

The wisdom of exchanging: What did Jefferson achieve through Westward expansion?

General

Grade Level

High School

Author Info

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Type of Lesson

Research Project

Duration

60 – 120 minutes

Objectives

Overview

This is the third lesson of a whole unit of study, and follows the lesson entitled “The wisdom of exchanging’: What did Jefferson achieve through Westward expansion?”. However, with minor adjustments it is also a lesson that would fit neatly into another established unit of study.

In this lesson, students will begin to understand the events and significant of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Students will begin the lesson by analysing an entry into the expedition journals and making inferences about what the journey would have been like and the issues and challenges faces. Moving on, students read and understand the background and objective of the expedition, drawing on Jefferson’s letter to Lewis. Students then undertake a research investigation into the course of the

expedition and create a report back to Jefferson which can take whatever format they wish and is available to them. To complete the lesson, students will reappraise their initial ideas about Jefferson using the entrance hall to Monticello as visual stimulus; what does their understanding of the Lewis and Clark expedition add to their understanding of Jefferson?

Prior Knowledge

This lesson is intended as the third in a series; students will have already been introduced to Jefferson and will have made a range of inferences around his guiding principles based on analysis and discussion around famous primary source material. Students will have followed this up through an investigation into the enlightenment and the impact of Jefferson's focus on education. However, with some very minor adjustments this lesson would easily work in a different context. Students that have studied the idea of Empire building and the thirst for power through expansion in other historical contexts (British, Romans) have the opportunity to draw some interesting parallels with Lewis and Clark.

State Standards

English Key Stage Three History Standards

Key Concepts –

Significance

Interpretation

Key Processes –

Historical Enquiry

Using Evidence

Communicating about the past

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills –

Effective Participators

Self-Managers

Independent Enquirers

Team Workers

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Begin to understand the causes, background and events of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Discover how Lewis and Clark overcame problems during their expedition.

Report back to President Jefferson what Lewis and Clark have discovered.

Technology Connections/outcomes

Contextual knowledge about Jefferson is essential, and perhaps a basic understanding of the relationship between the USA, France and Britain. Students should also make clear links between the issues raised through the analysis undertaken in the previous lessons, specifically around Jefferson's guiding principles.

Additional Learning Outcomes

Students will develop an understanding of the background and events of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Through conducting a research activity, students will work independently to map the course of the expedition and discover some of the key issues and events that took place. Finally, students will complete a report back to Jefferson using their choice of media, making clear links and connections to the objectives of the mission and what they think will interest Jefferson based on the inference they have made and built on over the course of the unit of study.

Essential Questions

Key question: 'The wisdom of exchanging': What did Jefferson achieve through Westward expansion?

Procedures

1. 5 min

Display the source written by Patrick Gass. Students should read this and begin to analyse and make inferences. A worksheet is attached (see PDF) to help students approach this, however, more able students or a class that have dealt with such material extensively before may find challenge in having the source alone, thus these are slightly personalised.

2. 25 – 50 min

Using the attached booklet, students should work through this specifically focusing on the middle sections. The introduction and background to the expedition could be read as a whole class, or students could work through this independently asking questions of each other and discussing before approaching the teacher.

Here, students conduct a short research enquiry into the expedition made by Lewis and Clark using whatever materials are available. I suggest using the PBS website that follows the Lewis and Clark expeditions, specifically the interactive timeline, which can be found at <http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/trailmap/index.html>. Teachers may also wish to use excerpts from the Ken Burns documentary 'Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery' from the *American Lives* series which is easily accessible through iTunes.

Although 25 minutes has been allotted to this; it is very likely that this could become a whole lesson in its own right through a combination of different media to gain an understanding of the journey taken. Should this be the case, another interesting approach could be to split the class into sections (perhaps by state explored) and have them create a large map which details the route, discoveries made and issues faced as the expedition progressed.

3. 25 – 50 min

Reporting back to Jefferson: using the prompts on the final page of the attached booklet, students will create a report back to Jefferson. Here, they should select a key episode of the journey and report back through creating a filmed report or audio message, writing a letter of journal article or a scripted performance. It is important that students refer back to the aim outlined by Jefferson on the first page of the booklet; this will help students link the learning here back to the 'big' enquiry question about the *real* Thomas Jefferson.

Similar to the above step, this could become a longer and more challenging activity. Student groups could be given a different section/state of the expedition and the class would then make a film that dealt with the breadth of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

4. 5 min

Students should now link their learning back to their initial ideas about Jefferson. Display the attached picture of the entrance hallway to Monticello that shows the peaceful tokens of friendship that Lewis and Clark received on Jefferson's behalf. Ask students to consider what the Lewis and Clark expedition allows us to infer about Jefferson? How does this compare or contrast with their initial inferences? Students should complete a written response to this as homework, building on the work they have already completed.

Related Assets

Handouts and Downloads

- [The wisdom of exchanging Lesson Plan Student Workbook](#)
- [The wisdom of exchanging Lesson Plan Source Analysis](#)
- [Who was the real Thomas Jefferson? – Unit of Study Overview](#)

Materials

Materials Needed

Starter Activity Source

The best authenticated accounts informed us, that we were to pass through a country possessed by numerous, powerful and warlike nations of savages, of gigantic stature, fierce, treacherous and cruel; and particularly hostile to white men. And fame had united with tradition in opposing mountains to our course, which human enterprise and exertion would attempt in vain to pass.

Patrick Gass, 14th May 1804

Assessment

Homework

Students should complete a written response, building on their initial inferences made about Jefferson which will have developed over the course of the unit of study. This is likely to be a positive interpretation of Jefferson, and the learning undertaken here should give students the opportunity to add further evidence and examples to this inference and make clear links between Lewis and Clark and the enlightenment ideas explore in the previous lesson.

Assessment

Summative: The report back to Jefferson could easily be used to grade students. The homework activity should also be very telling; as they have undertaken a similar activity and been given constructive feedback on their work using this to track and monitor how students have developed and improved in this skill would be very telling. By this stage, students will have enough knowledge and evidence to achieve NC Level 6.

Accommodations

Accommodations – Students with Special Needs

By Resource: In the starter activity, a worksheet has been created that helps guide students towards the more simple inferences that can be made from the journal excerpt. An example to model the task and skill is also given.

By Task: As the report to Jefferson given students the choice in the format they choose and approach they take, students can play to their strengths and select a route that will allow them to be successful and fully achieve the objectives set.

Accommodations – Advanced Learners

By Resource: In the starter activity, more able students may need less help and guidance when making their inferences. See attached worksheet to help deliver this.

By Outcome: More able students should produce written work of a high standard; this should be reflected in both their note-taking (mapping of the expedition) and their homework piece. Students at this level should also make more complex and thoughtful links and connections between their prior knowledge about both Jefferson and larger themes such as Empire building, should they have already covered this.

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