

**LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION**

**CONTEXT:** Thomas Jefferson was fascinated by the West, and he dreamed of seeing the country grow. In 1803, hoping to find an easy route to the Pacific Ocean, he sent a secret request to Congress asking for money to pay for an expedition to explore the West. At the time, the U.S. did not own the Louisiana Territory. A treaty to purchase it was not signed until May 2, 1803 and was ratified by Congress in December of that same year.

The river Missouri, and the Indians inhabiting it, are not as well known... It is, however, understood, that the country on that river is inhabited by numerous tribes, who furnish great supplies of furs and **peltry** to the trade of another nation... through an infinite number of portages and lakes, shut up by ice through a long season... An intelligent officer, with ten or twelve chosen men, fit for the enterprise, and willing to undertake it, taken from our posts, where they may be spared without inconvenience, might explore the whole line, even to the Western Ocean, have conferences with the natives on the subject of commercial intercourse, get admission among them for our traders, as others are admitted, agree on convenient deposits for an interchange of articles, and return with the information acquired, in the course of two summers. Their arms and **accoutrements**, some instruments of observation, and light and cheap presents for the Indians, would be all the **apparatus** they could carry, and with an expectation of a soldier's portion of land on their return, would constitute the whole expenses... While other civilized nations have encountered great expense to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by undertaking voyages of discovery... that it should incidentally advance the geographical knowledge of our own continent, cannot be but an additional gratification... The **appropriation** of two thousand five hundred dollars, "for the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States," while understood and considered by the Executive as giving the legislative sanction, would cover the undertaking from notice, and prevent the obstructions which interested individuals might otherwise previously prepare in its way.

\*\* excerpt from "Jefferson's Secret Message to Congress Regarding the Lewis and Clark Expedition", January 18, 1803

**1. Economics: Underline in PINK the details in the passage that reveal Jefferson's economic motivation for exploring the Louisiana Territory.**

**2. Geography: What natural resources does Jefferson expect to find and explore? What is his motivation for that exploration? Explain.**

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**3. Evaluating Evidence: How does Jefferson propose to compensate the explorers for their journey? How do you think the members of Congress will respond to his suggestion? What criticisms is Jefferson heading off with his suggestions? Explain.**

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**4. Inferring: For whom was the document written? How does that information help you understand it? Explain.**

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**5. Determining Context: What important things were going on at the time that relate to the document? How does this information help you understand the document?**

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**DIRECTIONS:**

- 1) **Read** the context provided above the source.
- 2) **Number** each paragraph in the passage provided (if there is more than one).
- 3) As you read the source, **highlight** in **YELLOW** important information (main ideas, description of people or places, facts, or other evidence).
- 4) As you read the source, **circle** in **GREEN** key terms, dates, historical events, names, places, and words that signal relationship (“this led to…” or “as a result of…”). Words that are repeated for emphasis should also be circled. *If the phrase is longer than 3-4 words it should be highlighted in yellow not circled in green.*
- 5) As you read the source, **box** words in **ORANGE** with which you are unfamiliar. In the margins, **define** these words. Remember, this is an exercise in building your vocabulary. So, if you can use context clues to figure out what the word means, but can’t define it on its own, you need to box and define that word. **Words that are in bold MUST be boxed and defined! (Use a hard copy dictionary or [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com))**
- 6) **Answer** the questions provided about the source. Your responses should be written in complete, thoughtful sentences. *Be sure to explain your responses where required!*