

Two Worlds at Two Medicine: A Blackfeet Encounter with Lewis and Clark

Fast Facts

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

Students will view the film, *Two Worlds at Two Medicine*, and analyze Blackfeet perspectives regarding the Lewis and Clark expedition. The DVD was sent to all Montana public high school libraries.

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

Social Studies Content Standards for Ninth through Twelfth Grade

(4) The history content standards for ninth through twelfth grade are that each student will:
(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 Blackfeet perspectives conflict with what you have previously learned?
- Why is it important to examine historical events from multiple perspectives?

Students will be able to...

- analyze Blackfeet perspectives regarding an encounter with the Lewis and Clark expedition.
- analyze information from Lewis and Clark journals and their US History textbook.

Students will know...

- there are multiple American Indian viewpoints regarding Lewis and Clark.



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- oral traditions are vital in analyzing perspectives of American Indians in US history.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Students will analyze Blackfeet historical perspectives regarding Lewis and Clark from the DVD *Two Worlds at Two Medicine*. (The Office of Public Instruction has sent a copy of this DVD to every Montana public school library. Check with your school librarian.)
2. Students will write a short reaction paper to the film summarizing key points and perspectives.
3. Students will analyze information from the journals of Lewis and Clark in addition to what their US History textbook says regarding this same incident

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

Day 1

Begin the lesson by showing this clip from the Montana Tribes Digital Archives. [Two Sides to Every Story - Calvin Weatherwax](#)

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 Blackfeet offering their perspectives on the Lewis and Clark expedition; in particular, an encounter at Two-Medicine between young Blackfeet boys and the expedition. Save at least 35 minutes of class time to allow for viewing the entire DVD.

Next, display this following quote from [Days of the Blackfeet](#) regarding this incident and ask students to write down four or five words that stick out in their mind and have them write a short statement about why they chose those specific words.

There are many similarities to the stories told by the Blackfeet and the Lewis and Clark expedition and also many differences. The Lewis version states that one of the Piegan had been stabbed through the heart, and another shot in the stomach. The Blackfeet version says that one was shot in the back, and another wounded and lived. The Lewis version is that three of the party were chiefs and in recognition they were given medals and the Blackfeet version says they were young boys out venturing to become warriors with a chance to count coup by stealing the rifle and horses. This discussion of truth will be brought out into public education based on the freedom of speech.

Ask for some initial reactions to the quote. If students want to read their responses, that is acceptable; or they can summarize. At the very least, ask a student to paraphrase the quote so it is understandable to all.

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

Tell students 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 from those expressed in your American history textbook.
- Your history textbook 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 U.S. government, still cause issues of concern today.
- The “discovery” of an area is not necessarily a discovery depending on perspective. Indigenous people had been in the area explored by the expedition for hundreds of years.

Day 2

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.

Have students review what the [journals of Lewis and Clark](#) have to say about this incident. This provides an excellent opportunity for close analytical reading of written primary source documents.

Next, have students review their textbook. How are Lewis and Clark portrayed? Is a balanced perspective offered? Is there any mention of the incident with the Blackfeet?

Facilitate a class discussion regarding what students discovered in their readings about this incident.

Based on this new information allow students time to revise their reaction papers and have them hand it in at the next class.

Resources

Two Worlds at Two-Medicine. Browning, MT: The Going-To-The-Sun Institute and Native View Pictures, 2004. Curly Bear Wagner (**Blackfeet**) and Dennis Neary, producers. DVD sent to all Montana public high school libraries.

If you do not have the DVD in your school library have the librarian visit the [WorldCat website](#) to check it out from a library near you.

If you are unable to locate a copy of *Two Worlds at Two-Medicine* check out this film called [A Blackfeet Encounter](#), which has many of the same Blackfeet oral accounts of this incident with Lewis and Clark.

For more Blackfeet perspectives visit [TrailTribes.org](#) (note: this website no longer maintained).