

Possible Interactions: Bartering Activity

In order to complete this activity, the students will need something to simulate the bartering that is taking place. A card document is included to use with this activity. The teacher should print out cards for each group to use for the bartering process. The teacher will pair the students up in groups of two. One of the students will take on the role of either Lewis or Clark, the other student will take on the role of a Shoshoni Indian Chief Cameahwait (Ka-may-a-wait). The student who is Lewis or Clark will get the cards that say Lewis/ Clark on them and the student that is Chief Cameahwait will get the cards with the Chief's name on them. Have the students cut along the perforated lines designated on the sheets to create the cards. The students will trade the items that they currently hold with each other until they are satisfied with their bartering. Read the scenario then read the activity directions at the bottom.

Here is the scenario. Lewis and Clark have just reached the source of the Missouri River in Western Montana in August of 1805. The Indians that they met there were Shoshoni and the tribe possessed many items that Lewis and Clark were going to need in order to survive the rest of the trip. This is a list of the things that the Indians had, which were many of these things were things that Lewis and Clark needed.

- Shelter
- Food
- Horses
- Canoes
- Maps
- Native American Guides
- Warm clothing
- Animal skins

The Shoshoni knew the land around them very well. They were peaceful towards Lewis and Clark and offered to trade items with the Expedition group. The Indians suggested that Lewis and Clark get horses and canoes for upcoming portions of their trip. Horses were needed for travel through the Bitterroot Mountains and over the Continental Divide. The canoes were needed in order to travel down the Clear-water River in Idaho, after they had passed over the mountains. The leader of the Shoshoni tribe was Chief Cameahwait. He was the person in charge of trading with Lewis and Clark. There were many items that Lewis and Clark had that the Shoshoni's would like to trade for. This is a list of those items.

- pocket mirrors
- sewing needles
- small scissors
- sewing thread
- silk ribbons

- ivory combs
- handkerchiefs
- yards of bright-colored cloth
- rolls of tobacco
- tomahawks that doubled as pipes
- knives
- brass kettles
- vermilion face paint
- tiny beads of assorted colors

Lewis or Clark will attempt to barter for: 18 horses, an Indian guide for 2 weeks, 20 animal skins, 7 canoes, and food for 3 weeks. Chief Cameahwait will try to get the best deal for his village. Students will trade items back and forth as they barter a trade. At the conclusion of the activity the students will write their name onto a piece of paper and glue their possessions on this paper. Each group's final results will be used to compare with the rest of the class to see how each group bartered.