

Routes Across America

Use geographic terms and map tools to trace an important expedition.

SS.8.G.1.2 "Use appropriate geographic tools and terms to identify and describe significant places, and regions in American history."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every named place or region, circle every geographic tool or term that helps describe location, and number the route's major stages from start to finish.

Mapping the Lewis and Clark Route

- ① In 1803, the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France. To understand this huge region, President Thomas Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark west in 1804. Their expedition began near St. Louis, on the Mississippi River. A river map helped the group follow waterways and record tributaries, smaller streams that flow into a larger river. The Missouri River carried them northwest across the Great Plains, a broad interior region with grasslands and few trees.
- ② Beyond the plains, the expedition entered the Rocky Mountains, a rugged mountain range west of the Great Plains. Near Lemhi Pass, on the present-day Idaho-Montana border, the travelers crossed the Continental Divide. This high ridge separates river systems that flow toward different oceans. Their route then followed the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia Rivers west. By recording directions, distances, landforms, and river connections in journals, the expedition created geographic information later mapmakers could use.
- ③ In late 1805, the group reached the Pacific Ocean near the mouth of the Columbia River, in the Pacific Northwest. They built Fort Clatsop on the river's south side, near present-day Astoria, Oregon. On a historical map, a legend explains symbols, while a scale shows the relationship between map distance and actual distance. Using these tools, a reader can locate the expedition's route and describe how rivers, plains, mountains, and the coast shaped travel across the continent.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Identify the expedition's starting place and the river beside it.

2 What region did the Missouri River carry the expedition across? Describe one landscape feature of that region.

3 At what present-day state border did the travelers cross the Continental Divide? What is the Continental Divide?

4 Name the two map tools in the last paragraph and tell what each one helps a reader understand.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a significant American history place or region not named in the reading. Write exactly four sentences that locate it with at least two geographic terms, name one geographic tool that could help identify it, and explain why the place or region mattered in history. Actually use the teacher-provided atlas or map to locate your chosen place. On separate paper, record the map title/date and two observed location details; explain how one supports your description. Distinguish mapped location evidence from historical facts learned elsewhere.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every named place or region, circle every geographic tool or term that helps describe location, and number the route's major stages from start to finish. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Identify the expedition's starting place and the river beside it.	The expedition began near St. Louis, on the Mississippi River.
2	What region did the Missouri River carry the expedition across? Describe one landscape feature of that region.	It carried the group across the Great Plains, a broad interior region with grasslands and few trees.
3	At what present-day state border did the travelers cross the Continental Divide? What is the Continental Divide?	They crossed near the Idaho-Montana border. The Continental Divide is a high ridge that separates river systems flowing toward different oceans.
4	Name the two map tools in the last paragraph and tell what each one helps a reader understand.	A legend explains symbols. A scale shows the relationship between map distance and actual distance.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Gettysburg is in south-central Pennsylvania, north of the Mason-Dixon Line and east of the Appalachian Mountains. It lies near roads that connected several towns, making it an important location during the Civil War. A political map can identify Pennsylvania and nearby states, while a scale can estimate distances from Washington, D.C. The Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 made this place significant because it was a major Union victory.

Accept equivalent geographic descriptions that accurately identify the locations, regions, landforms, and map tools named in the passage. For the open response, accept any accurate significant American history place or region not named in the reading that includes two geographic terms, a relevant tool, and a historical explanation. Supply a readable sourced atlas/map covering learners' selected places, with political or physical labels and usable legend. Check each actual location and observed details against it. Require both the original four-sentence explanation and separate map record; naming a tool without using it is insufficient. The original Gettysburg model is a historical/geographic explanation, not a claim that a particular map was inspected.