its favor."

To Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, the mission itself was their greatest reward. Traveling through virtually unexplored lands was an exhilarating experience that they would cherish for the rest of their lives. Although they faced many dangers, the thrill—not the peril—of the expedition bursts from the pages of the journals they kept. As Lewis wrote the day he left the Indian village to enter the Western wilderness, "I could but esteem this moment of my departure as among the most happy of my life."

ANALYZE THE TEXT

Main Ideas and Details What is the main idea of the text on this page? What is the selection's overall main idea? Identify the key details that support it.