

Sacagawea

Not a lot is known about Sacagawea before she was twelve years old. At the age of twelve, she and several girls in her Shoshone tribe were kidnapped by the Hidatsa tribe during a battle. She became the wife of a trapper from Quebec named Toussaint Charbonneau.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and the Corps of

Discovery spent the winter of 1804 near the Hidatsa village. Lewis and Clark hired Charbonneau and pregnant Sacagawea to be their interpreters. Charbonneau spoke French and Sacagawea could speak Shoshone language. They moved into Fort Mandan with the Corps for the rest of the winter. Sacagawea gave birth to Jean Baptiste Charbonneau on February 11, 1805.

Sacagawea, with baby in tow, was a huge help to the Corps of Discovery. Not only was she a guide and interpreter, she showed other tribes that the group's trip was a peaceful one. She helped in other ways too. Sacagawea managed to rescue items that had fallen from a boat that turned over, which included the journals of Lewis and Clark. Additionally, it was because of her that they had great success in getting horses to cross the Rocky Mountains. Her brother was the chief of the tribe they came upon, so he agreed to barter horses to the group as well as send some of the tribe to help guide them through the mountains. Sacagawea was a benefit to the group yet again after the trip through the mountains. Many of the members of the Corps grew weak during the difficult journey through the Rockies, but Sacagawea cooked some camas roots which helped these men regain their strength.

After Lewis and Clark's expedition, Sacagawea and Charbonneau returned to the Hidatsa tribe. Three years later, they moved to Missouri where William Clark lived. Here, Sacagawea gave birth to a daughter, Lizette. It is believed that Sacagawea died soon after in 1812 of an unknown illness, and that William Clark adopted her children.

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Sacagawea KEY

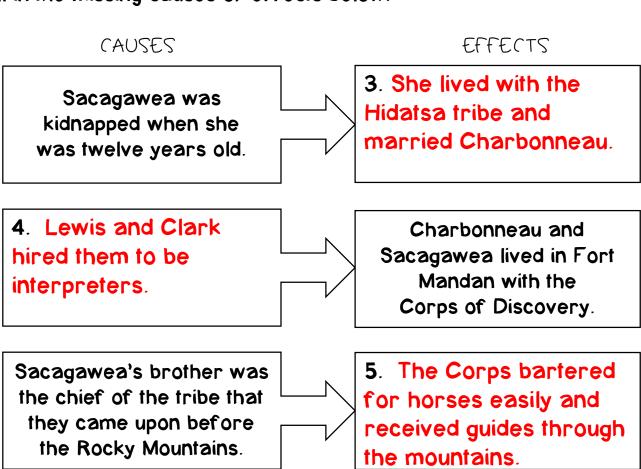
1. Why did Lewis and Clark ask Sacagawea to come along on their expedition?

She could speak the Shoshone language, and her husband could speak French, so they could translate. She would also show that the group was travelling peacefully by coming along.

2. Why do you think there isn't much known about Sacagawea's early life?

She was kidnapped and taken from people that might have known.

Fill in the missing causes or effects below:





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