

# Geography and History Activity

**networks**

## The Jefferson Era

### Lesson 2 *The Louisiana Purchase*

#### Understanding Human-Environment

#### **Interaction:** Flora and Fauna of the Louisiana Territory

When Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark to explore the Louisiana Purchase, one of the assignments he gave them was to learn more about the flora and fauna, or plant and animal life, of the land. He asked them to record "the animals of the country generally, & especially those not known in the US; . . . the dates at which particular plants put forth or lose their flower, or leaf, times of appearance of particular birds, reptiles, or insects."

Lewis and Clark kept detailed journals about the plants and animals they observed. Some of the animals they encountered were bighorn sheep, buffalo, grizzly bears, and prairie dogs. Some of the plants they found were beargrass, which horses would not eat ; camas, or quamash, a plant that the Nez Perce often ate ; bitterroot, which was named in honor of Lewis (*Lewisia rediviva*), now the Montana State flower; and Ponderosa pine, a tree that Lewis often called longleafed pine.

Many of these species were quite common during the Lewis and Clark expedition. Now some are extinct or limited in number.



**Bighorn sheep**



**Prairie dog**

# Geography and History Activity *Cont.*

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## The Jefferson Era



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**Buffalo, or Bison**



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**Grizzly bear**

**Geography and History Activity** *Cont.***networks****The Jefferson Era****Understanding the Concept****Directions** Answer the following questions.

- 1. Naming** Name four animals and four plants that Lewis and Clark encountered.

**Animals**

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**Plants**

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- 2. Explaining** How do we know about Lewis and Clark's discoveries?

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- 3. Speculating** Why do you think Jefferson wanted to know about the animals and plants of the new lands?

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\_\_\_\_\_**Applying the Concept**

- 4. Contrasting** If you followed Lewis and Clark's route today, how would your animal and plant observations differ from theirs?

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- 5. Formulating Questions** Identify three questions you could ask to learn more about the plants and animals Lewis and Clark discovered.

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