

The Unconventional Explorer

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INTRODUCTION

What this Unit will Teach

The theme of my paper is “The Unconventional Explorer.” My idea of an unconventional explorer is a person who becomes an explorer by chance or luck and plans a journey alone or with a few companions, unlike explorers such as Christopher Columbus or Ponce De Leon who planned expeditions of discovery for fame and glory, and had a powerful ruler as a sponsor.

An example of an “unconventional explorer” is Heinrich Harrer. In 1943, Harrer escaped from an internment camp in Dehra-Dun, India, and traveled on foot to Tibet. He was a fugitive with no status, no papers, one companion, and very limited funds. After a desolate march and incredible adventures, in a country traveled by only a few European men, he reached “The Forbidden City of Lhasa.” Lhasa is the capital of Tibet, a country located in the Himalayan mountains, north of India.

Here are other examples of unconventional explorers:

- Alexandra David-Neel. David-Neel was the first Western woman to enter “The Forbidden City of Lhasa.” She disguised herself as a woman beggar and traveled from China to Lhasa, accompanied by a young Lama.
- Sacagawea, from the Lewis and Clark expedition. Lewis and Clark mention Sacagawea in their accounts as a vital member of the survival of their expedition. In 1803, Sacagawea was a 16-year-old Shoshone girl. She joined the expedition with her husband Toussaint Charbonneau, a fur trader from Canada, who was three times her age. She was also expecting her first baby. Sacagawea knew where to find many kinds of plant foods during the expedition, she knew the territory they were traveling, and she also spoke some of the native languages. On May 14, 1805, Clark wrote in his journal: “Today Sacagawea prevented a disaster; A squall of wind struck our sail broadside and turned the pirogue nearly over. . . The articles which floated out were nearly all caught by [Sacagawea]. . . In this pirogue were our papers, instruments, books, medicine and, in short, almost every article necessary to insure the success of the enterprise” (Frantin 40). Had she not saved the supplies, the expedition might have had to turn back. The Captains wanted to honor Sacagawea, so they named a creek in Central Montana for her. By the end of the expedition, she had mountains in three states named after her. The expedition employed various methods of transportation. On the

first weeks of the expedition, they traveled on the Missouri River on small sailing boats named pirogues by the natives of the region.

- *The Journal of Augustus Pelletier* is a historical novel based on the journals of Pelletier, the youngest member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Pelletier's father was French and his mother was Native American. Augustus was a trapper and a hunter; he also knew how to read and write well. His mother sent him to the Seminary when he was younger and encouraged him to "learn the most you can from the priests" (Lasky 21). Augustus became Lewis' apprentice. He had beautiful handwriting, and Lewis assigned him the task of copying the letters, accounts, and information to be sent to President Jefferson. He also learned to measure longitude, latitude, and other important notations that were recorded during the expedition.
- In their oral traditions, Native Americans describe the travels and journeys of their ancestors before the arrival of Christopher Columbus. My friend Gilbert Walking Bull, Seating Bull's great grandson, used to tell me stories that were passed down through generations of Lakotas. Gilbert explained to me that some of his ancestors embarked on a journey that lasted a few years. The final destination of this journey was the Caribbean. His ancestors went to the islands for religious ceremonies at least once in their lifetime.

By studying the accounts of these types of explorers, my students will learn first-hand what it means to go on an expedition. An "unconventional explorer" overcomes his fears and hardships. My students will also learn about the character traits that make a successful explorer.

UNIT BACKGROUND

Who are my students?

Currently, I am teaching in a bilingual setting, and all my students are "new arrivals" from Latin America. They have been living in this country for a year and a half or less. A high percentage of my students are considered "at-risk" because their parents move frequently looking for work, and the likelihood of them getting a consistent, traditional education is slim. New students always arrive after Christmas, and the flow of students will continue until the end of March. At least one third of my students will leave before the end of the school year.

I teach a combined class of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. The school does not have enough students that fall into the category of "new arrivals" to create a class for each grade level, which is the reason why these students are all together in one classroom, and I am their lucky teacher. I teach all the subjects required for each grade level, plus English as a Second Language. The students in the lower grades have the

advantage of being exposed to higher knowledge thinking. There is also a lot of peer tutoring going on in the classroom. A nice atmosphere of camaraderie has developed among my students regardless of their age or gender. The older students enjoy working with and helping the younger ones, and at the same time they review their previous knowledge. The younger students love the idea of having friends of higher grade levels, with whom they exchange ideas, stories, and books to read. Some of the young ones apply themselves to learn new materials from higher grades, especially in mathematics and science.

Approximately 60 to 70 percent of my students' parents did not finish middle school. These parents do not have the academic knowledge to be able to help their children with their studies. They also do not stress on their children the importance of a formal education. A few of the parents think that their children can survive without a formal education. They believe that middle school is more than enough. After all, they (the parents) are "making it without it."

Like my students, I am also an emigrant from Latin America. I came to this country when I was in my twenties. I had two years of college, but I did not possess a working permit. For the first few years, I had to do menial jobs for less than minimal wage, live in a rented room, and share a bathroom with fourteen other tenants.

My students' view of the world outside their communities and culture is very limited. Their only traveling consists of going back to their homeland in South America to visit their relatives. My class's knowledge of world geography and history is remarkably low, including their knowledge of America and their own countries of origin.

I inherited a love for reading about traveling, expeditions, and adventures from my father. He has an extensive library, and the majority of his books are about traveling and explorations. Wanting to read these books enhanced my reading at an early age. The first book that caught my attention was *Seven Years in Tibet*. "Where is Tibet?" I asked my father. My father made me look in an atlas until I found Tibet's location in Asia. We also looked at pictures of Tibet – the landscape, the buildings, and the people. We read about the Tibetan people, their culture, and especially their religion and the story of the Dalai Lama. I fell in love with Tibet. I traveled through the mountains with Heinrich Harrer, author of *Seven Years in Tibet*, and together we reached "The Forbidden City of Lhasa," and, once there, we both lived a fairy tale of enchantment that I will never forget. After that, the sky was the limit. I wanted to read more books and live new adventures. I was hooked on reading, and I still feel the same way.

Introducing my students to this exciting topic may produce the same results in them. To learn about different explorers, their adventures, their hardships, their rewards, and their knowledge and capabilities may encourage my students to apply themselves to their studies and awaken in them a thirst for facts. I want to open my students' minds to the wonders of the world, spark in them a curiosity for the unknown and for cultures different

from their own, and create a thirst for knowledge and adventure. Learning about expeditions to far and exotic places will enrich my students' limited knowledge of geography. They will develop skills such as creating timelines, reading maps, and making charts following a narrative. My students will be able to study the people and the land of a country within a time frame. They will be able to go back in time and study the culture and the physical environment of a place.

Implementation Strategies

Some of the teaching strategies I will use include documented accounts of the "unconventional explorers." My research will provide my students with valuable knowledge of the life experiences of these explorers. My students will view films and documentaries. They will do research at the library and on the Internet. Students will write their personal responses to these new ideas in their journals.

I am planning to implement all the information from my unit into each of the different subjects I teach in the classroom. In language arts, after reading a story, my students will work in cooperative learning groups and each group will analyze an element of a given story of discovery – the conflicts, setting, characters, and so on. Later they will be able to compare and contrast the elements from different stories, such as each explorer's character traits, and draw their own conclusions about how these traits help each explorer's journey to be a success. They will also prepare their own fictitious journeys of discovery.

In social studies, my students will create their own maps and timelines. They will compare and contrast religious beliefs, clothing, food, and other aspects of culture from the places where these journeys of discovery took place. In science we will study the flora, fauna, and climate of the countries involved in this study of discovery. My ultimate goal is to have my students write their own travel journeys from their homeland to America.

HEINRICH HARRER

Harrer was born in Carinthia in 1912. He spent most of his childhood in the Alps, and his time outside of school was dedicated to mountain climbing and skiing. He also enjoyed reading about traveling and explorations. When he went to college, his skiing abilities won him a place on the Austrian Olympic team. A year later he was the winner of the downhill race in the World Student's Championship. He succeeded at climbing the North Wall of the Eiger, one of the most dangerous mountains in Switzerland. Harrer was among the first to accomplish this daunting task, and the achievement won him an invitation to participate in an expedition to the Himalayas, his childhood dream (Harrer preface).

In his book *Seven Years in Tibet*, Harrer describes the events that culminated with his journey into Tibet. In 1939, Harrer was on his way to Nanga Parbat, a 25,000 foot mountain in the Himalayans. The first four attempts by other explorers to conquer this mountain had failed. While Harrer's expedition was in Karachi, India, England declared war on Germany. Harrer and his companions were arrested by Indian soldiers and taken to a prison camp. In the camp's library, Harrer read all the travel books on Asia and learned Hindustani, Tibetan, and Japanese. He also exercised every day and tried to keep himself as fit as possible. He was planning to escape and make his way to Tibet. In May 1943, after months of preparation and two previous attempts, Harrer and a friend escaped from Dehar-Dun (Harrer 4).

In Asia, the natives were accustomed to seeing foreigners traveling with servants. On one occasion Harrer and his companion were seen by some villagers, who sounded their drums in alarm. The natives were not used to seeing Europeans carrying heavy loads and traveling by themselves. After that incident, they decided to travel at night through the jungle and rest during the day. After a couple of weeks of traveling, they found themselves on the bank of the Ganges River. From then on, they could follow the pilgrim's road. Harrer dyed his blond hair and beard black. He also stained his face and hands with a mixture of permanganate, brown paint, and grease. The first time they ran out of food, he ventured into a pilgrim shop to buy supplies and was mistaken for a thief and thrown out. After that he would always go into a shop showing his money (Harrer 7).

In January of 1946, after many hardships and a plethora of new experiences, Harrer and his friend Aufschnaiter reached Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. They, along with a group of pilgrims, went through the city gates. Nobody ever came to Lhasa without a permit from the authorities, so people assumed that they had permits. Because of the Tibetan people's religious beliefs, pilgrims could ask for lodging from anyone in the city. After walking through the city, they decided on a house, sat outside among the protests of the servants, and waited. Soon they learned that the house belonged to the "Master of Electricity," a high-ranking official from the government whom everyone addressed as "Kungo," which means highness. The official took them in after getting permission from the local authorities. They were not allowed to leave the house until the regent, who was away on vacation, came back and decided what to do with them (Harrer 115).

Their host and his wife had five children, and soon the group made friends with all of them. Meal times were not the same as ours in 21st century America. Early in the morning and throughout the day, they drank butter tea. There were two main meals in the day. The first one at 10 in the morning consisted of tsampa (a flour dumpling) and some trimmings. The evening meal was the central point of the day. Many courses were served at this meal. The whole family would assemble and the day's happenings would be discussed. After supper, they all sat in the living room to smoke cigarettes and drink beer. In the evenings the children would show their parents their homework, which helped Harrer become familiar with Tibetan writing (Harrer 120).

Suddenly everyone in town knew about their arrival, and since they were not permitted to leave the house, many important people came to the house to visit with them. In this setting they were introduced to the ceremony of Tibetan tea parties. Kungo's wife had a few tea sets that she would use according to the rank of the guests. The teacups consisted of three parts: a stand and a cover both made of gold or silver, and a porcelain cup. The tea was mixed with butter before being served. The guests would bring them gifts such as clothing and cigarettes, a tradable commodity in Lhasa in those days (Harrer 117).

Lhasa was not an isolated place. Newspapers came in from all over the world via India. There were even a few people in town who received *Life* magazine. The Indian daily papers arrived regularly a week after publication. The people who came to visit Harrer and his companion were very informed about what was happening outside of Tibet (Harrer 119). The next lesson that Harrer and his companion learned involved the rules of protocol to be followed while visiting an important dignitary:

After eight days of keeping indoors, a servant came with an invitation to visit the home of the Dalai Lama's parents. They felt bounded by their promise to keep at home, but their host assured them that a summons from the Dalai Lama had precedence over all other considerations. Before they left, Thangme, their host, gave them both a pair of white silk scarves. The scarves were to be presented when they were received in audience. When paying visits or presenting a petition to a person of higher rank, or at the great festivals, one is supposed to give presents of scarves. The scarves can be found in all sorts of qualities. The quality of the scarf should be consistent with the rank of the giver. (122)

The house of the parents of the Dalai Lama was guarded by a great gate, near which the gatekeeper was on the lookout for anything unusual. Inside the gate was a large garden full of vegetable plots and clusters of willows. Beyond the garden was the palace. On the first floor they were introduced to the "Holy Mother," who sat on a small throne. Harrer and his companion handed her the scarves with a deep reverence, stretching their arms to the fullest extent. Contrary to Tibetan custom, she shook their hands. She had received Europeans into her house before. The "Holy Parents" had six children. The elder son, long before the discovery of the Dalai Lama, had been recognized as an incarnation of Buddha. The youngest son was recognized as another incarnation of Buddha. As the mother of three "incarnations," she held the record for the Buddhist world. Loaded with gifts and escorted by servants, they returned home after their audience. The "Holy Mother" also presented them with a hundred-sang note, "by the personal desire of the Kundun." Kundun was the title used by the parents and brothers of the "God king" when referring to him, which simply means "Presence" (Harrer 122).

Two days later they received word from the Foreign Ministry that they could move about freely. At the same time they were supplied with two splendid full-length cloaks of

lambskin, for which they had been measured. For each of these cloaks, sixty skins were used. On the same day they went for a walk in the town and attracted no attention in their Tibetan cloaks (Harrer 126).

The inner town was composed of nothing but stores. Shops extended in unbroken lines and the dealers overflowed into the street. General stores contained a large range of goods, from needles to rubber boots. Provision stores contained local produce as well as American corned beef, Australian butter, and English whisky. There was nothing one could not buy or order, from Elizabeth Arden to sewing machines or David Crosby's latest records. There was an enormous store full of European hats. Tibetans valued broad-brimmed European hats. Sunburned faces were not considered attractive. The Tibetans also loved umbrellas and shades. These items could be found in all sizes, colors, and qualities. The monks were the best customers for these items since, except at solemn festivals, they went bareheaded (Harrer 126).

The common people wore the Nambu, a sash made of pure woven wool. Bales of this material were displayed in the stores. The wool was dyed with shades of indigo colors. Only the donkey drivers wore the white wool, the absence of color being a sign of poverty. Tape measures were not used, but people measured clothes by the length of their arms. Thanks to his long limbs, Harrer always profited by this custom (Harrer 127).

Only the Nepalese sold honey. The Tibetan Government had officially forbidden Tibetans to take honey, because their religion does not allow them to deprive animals of their food. So the Tibetans allowed the Nepalese to collect the honey and then bought it back from them (Harrer 127).

There were no police in our sense of the word. Evildoers were publicly sentenced. The punishment was drastic. A man who stole a golden butter lamp from a temple had his hands publicly cut off. He was then sewn up in a wet yak skin. After the skin was dry, the man was thrown over a precipice (Harrer 69).

Harrer and his companion were given parcels of clothes and shoes by the government. They were also given an allowance. Everyone who met them presented them with gifts. Harrer wrote in his journal, "It is probable that no other country in the world would welcome two poor fugitives as Tibet welcomes us" (Harrer 119). Harrer lived in Tibet for seven years. He became a successful entrepreneur and a tutor to the Dalai Lama.

ALEXANDRA DAVID-NEEL

Born in France in 1868, Alexandra was an only child, and at an early age she developed a taste for books on adventure and travel to escape from a lonely childhood. She became a journalist, a scholar, and a traveler. In 1904 she married Philippe-Francois Neel, chief engineer for a French railroad. They had an unconventional marriage in which they rarely lived together. Through her travels, he supported her, stored her effects, shipped

things around after her, made arrangements for publishing her manuscripts, and rarely complained. She studied and later adopted Buddhism as her religion. She traveled through Asia and learned to speak Tibetan with a Lhasan accent at Podang, where she was also given a 15-year-old boy as a personal attendant. His name was Yongden, and later she adopted him. Together they made various journeys into Tibet disguised as pilgrim beggars. On the first and second journey they were discovered and stopped (Finling 97).

In 1923, Alexandra and Yongden traveled through the mountains from China to Lhasa. When they were relatively close to their destination, they managed to get rid of their baggage and coolies, took on the role of beggars, and put what they needed in backpacks. The two walked through rainstorms and heavy snow, slept outdoors in freezing weather, went for days without food, and evaded robbers and officials who would certainly have stopped them had her identity become known. She wore a white woolen dress and darkened her face with a mixture of cocoa and crushed charcoal, and her hair with black ink. They had a small tent but no blankets. They had a kettle, and each carried a bowl and chopsticks. Under their clothes, they carried revolvers and money (Finling 100).

Yongden was a Tibetan priest, so he could travel freely. People often asked him for advice or to foretell the future, and paid him for his services with food or gifts. Alexandra posed as his mother. After getting lost and more than a few misadventures, they reached Lhasa on New Year's Day, 1924. For two months they lived and explored the city. They saw the festivities of the New Year, visited the Potala, where the Dalai Lama was enthroned, and learned first-hand about the people and their culture (Finling 101).

Alexandra David-Neel made this journey at the age of fifty-five, partly because it was forbidden to foreigners and partly to test herself. She enjoyed the freedom of the pilgrim's life, with its joys and hardships. "I deem it to be the most blessed existence one can dream of," she wrote, "and I consider as the happiest in my life those days when, with a load upon my back, I wandered as one of the countless tribe of Tibetan beggar pilgrims" (David-Neel 18).

THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

Long before the Louisiana Purchase, Thomas Jefferson had been fascinated by the lands in the West. Who lived there? What was the land like? Could the Missouri River possibly lead to a water route to the Pacific? To find the answers, Jefferson sent an expedition to the new territories. Jefferson chose Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to share command of the exploration.

In May 1804, the expedition set out westward from St. Louis, Missouri. Jefferson told the two captains that they had three goals: one was to search for a water route to the

Pacific; the second was to establish relationships with the Native Americans they met; and the third goal was to pay close attention to “the soil and face of the country,” to its plants, animals, minerals, and climate, and to keep careful written records of their findings (Dawson and Gay 374).

The expedition included soldiers, river boatmen, hunters, and York, Clark’s slave. Later on they hired Charbonneau and Sacagawea. Throughout the expedition, its members faced many hardships. In his journal, Captain Meriwether Lewis wrote the following account of a sandstorm on April 24th 1805: “The wind blew so hard during the whole day, that we were unable to move . . . Sore eyes is a common complaint among the [people]. I believe it [comes] from the immense quantities of sand which is driven by the wind from the sandbars of the river in such clouds that you are unable to discover the opposite bank of the river” (Dawson and Gay 374). They were also rewarded with some fabulous views. They saw a herd of 20,000 bison. They crossed the Rocky Mountains, and finally “their eyes were filled with the sight of the great pacific Ocean. Ocean in view! O the joy!” wrote Clark (Dawson and Gay 375).

The explorers returned to St. Louis in September of 1806. They had not found a water route to the Pacific. But they had recorded and described thousand of varieties of plants and animals. They also mapped a vast area, opening it to future explorations and settlers from the United States.

The Leaders of the Expedition

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark do not fall into the category of “unconventional explorers,” but I think that my students should have some knowledge about the leaders of an expedition before they study any “unconventional explorers” who took part in such a quest. My students should understand the reasons why President Jefferson selected Lewis as leader of the expedition, and later Lewis selected Clark as his second in command. Studying the leaders’ backgrounds will also help my students to understand Lewis and Clark’s relationship with Sacagawea and Augustus Pelletier.

Meriwether Lewis

Lewis was born in 1774, within sight of Monticello, at Locus Hill. His father was a Revolutionary War officer who died during the war when Lewis was five years old. Jefferson was very close to Lewis’s father; he had no son of his own, and a father-son relationship developed between them. Lewis inherited his father’s plantation, but he had a wandering spirit. At age 20 he turned the management to his mother and joined the army. In 1801, President Jefferson called him to the White House to serve as his secretary (Ambrose 28).

Jefferson had in mind the extension of the territory of the new nation. He wanted to create a country that was a continent wide. In 1802, Jefferson read the accounts of

Mackenzie, an explorer from Canada. Mackenzie traveled to the Western lands and the Pacific. The president decided to mount an expedition and claim the new territory for the country. He told Lewis “to drop all other responsibilities and concentrate single-mindedly on leading such an expedition” (Ambrose 29). He said he would get the money from Congress.

Lewis had less than five years of formal schooling, but he was a quick learner. Jefferson became his tutor. The President also sent Lewis to study with some of his “scientific friends,” to learn the specialized skills he would need on the expedition. In his letters Jefferson described his pupil: “Capt. Lewis is brave, prudent, habituated to the woods, and familiar with Indian manners and character. He is not regularly educated, but he possesses a great mass of accurate observation on all the subjects of nature” (Ambrose 30).

At the President’s house, Lewis read what few accounts there were of exploration of the Pacific Coast, especially what was available from Captain Robert Gray, an American who in 1792 had sailed into the estuary of a river he named for his ship, Columbia, and fixed its position. The only other fixed position Lewis had available to him was St. Louis. Then there were some sketchy maps of the Missouri as far up as the Mandan Villages, which was as far up the river as any literate man had gone. He also drew up an estimate of expenses to be presented to Congress (Ambrose 31).

Lewis and Jefferson agreed that the ideal size of the party would be a dozen: one officer and 10 to 12 enlisted men. More might alarm the Indians and lead to war, and fewer would invite an attack. To avoid Congressional criticism, they tried to keep their sum request as low as possible. The sum came to \$2,500, with the largest expenditure of \$696 for “Indian presents.” Meriwether Lewis was aware of the magnitude of his assignment. It would be nearly a year before his companion William Clark would enter the official planning, but already Lewis was thinking ahead, knowing that he would need another officer whose strength and skills matched his own (Ambrose 32).

William Clark

William was also born in Virginia, just miles away from Lewis, in Caroline County. He was four years older than Lewis, but they both loved the woods and open spaces. In 1789, 19-year-old William Clark joined the frontier militia and rose quickly in the ranks. A few years later he was a captain in command of elite riflemen sharpshooters. At this point he met Lewis, who was assigned for six months under Clark. During this time they developed a mutual trust for each other. It would be seven years before the future partners were together again (Ambrose 32).

Clark was an experienced wandering man. He had spent time on the frontiers of Ohio and Kentucky. Clark knew how to fight Indians and to negotiate with them. He was a “water man” and had a keen eye for details of the land. He had built forts in the

wilderness and blazed trails through the unknown. He was less schooled than Lewis in social and scientific arts and he did not have much of a formal education, but he possessed many of the skills that Lewis would need on the expedition. He also shared Lewis's enthusiasm and curiosity and was as strong as a bull (Ambrose 33).

Sacagawea

Born in approximately 1787, in what is today Idaho, Sacagawea was a Native American woman of the Shoshone tribe. Her tribe lived along the Bitterroot Range of the Rocky Mountains. They often camped near the Snake River, so they were also called the Snake Indians (Frandin 5).

As a child, she had many different names. This was common for young Indians. In time, she became Sacagawea. Sacaga means "bird," and wea means "woman," so her name means "Bird Woman." She may have been called Bird Woman because she was small and moved quickly like a bird. Sacagawea had an older brother named Cameahwait. She also had another brother and a sister. Her family lived in a tipi. The Shoshone were peaceful wanderers. The Shoshone did not have schools. Sacagawea learned by working beside the women of her tribe. She collected wood for fires, and helped make moccasins, clothing, and tipis. She picked berries and dug roots for her family to eat. She learned to make medicines from plants. For fun, she ran races and juggled mud balls with her friends (Frandin 6).

When she was 10 or 11, her tribe was camped near what is now Three Forks, Montana. The Minnetaree, an enemy tribe, attacked them with guns. The Shoshone had only bows and arrows. Sacagawea and other members of her tribe were captured and taken 600 miles to a Minnetaree village in what is now North Dakota. There, she was sold into slavery, eventually becoming the property of a Canadian trapper named Touissant Charbonneau. When he was hired as an interpreter and guide for the expedition, Sacagawea accompanied him (Frandin 16).

She became a vital member of the Lewis and Clark expedition. They (Lewis and Clark) mention her frequently in their journals. After the incident of May 14, Lewis wrote in his journal: "the Squaw, has equal fortitude and resolution, with any person aboard at the time of the Accident" (Kessler 60). During the return trip, after the expedition had split into two groups, she found a passage through the mountains. Clark describes Sacagawea as "the Indian woman who had been of great service to me as a pilot through this country" (Kessler 62).

Sacagawea acted as an interpreter and a guide. She helped Lewis and Clark establish good relations with Native Americans along the way. She helped translate Indian languages for the expedition. The baby she carried on her back signaled the peaceful purposes of the expedition (Dawson and Gay 375).

After the expedition was over, Clark and his wife adopted Sacagawea's son. His name was Jean Baptiste, but Sacagawea nicknamed him Pomp. Pomp means "leader of men" in Shoshoni. A few years later Sacagawea died giving birth to her daughter. The girl was also adopted by William Clark (Frandon 101).

Augustus Pelletier

The Journal of Augustus Pelletier is a piece of historical fiction based on Pelletier's journals of the expedition. The importance of this work resides in the knowledge (of the expedition) that is imparted through the experiences of a teenage boy. Some of my students who read the book found it very entertaining. After reading this journal they could recall some of the most important events, the equipment used on scientific observations, and the collection of new specimens for later studies. The story also mentions how he became an indispensable member of the expedition because of his skills. Some of these skills included good handwriting, his love for books, and his eagerness to learn new things.

At the beginning of the story, Augustus was not a member of the expedition. Instead, he followed the group at a safe distance, waiting for the right moment to introduce himself. While he waited, he observed the leaders of the expedition carefully and commented on their character traits, skills, and work assignments:

June 27, 1804. At the juncture of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers.
Well, this beats all. You ever seen a man weigh water? I did this morning. First Captain Lewis dunked a bucket into the Missouri and weighed it on this scale they haul around. Then he sent someone to fetch a bucket from where the Kansas joins the Missouri and told him to go well downstream. The Missouri weighs more. I could have told them that. What with the freight of mud and stuff in the water it was bound to weigh more. Captain Clark then went over to the Kansas and Measure its breadth. It stands 230 yards wide, compared with the Missouri's 500 yards at this point. (Lasky 18)

June 30, 1804.
When I first appeared before him, he did not seem surprised. He just said, "Hold this." Those were the Captain's first words to me. Then he said, "Can you write?" I said yes. He gave me his book and pencils. Captain Lewis had measured the distance between the sun and the morning moon forty times. He measured eight more times. I would hold the chronometer for him, and when he said, "Mark" I would write down the times . . . I know what he is doing. The instrument he looks through is called a sextant. By fixing the height of a star or the sun or the moon and knowing the exact time, one can figure through mathematics something that is called the longitude and the latitude. (Lasky 20)

July 5, 1804.

Something special happened today. Captain Lewis showed me the letter from President Jefferson to him, giving the instructions for the expedition . . . I already knew that the purpose of the expedition was to explore beyond the Missouri and all the new land that came with the Louisiana Purchase, but I wasn't clear on the fact that the real dream, the big hope, is an all-water route to the Pacific. The most exciting thing to me is that I have actually touched a paper touched by President Jefferson, and here I am just a poor half-breed boy . . . I am glad mama sent me to Father Dumaine when I was little to learn how to read and write.

(Lasky 26)

NATIVE AMERICAN TRAVELERS

Travel was always important for Native Americans. They carried on trade and exchanged news and information. Some went on religious quests of self-discovery. According to some Native American stories, people knew how to get around in early America. Before a journey, a person visited a "Singer." A Singer sometimes was also a healer, but most Singers were traders. They were the carriers of the "Journey Songs." If you learned your Journey Song and did not forget it, you would never get lost on your way back home (Storm 164).

Sacagawea was a perfect example of how people knew how to get around then. She would never have completed her journey to the Lodges of the Mandan of the Dakota, or have been successful on her return journey home to her own Bannack people of Western Montana, without knowing her journey song. These two places were separated by seven hundred and fifty-three miles of the wildest, most dangerous land imaginable (Storm 164).

The First Journey through the Grand Canyon

Long ago, in the rim of the Grand Canyon, lived the ancestors of the Hopi. The son of the chief liked to sit on the edge of the canyon rim, and imagine where the river below ended. The elders of the tribe did not know the answer, so one day "Wise Son" decided to go on a quest to seek the answer.

His family and friends helped him to build a waterproof boat that could be closed entirely, like a cocoon. He constructed a long pushing pole to help him navigate the waters. The Shaman tied prayer sticks at the top of the pole, with special blessings for a safe journey. When the day arrived for Wise Son to start his journey, his father and his friends gave him food supplies and more prayer sticks (Edmonds and Clark 76).

He traveled for weeks and learned to keep the boat in the main current, even though he had to navigate through some rapids and tunnel-like caves. The river provided him with fish and fresh water.

One day he noticed a change in the water. It tasted salty. Later on his boat floated into a great body of water that extended as far as he could see. He saw an island and guided his boat to the shore. On the island he found a house with a very small door. He knocked and asked, "Please, will you let me come in and see you?" From inside the house, Spider Woman, who possessed supernatural powers, answered, "Make the door larger and enter." Wise Son presented Spider Woman with a prayer stick, and told her about his journey. He also told her that he wanted to find a gift to bring back to his people. He wanted to find something that might be helpful to his tribe (Edmonds and Clark 77).

Spider Woman took him to the house of the Snake Clan. In this house, he was taught a ceremony to call on the rain and the Snake dance. Wise Son went back to his people and taught them the ceremony and the dance. Since that time, the Hopis do the Snake dance every year as a thanksgiving to their gods for the blessings of rain to the tribe (Edmonds and Clark 79).

CONCLUSION

I selected the theme of expeditions to teach my class because expedition is always an exciting subject. The dream of adventures in a far and exotic place appeals to students of all ages. By using an exciting topic to teach my students the requirements of the curriculum, there is a good possibility that the knowledge will stay with them.

By choosing explorations on different continents, my students will be able to expand their knowledge of geography, history, and social issues. They will compare and contrast different cultures and draw their own conclusions regarding ethnicity, gender, and the influence of the environment in our ways of life.

Going on an adventure with Sacagawea and Augustus Pelletier, both teenagers like my students, will help my class make a stronger connection to the implications of the Lewis and Clark expeditions. Looking at a far away country such as Tibet through the eyes of a very unconventional woman such as Alexandra David-Neel will open my students' minds to the diversity and complexity of other cultures. Also, the film *Seven Years in Tibet*, based on Harrer's story, will be a wonderful tool for my visual learners.

By studying the life of these explorers, comparing them to their own, and creating their own journals of discovery, I hope to show my students a clear picture of what it means to be an unconventional explorer.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan 1: The Lewis and Clark Expedition

Objectives

Students will learn the reasons, causes, and consequences of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Students will read about President Jefferson's ideas and actions regarding the expedition. They will analyze in detail the preparations for the expedition. What kind of instruments and equipment were taken and why? What kind of provisions did they need?

Activity One

The teacher will give an introductory talk on the Lewis and Clark expedition, followed by a class discussion and questions. After that, students will write their own predictions: What kind of difficulties do you think they will encounter and why? What are the possibilities of them being successful in their endeavors? What will be the outcome of the expedition (TAKS objective 4)? The class will prepare a chart with all the predictions to be discussed at a later time.

Activity Two

Students will read about the expedition and discuss the subject among themselves in cooperative learning groups. After that, each group will be assigned a different activity. The first group will draw a map of the region of the country covered by the expedition, including important landmarks. The second group will prepare a timeline of the most important events of the expedition. The third group will prepare a sequence of the events of the expedition. The fourth group will prepare a chart of the equipment and provisions taken by the expedition. They will divide this chart into categories depending on the nature and use of the tools and provisions (TAKS objective 3).

Evaluation

Each group will present their findings to the rest of the class. The class will compare and contrast their findings to the 'prediction chart' prepared on the first activity, and make their own conclusions in relation to their previous knowledge and the new one: which predictions were correct and which ones were not and why (TAKS objective 4).

This lesson plan can also be adapted to the other readings in the unit. In a combined grade class such as mine, each grade can work on the theme that relates to their own curriculum. 5th-graders can work on the "Lewis and Clark expedition," 6th-graders can work on *Seven Years in Tibet*, and 4th-graders can study Native Americans and their travels.

Lesson Plan 2: Comparing and Contrasting Two Cultures

Student Objectives

Students will learn about the different cultural groups the explorers encountered. They will study their clothing, food, family groups, government structure, and the environment, among other cultural traits.

Activity One

They will study one of the tribes or countries visited by one of our “unconventional explorers.” Students will be divided into cooperative learning groups, and each group will be given a cultural trait to analyze. Students within each group will prepare a chart with their findings. One group will prepare a chart explaining the diet. Another group will make drawings of the clothing. Another group will prepare a diagram of the government structure; another group will work on the climate, the flora and the fauna, and so on. This activity will be repeated with each cultural group studied in the class.

Activity Two

Students will choose one cultural trait and compare and contrast this trait from the different cultural groups. For example, they can compare the diet of the Tibetan people and the diet of Shoshones of North America. Students will compare other cultural traits, including the different environments (TAKS objective 4).

Evaluation

After sharing their findings with the rest of the class, students will discuss the effects of the environment in the culture of a region. Each student will write their thoughts and reflect about their findings in their journals. Students will practice inference and summarizing and will reach their own conclusions (TAKS objectives 1, 4).

Lesson Plan 3: My Own Journey of Discovery

Student Objectives

Students will create their own journeys of discovery applying all the information learned in this unit.

Activity One

Students will create a timeline with the most important events of their journey from their countries of origin to America.

Activity Two

Students will draw a map of their journey, including important landmarks and geographic features.

Activity Three

Students will write a journal of their travel experiences. They will include facts, opinions, and points of view; explain the purpose of their journey; and draw their own conclusions about the outcome of their expedition (TAKS objectives 1, 2, 3, 4).

Evaluation

Students will present their final product to the class. It should include:

- A compare-and-contrast graphic organizer explaining some of the cultural traits of their country of origin and the United States, such as diet, clothing, family structure, and government.
- A map of their journey.
- A diary.

Students' work will be graded according to their presentations and content knowledge.

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