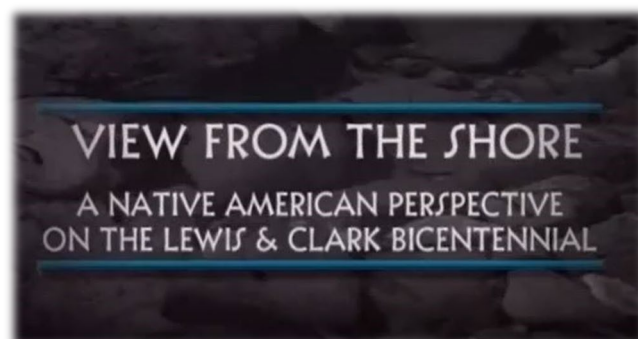


# Analyzing Multiple Viewpoints – The Lewis and Clark Expedition

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area      Social Studies  
Grade Level:            High School  
Suggested Duration:   Two 50-minute class periods



## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

Students will view and analyze multiple American Indian perspectives regarding the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Social Studies Content Standards Ninth Through Twelve Grade

(4) The history content standards for ninth through twelfth grade are that each student will:  
(d) analyze multiple and complex causal factors that have shaped major events in US and world history, including American Indian history;  
(h) analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history they produced;  
(j) analyze perspectives of American Indians in US history;  
(m) integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about past and present people, events, and ideas; and  
(n) construct arguments which reflect understanding and analysis of multiple historical sources, perspectives, and contexts.

### Understandings

- History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised.
- History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell. (EU 6)

### Essential Questions

- Which Montana tribal nations discovered Lewis and Clark coming through their territory?
- Do the perspectives given in the video conflict with what you have previously learned?
- Why is it important to examine historical events from multiple perspectives?



### Students will be able to...

- Briefly describe some American Indian perspectives regarding the Lewis and Clark expedition.
- Analyze and compare versions from their textbook and information from the film.

### Students will know...

- Key concepts regarding the multiple American Indian viewpoints of Lewis and Clark.

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

1. Students will view the film “View from the Shore: American Indian Perspectives Regarding Lewis and Clark.” (The Office of Public Instruction has sent a copy of this DVD to every Montana public school library. Check with your school librarian.)

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities:

#### Day 1

Save at least 35 minutes of class time to allow for viewing the entire DVD.

Briefly introduce students to the topic of Lewis and Clark. Lead a class discussion/brainstorming session to see what they already know. List out topics/issues on the board.

Tell students they will be watching a film that includes interviews with several American Indians offering their perspectives on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Ask students to write up a one-page reaction paper to the film. Did they learn anything new? Did this conflict with what they have been previously taught? Do these perspectives differ from what is in your history textbook?

Tell them their one-page reaction papers will be due at the next class.

Things to keep in mind as you hear/read primary sources from a tribe about a particular event in history:

- With regard to events such as Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery, Montana tribal histories offer differing points of view as compared to those expressed in your American history book.
- Your history book and a tribal history each represent “points of view”; the point of view changes, depending on whose story is being told.
- Identifying and respecting another culture’s viewpoints of historical events is basic to your understanding of how histories can influence our ideas and points of view.
- Events from the past, and how they are viewed by tribes and by the US government, still cause issues of concern today.

- The “discovery” of an area is not necessarily a discovery. Indigenous people had been in the area explored by the expedition for hundreds of years.

## Day 2

Hand out select quotes from the film (entire transcript can be found on the Indian Education Web site – see classroom resources, videos). First, have students scan through all the quotes and identify words that stand out to them for what is called a "spirit read" or "popcorn read." If you or students are unfamiliar with this practice, its goal is to elicit the main sense or spirit of the piece by having students say words, out loud, that stand out to them. They go in no particular order. It is acceptable (and even effective) for words to be repeated by multiple students. It is effective if the teacher only says two words: the first one and the last one. That way students will know when the exercise has ended.

Have students work in small groups of two or three. Assign a quote to each group and have them discuss what the main point is. After students have had a chance to read and discuss the quote, have them read it to the class and share their observations and insights. Allow time for class input after each quote is read.

Lead a class discussion on the major issues covered in the film. List on the board new information gained as a result of watching this film. Key point of metacognition: discuss the role critical thinking/critical literacy played in this lesson. Ask students to reflect on times when they learned of a truth that seemed contrary to what they'd always believed.

Next, have them read excerpts from the US History textbook and compare that to statements made in the film. Their history book and a tribal oral history each represent “points of view;” the point of view changes, depending on whose story is being told

Ask students to write a reflection on the importance of critical literacy. How does the new perspective on Lewis and Clark shape or change your understanding of the Corps of Discovery? What role could or should critical literacy play in your future historical studies?

## Resources

[“View from The Shore”](#) DVD, Black Dog Films. This may also be available in your school library.  
[Complete transcript of the DVD](#), Montana Office of Public Instruction

[TrailTribes.org](#) has some excellent information for further research. (Note: this website is no longer maintained but still has relevant information.)

For more American Indian perspectives regarding Lewis and Clark watch this film "[Native Homelands Along the Lewis and Clark Trail](#)," The Montana Experience: Stories from Big Sky Country

This [resource from PBS](#) has background information about Lewis and Clark, and some of the text provides a good opportunity for close analytical reading for bias.

[Lewis and Clark journals](#)

## Select Quotes

**Darrell R. Kipp:** We are negotiating the reality of what has been presented in textbooks and history books and movies and television and even in the Lewis and Clark journals themselves over the years. And so I see the Lewis and Clark expedition commemorative as an opportunity, as an excellent opportunity, that Indian tribes are able take advantage of, should take advantage of, to present their renegotiation of reality and set the record straight. (page 1)

**Raymond Cross:** And I think that Lewis and Clark can be seen, at least from my tribe's perspective, at a number of different levels. They can be seen as real flesh and blood people, an ill-equipped pair, and ill-equipped duo to really work with the Indian people. On the other hand, I think you see them as sort of symbol and icon, as sort of a collective memory of the American people that put so much stock in those journals as sort of the true story of how it was back then. So Lewis and Clark, I think the flesh and blood characters, are now overshadowed by this sort of bicentennial characterization of their contribution. I don't think in that light one should blame Lewis and Clark too much. I think the battles engage when you have the Lewis and Clark heritage, when you think of all these thousands of Lewis and Clark books that sort of seek to reenact that conquest of the West. I think that is where the Indians are put at a disadvantage. It is forgotten how much the Indians made possible this expedition. (pages 1-2)

**Julie Cajune:** They could have never made it, they did not know where they were going, they did not know how to feed themselves, and so Indian people guided them. Shoshone women I think transported their baggage, you know, on mountain passes. So they didn't know where the passes were, where to go. And then horses – you weren't going to get one set of horses that are going to last you the whole way, you know, who had the horses? – the Indian people. The river routes, the best portages and everything, all of that information was really provided by Indian people. (page 2)

**Dick Little Bear:** I am really ambiguous about this expedition, because while it was a big place that they were coming through, it was kind of hostile to them, they called it wilderness and they called it discovery. It wasn't wilderness to Native Americans and it certainly was already discovered. (page 2)

**Henrietta Mann:** Expedition. I don't like to call it the Corps of Discovery, I really abhor the word discovery. It is simply because - what did they discover that we already did not know? It is more than a matter of semantics, it could have called something else except the Corps of Discovery, because we were here, and if there was a discovery, we discovered them. (page 2)

**Julie Cajune:** For some people it was an invasion into their homeland. The idea that the expedition didn't realize that they were entering a very old tribal world – it didn't seem to be in their thinking. They realized that they were encountering people, but there was still the belief that we are exploring our new purchase, you know, we are exploring our own country, was still paramount in their mind and looking for what benefit we can get from this new acquisition, you know, what are we going to get out of this, what resources can we exploit? (page 2)

**Raymond Cross:** I think the stories have always been fairly one-sided, presented from the sort of coonskin cap brigade if you will. I think the stories really haven't allowed the Indian perspective, the

Indian voices, to speak on these issues. And it ranges from the fined-grained to the large-scale. If you look at Blackhead's speaking at the expedition, he asked for a wide variety of goods, a wide variety of trading relationships. Meriwether Lewis said look, you know, we are going to set the tone, we want you to come back with us and visit Washington, D.C., we want to show you the majesty of what this new American world is like and you understand that you got to become part of it or you will be swept away. And Blackhead said, no, you know, I don't want to go down the river and visit your world, I like mine just fine. And I think that has always been this tension, is that as if there is two Americas, one Indian and one non-Indian and as if there has never been a fairly reciprocal influence between the two. There has never been a willingness on part of non-Indians to come and experience that Indian world. It has always been the other way around, you come down and see the majesty, what we created, we don't really want to deal with your own issues and interests and values. (pages 2-3)

**Dick Little Bear:** Here they purchased land from another government that had no ownership of it. They didn't even consult with the tribes that were already here. Maybe they did not own the land in European terms where you have to have a piece of paper, but they had left artifacts; they had an experience here; their stories were here; their people that they loved and cherished were buried here; their sacred sites were here. If that isn't a sign of ownership, I don't know what is. (page 4)

**Darrell R. Kipp:** One of the things that happened to Indian tribes within the Lewis and Clark journals is that you have an outside group coming along and seeing things and putting their own identity or their own nomenclature, their own labels on what they see, and those labels or those definitions reflect their definitions, their standards, and not of the subject itself. And so consequently when the journals indicate as they are identifying plants, as they are identifying rivers, they gave them names. For example, the Marias River, in the journals of Lewis and Clark that name is given, and yet amongst this tribe, my tribe, it is the Bear River. And everything around them already had names, everything around them already had been identified for thousands of years in longstanding oral tradition and identity. And yet we know then from the time of Lewis and Clark on we didn't lose our identity, we just simply were overwhelmed by the identification and the labels that others placed upon us. (pages 4-5)

### Extension

Ask students to read and respond to selections from the Lewis and Clark journals where they meet some of the tribes. You might ask students to imagine what it looked like from the perspective of the tribes (the same way the video approached the topic) and rewrite the journals that way, or write a script of one tribal member talking to another about what was witnessed.

### Additional Resource

*The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (2005) Authors: Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation Staff, Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee, Elders Cultural Advisory Council, Elders Cultural Advisory Council Staff. (University of Nebraska Press)