

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Purchase, one of the biggest real estate deals in history, more than doubled the size of the United States for what turned out to be a bargain price of \$15,000,000. Not only did the United States acquire a vast territory that would be turned into 13 new states, the deal secured for America the right to travel on the Mississippi River all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, a vital right-of-way that opened up enormous commercial opportunities for farmers throughout the interior of our country. While other nations fought wars over territory, the United States grew with a relatively simple financial transaction.

The men who negotiated the purchase from France, Robert Livingston and James Monroe, exceeded the authority they had been given by President Jefferson – they only had the authority to negotiate for the port of New Orleans. President Jefferson himself doubted whether the Constitution gave him the authority to purchase more land for the United States. In the end, the United States Senate confirmed the purchase in an overwhelming vote.

President Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the enormous territory the U.S. had just acquired. These men, with their Corps of Discovery, led the most astonishing expedition in the history of America. They represent the epitome of America’s self-reliance, rugged individualism, and pioneering spirit in overcoming numerous obstacles in their two-year round-trip to the Pacific Ocean and back. In addition to the hundreds of new plant and animal species they recorded, they mapped the Louisiana Territory, found a route all the way across the continent, and helped establish America’s claim to the Oregon Territory.

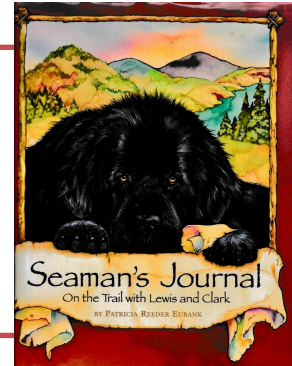
BOOK

Title: *Seaman’s Journal: On the Trail with Lewis and Clark*

Author and Illustrator: Patricia Reeder Eubank

Year published: 2010

Length: 40 pages



ACTIVITY	TIME	FREQUENCY	PREPARATION
Songbook: <i>Elbow Room</i>	5-10 minutes	Daily	Minimal
Political Geography: Thirteen New States	15 minutes	Once	Minimal (if you have puzzle)
Arts & Crafts: Water Colors	30-40 minutes	Once	10 minutes
Arts & Crafts: Make Your Own Journal	20-30 minutes	Once	Minimal
Cooking: Make Your Own Pemmican	60 minutes	Once	30 minutes (shopping)
Science: Make Your Own Map	20-30 minutes	Once	Minimal
Re-enactment: Junior Naturalists	20 minutes	Once	10 minutes
Re-enactment: Build Your Own Fort	40 minutes	Once	Minimal
Art: Find the Animals	10 minutes	Once	Minimal
Language Arts: A Dog’s Eye View	10 minutes	Once	Minimal
Language Arts: Vocabulary	10 minutes	Once	Minimal



Below is one suggestion for your week with *Seaman's Journal*. Please experiment with what works for your family!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Songbook: <i>Elbow Room</i>	Political Geography: 13 New States	L.A.: Vocabulary (before reading)	Re-enactment: Junior Naturalists	Arts & Crafts: Water Colors
Cooking: Pemmican	Arts & Crafts: Make Your Own Journal	Science: Make Your Own Map	Art: Find the Animals	L.A.: A Dog's Eye View
Supplies: Nuts, seeds, dried fruit, honey, salt, coconut oil	Supplies: Paper, hole-punch, string/yarn/brads	Supplies: Graph paper, colored pencils	Supplies: Seek app by iNaturalist, sketching paper, pencils	Supplies: Watercolor paints, paper to paint on, paint brushes

AMERICAN HERITAGE SONGBOOK: SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK!: ELBOW ROOM

Schoolhouse Rock! has another great song and animated short. *Elbow Room* is all about the United States opening up and settling the West. The story starts with the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis & Clark, as you can see in the lyrics below. But it moves from there to the California Gold Rush, Manifest Destiny, and then links to our current frontier, outer space.

*The president was Thomas Jefferson
He made a deal with Napoleon
How'd you like to sell a mile or two, (Or three, or a hundred, or a thousand?)*

*And so, in 1803 the Louisiana Territory was sold to us
Without a fuss
And gave us lots of elbow room*

*Oh, elbow room, elbow room
Got to, got to get us some elbow room
It's the west or bust
In God we trust
There's a new land out there...*

*Lewis and Clark volunteered to go
Goodbye, good luck, wear your overcoat!
They prepared for good times and for bad (and for bad)
They hired Sacagawea to be their guide
She led them all across the countryside*



*Reached the coast
And found the most
Elbow room we've ever had*

You can find *Elbow Room* on Disney+, [YouTube](#), or order it from [Amazon as part of a Schoolhouse Rock package](#).

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY: THIRTEEN NEW STATES

*Clark works to complete his maps while Lewis studies the animals, especially the sea otter.
Clark said we have come 4,142 miles from Missouri to the Pacific!*

The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States in a single transaction. For the price of \$15,000,000, France sold the United States all of the territory from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains: 800,000 square miles. To help your child(ren) grasp the size, have them remove all the states from the puzzle. Then ask them to assemble just the states that were carved out of the Louisiana Purchase. For this activity, you should only include the states that that were wholly or largely part of the Louisiana Purchase:

- Louisiana
- Arkansas
- Missouri
- Iowa
- Minnesota
- Oklahoma
- Kansas
- Nebraska
- South Dakota
- North Dakota
- Colorado
- Wyoming
- Montana

(Small parts of Texas and New Mexico were also part of the purchase but including those states gives the wrong impression of the size of the purchase.)

Next, ask your child(ren) to complete the puzzle east of the Mississippi. Point out how important the Mississippi River is to the United States. Before roads were built, the Mississippi River was like a giant superhighway, right in the middle of the country, that farmers could use to float their goods down to New Orleans. From there they could be put on a ship and reach ports on the East Coast or even other countries.



ARTS & CRAFTS: WATERCOLORS

*Often, huge flocks of passenger pigeons block out the sun.
Lewis sketches them in his journal while I look out for rattlesnakes.*

The beautiful drawings by Patricia Reeder Eubanks are rendered in a combination of watercolors and acrylics. She does a beautiful job illustrating many of the animals Lewis & Clark encountered along the way and sketched in their journals. For this activity, just ask your kids to paint their favorite animal from the story (including Seaman!) using watercolors.



Grizzly Bear

ARTS & CRAFTS: MAKE YOUR OWN JOURNAL

Often Lewis and I visit the Mandans and Hidatsas who live close by. They tell him about the route over the mountains, and Lewis writes it all down in his journal.

Lewis & Clark recorded an incredible amount of information in their journals. They sketched plants and animals, recorded their interactions with all of the Indian tribes they encountered, described the land and all their adventures crossing the continent. For this activity, you will make your own journal that you can use to collect your watercolor drawings (above), your maps (below), and recording the plants and animals you discover on your hike (below).

Making the journal is relatively simple: collect some paper, punch two holes in the sheets with a hole-punch, and then bind them with string, yarn, or brads. The simple binding makes it easy to add new drawings, maps, or additional pages.

COOKING: MAKE YOUR OWN PEMMICAN

I help Sacajawea dig roots to eat. She also gathers plants for medicine. One day she made pemmican and gave me a piece. I ate the dried meat in it but spit out the nuts and berries. Phooey!

You will find a recipe for pemmican in the back of the book. However, there are many varieties of pemmican and you may want to try one of them. [We used this one](#) and it was a huge hit with (most) of our kids (one refused to try it). We decided it was more of a “dessert pemmican.”



Make Your Own Pemmican!



SCIENCE: MAKE YOUR OWN MAP

Clark has mapped the lands we crossed.

Lewis & Clark were co-leaders of the Corps of Discovery. However, each had distinct responsibilities. One of the main goals was to find and map a route to the Pacific Ocean. Clark was the expert in map-making and it fell to him to map the rivers, mountains, and geography they traveled. Between the two of them they produced about 140 maps. In 1814 a complete map of their journey was produced. Astonishingly, Clark was only off by 40 miles in measuring the distance across the continent they traveled.

For this activity, your young explorers get to be William Clark. Their assignment is to map their local neighborhood – the streets, sidewalks, cul-de-sacs. Alternatively, they could map a local park – the playground equipment, the paths, the ball fields. Younger children may want to map something even simpler, like their own room (that’s what our four-year-old did). Use graph paper if available and colored pencils to help indicate landmarks.

HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT: JUNIOR NATURALISTS


We have been on the greatest adventure ever.

Lewis will send a long report to President Jefferson about the Indian tribes, plants, and animals we discovered.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition was also known as the Corps of Discovery Expedition. President Thomas Jefferson had charged the expedition to document the plants and animals (“especially those not known in the U.S.”) they saw along the way. What did they discover? They returned with more than 200 plant specimens of which 178 were not known to science. They also discovered 122 animals not previously known to science. Their journals record 134 bird species, including new species named after the explorers: Clark’s Nutcracker and Lewis’s Woodpecker.

This is a great activity to do with a larger group so consider inviting extended family or another homeschooling family to join you. For this re-enactment you will need to find a local hike with interesting plants, birds, and animals. Provide each of your children with a journal/sketchpad (see “Make Your Own Journal” above) so they can record some of the plants and animals they encounter along the hike, just like Lewis and Clark. You may want to bring some pemmican (see “Make Your Own Pemmican” above) along as a snack.

The kids can try counting how many different kinds of birds they see; you can also turn it into a contest by breaking up into teams or individuals to see who can find the most birds or the most species. You can

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a hammer. The hand is rendered in shades of orange and red, and the hammer is grey with a yellow handle. The background features soft, colorful stars in shades of pink, purple, and blue.

help them identify the plants or birds they encounter by using an app; we used Seek by iNaturalist for the plants because they were easier to record (works on both iOS and Android).



Hiking!

RE-ENACTMENT: BUILD YOUR OWN FORT

Fort Clatsop, December 1805


The men have built a fort from the pine and fir trees. It rains constantly now, and many of the men wear the Clatsops' basket hats to keep their heads dry.

The Corps of Discovery halted their expedition twice because of winter. The first time they built Fort Mandan on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains near the Mandan Indians. The second time they built Fort Clatsop near the shore of the Pacific Ocean and the Clatsop tribe.

You'll need blankets, pillows, and chairs to help your explorers build a traditional blanket fort inside the house. Let them decide if they are building Fort Mandan near the Rocky Mountains or Fort Clatsop near the Pacific Ocean. Lewis & Clark built their forts for shelter and protection from the winter storms. If your kids are up for it, they may want to sleep overnight in their forts before heading "home" in the morning after a nice breakfast of pemmican.

ART: FIND THE ANIMALS

We've seen bobcat, elk, buffalo, and antelope. I chased the antelope and took one to Cook.

An illustration of a hand holding a hammer, positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.



One day we counted thirty-six bald eagles soaring above our heads.

The author/illustrator, Patricia Reeder Eubanks, imitates the journals of Lewis & Clark by including drawings of animals they discovered during the expedition. Once Lewis & Clark start the expedition, your child(ren) will discover multiple pictures of animals on every page. Ask them to see if they can find all the animals. Which one is their favorite?

LANGUAGE ARTS: A DOG'S EYE VIEW


*Here is my story of the greatest adventure a dog ever had,
when I followed Lewis and Clark all the way to the Pacific Ocean and back again.*

This story is told using the “first person” point-of-view of Meriweather Lewis’ Newfoundland dog, Seaman. What do your kids think about a dog telling them the story of the most famous expedition in our nation’s history? The technique the author uses creates an interesting blend of fact and fiction. Of course it’s fictional that a dog can tell a story and keep a journal. But the facts he relates are all taken from the journals of Lewis & Clark.

LANGUAGE ARTS: VOCABULARY

In a pouring rain, we pushed the fifty-five-foot keelboat and two pirogues (flat-bottomed dugout canoes) into the Missouri River. We travel upriver and the men must push against its strong current.

We tried something new with this module and asked the kids what words they thought should be in the vocabulary section. The words below are a combination of their suggestions and some that we thought might be new to young readers:

- **Loyal:** firm, unchanging support for a person, organization, or cause
 - **Migration:** moving from one place to another
 - **Keelboat:** a shallow, covered riverboat with a long piece of wood on the bottom (the keel) to provide stability
 - **Portage:** carrying a boat over land to avoid an obstacle in the water
 - **Fossils:** the shape of a plant or animal that has been preserved in rock for a long time
 - **Trinkets:** a small ornament or piece of jewelry of small value
 - **Prairie:** a large area of flat land with grasses but no trees
 - **Journal:** a daily record of experiences and observations
- 
- A hand is shown holding a pencil, with a yellow starburst effect behind it. The hand is positioned as if about to write on a star-shaped graphic element.