



# TeachersFirst **READING TREKS**

## *The Journey of York: The Unsung Hero of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*

### Teacher Guide

### Grade Level & Content Areas

Access Reading  
Trek Map

**Ages:** 7–10

**Grades:** 2–4 (read-aloud), 3–5  
(independent reading)

**Reading Level:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Lexile Measure:** 870L

**Guided Reading Level:** S

**Developmental Reading**

**Assessment (DRA):** 40

**Content Areas:** Reading,  
literature, and social studies  
(including history and geography).

## Synopsis of Book

After portraying York as part of the National Park Service's Chautauqua Living History event for the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Hasan Davis gave him a voice in print. York, an enslaved man, was the only member of the Corps of Discovery who did not volunteer, had a wife, and did not receive governmental land grants. In this picture book, York narrates his journey through the wilderness, poling up the Missouri River, encountering Native Americans, and eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean.

## Standards

### Common Core State Standards for K–5

#### Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

#### Reading: Informational Text

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

#### Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge

## National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- Theme 1: CULTURE
- Theme 2: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
- Theme 3: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS
- Theme 4: INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY
- Theme 9: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

## Next Generation Science Standards

- Topic 2: Structure and Properties of Matter

## National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- CREATING
- RESPONDING

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## Using a TeachersFirst® Reading Trek to Explore This Book

TeachersFirst Reading Treks create a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or a text using the My Maps feature of Google Maps. To motivate and enrich student reading, teachers and students can reference this visual collection of web resources and images as they relate to the contents of a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this teacher guide and the accompanying [Reading Trek map](#) as you and your students explore this book. And, if you feel inspired, you (or your students) can create your own Reading Trek about this or another book!

## Using This Reading Trek in Class

Below is a list of ideas for how to use this Reading Trek in your educational setting.

### Working with the Map:

1. Introduce the book to the whole class by displaying the [Reading Trek map](#) on an interactive whiteboard. Highlight Deborah Hopkinson's site, her layer, and the layer for the illustrator.
2. Identify and map the Native American Tribes that the expedition encountered while crossing North America. Mark the tribes along their route using a digital tool like Google My Maps ([TeachersFirst review](#)) and discuss how York influenced diplomacy and the expedition's interactions with each tribe.
3. As a class or in small groups, choose a location from the map to visit, tour, or camp and plan a pretend trip. Generate a list of shared materials needed, such as tents and cooking gear (with or without electricity), then decide who in the group will be responsible for transporting them and how. Students will then create lists of necessary personal items,

including clothing and toiletries, that will fit in a chosen size of backpack.

4. Compare historical and modern geography. Have students begin with 2 maps: one from the early 1800s and one that shows modern states (such as the [Reading Trek map](#)). Have them compare the two, noting states that did not exist, the expansion westward, and how much Native American land was lost. Students can use an online tool such as Canva's Venn Diagram Creator ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to compare.
5. Use the [Reading Trek map](#) to spark discussion, pose questions, or inspire writing prompts about traveling across the United States.
6. View "[The Journey of York - Unsung Hero of the Lewis and Clark Expedition by Hasan Davis](#)" as a preview or post-reading activity.
7. Read "[No Regular Botanist](#)" to learn about Lewis's plant press. Using manila or construction paper and large, heavy books, students can follow Lewis's technique for pressing leaf and flower samples. Students

## Extension Activities:

1. Visit Mr. Nussbaum's [Lewis and Clark Expedition activities](#). Many of these activities are free—simply choose a grade-level-appropriate activity or quiz.
2. Visit [Alleanna Harris's illustration gallery](#) and have students write a response to a selection of illustrations or create a drawing of their own. Students can share their responses with Ms. Harris by emailing [alleannacharris@gmail.com](mailto:alleannacharris@gmail.com).
3. Visit Ducksters ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to learn more about [Sacagawea's life](#) and have students take the ten-question quiz to assess comprehension. Read the Ducksters full

should journal and draw the specimens over several days or weeks to note the changes. You might try replacing paper and pen journals with Penzu ([TeachersFirst review](#))—you can add images or your own artwork as illustrations.

8. Construct a virtual timeline using Preceden ([TeachersFirst review](#)). (Read the full review for more ideas for using the tool.) Teachers will also want to reference this [Monticello Lewis and Clark Timeline](#).
9. Earn the [Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail online Junior Ranger badge](#). The badges are free to all class members who submit their work through the post or email. Teachers may submit all students' work through a single email.
10. Track York's impact by locating places that were named after him and monuments honoring him. List states (or color them on the map) that have officially recognized York and his part in the expedition.

review for more ideas for using the Ducksters site.

4. Visit Duckster's page on [Native American Art](#), then create a paper Nez Perce shirt and decorate it. Using brown construction paper or cardstock, cut out a shirt shape, then adorn it with feathers, beads, and crumpled tissue pieces. You can also create the shirt virtually using Tux Paint ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
5. Discuss the meaning of perseverance and identify individuals throughout history who demonstrate this character trait. Create a collection of short stories of personal perseverance. Consider using FlexClip

- ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to create video recordings you can share on your class website.
6. Have the students write diary entries from York's point of view that describe some of the significant events from the journey. For an online option, use Padlet ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to create and share entries.
  7. Have students write a letter to President Thomas Jefferson requesting York's freedom and recognition for the many ways he helped the expedition.
  8. Have a class discussion where students share why they think York's story was left out of history for so long. What does it mean to be a hero? How did York's race and slavery in general impact his legacy? Use a tool such as Kialo Edu ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to spark a class discussion or debate.
  9. Design a poster that advocates for York's freedom. List or illustrate his contributions to the expedition using pen and paper or a digital tool like Adobe Express for Education ([TeachersFirst review](#)).

## Helpful Resources

### From TeachersFirst:

- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [TeachersFirst Review of Google My Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Building Background Knowledge with Reading Treks](#)
- [OK2Ask: No Passport Required: Cross-Curricular Learning Journeys with Google My Maps](#)

### Other Resources:

- [Hasan Davis](#)
- [Alleanna Harris](#)
- [Filson Historical Society](#)
- [Discover Lewis and Clark - Synopsis of the Expedition](#)