

Lewis and Clark Expedition Essays

By Jeri Kelley

Lesson Subject & Rationale: Reading and writing in response to the Lewis & Clark Expedition

Children will read and explore the available literature; discuss the literature in small groups and map out the expedition route. Students will individually write an essay on who they would choose to be in the expedition and what that role would include. Students will trade essays with partner for peer editing and comparison of what their roles would be.

Standards

- IL.5 GOAL: Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information.
- IL.18.A STANDARD: Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions.
- IL.18.A.3 > Explain how language, literature, the arts, architecture and traditions contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- IRA.5.6 ...promote the integration of language arts in all content areas

Materials/Resources

"The Incredible Journey of Lewis and Clark", by Rhonda Blumberg.

Blank map sheets of the United States.

Markers.

Note book paper and pens.

Maps of Lewis and Clark expedition from the Library of Congress <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>, Discovery and Exploration section. From the LOC Thomas Jefferson papers <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?> .

Student Objectives

Students will be able to discuss sections from the literature readings. Students will be able to draw the expedition route. Students will be able to write an essay on someone from the expedition and what their role is.

Activities & Grouping Procedures

This lesson will follow a social studies chapter on the expedition of Lewis and Clark. Children will have access to several copies of "The Incredible Journey of Lewis and Clark", and the classroom library which will include books on Sacagawea etc. After time for reading, students will collect in groups of 4 or 5 to discuss their readings. Open ended questions will be asked such as: How did the notes, drawings and interactions of the expedition change or contribute to our countries knowledge and culture? How were the roles of the Indians involved different from that of the explorers? How was their culture different? What did Thomas Jefferson hope to accomplish with this journey? What was his motivation? Maps and letters from the LOC will be passed around and students will, as a group map the route of the journey on a piece of map paper. As individuals, students will write an essay on who they would like to have been on the journey, provide information about that person, what their role was, and what their days may have been like etc. In groups of two, students will peer edit and discuss the differences between their choice of individuals to write on.

Assessments

Check to make sure that all students are actively engaged in reading. Monitor groups to check for active participation in discussion of material and open-ended questions. Check maps for accuracy in marking the route for the expedition. Check essays to make sure students have selected and written about a specific person and their role.

Adaptations for Special Needs

I would suggest books from the classroom library that may be more appropriate for the reading level of those students who have difficulty reading. I would also arrange the students into heterogeneous groups so that these students could benefit from the discussions of the readings.

Adaptations for Gifted/Talented

I would encourage these children to expand on their essays with additional details of the culture of the Native American they chose (for example) or the background of the explorer they decided to write about.