

Lewis & Clark's South Dakota Adventure  
4th Grade Gallery Class

**Program Goals:**

- To identify the Missouri River as the route used by Lewis & Clark.
- To recognize people, animals, and landscapes the Corps of Discovery encountered while traveling through what would one day be South Dakota.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Location:** Observation Gallery

**Hands-on Items for the Class:**

12 x 7 foot floor mat of the Missouri River in SD

All other hands-on items are in numbered cloth bags whose contents relate to the 11 stops on the floor mat.

**Bag 1 X - docent**

- Keelboat model
- Pirogues photo
- Missouri River photo

**Bag 2 X**

- Buffalo figurine
- Spirit Mound photo

**Bag 3**

- Buffalo tracks
- Buffalo herd photo

**Bag 4 X**

- 15-stripe US flag

**Bag 5 X**

- Jefferson peace medal

**Bag 6**

- 2 strings of trade beads

**Bag 7 X**

- Antelope figurine
- Antelope photo

**Bag 8**

- Antelope horns

**Bag 9**

- Antelope tracks
- Antelope photo

**Bag 10 X**

- Prairie dog figurine

**Bag 11 X**

- Prairie dog pelt

**Bag 12**

- Prairie dog skull
- Prairie dog photo

**Bag 13 X**

- Plesiosaur figurine

**Bag 14 X**

- 45-foot measuring cord

**Bag 15 X**

- Deer antlers
- Deer photo

**Bag 16**

- Deer figurine
- Deer photo

**Bag 17 X**

- Elk figurine
- Elk photo

**Bag 18**

- Deer tracks
- Deer photo

**Bag 19**

- Elk tracks
- Elk photo

**Bag 20**

- Buffalo hide piece
- Buffalo photo

**Bag 21 X**

- Coyote figurine
- Coyote photo

**Bag 22 X**

- Coyote pelt

**Bag 23**

- Coyote jawbone
- Coyote tracks

**Bag 24 X**

- Compass
- 2 laminated maps

**Bag 25**

- Spyglass

**Bag 26 X**

- 15-stripe US flag

**Bag 27 X**

- Tobacco twist
- Pirogue photo

**Bag 28 X**

- Grizzly bear track

**Bag 29**

- Grizzly bear jawbone
- Grizzly bear photo

**Bag 30**

- Grizzly bear claw
- Grizzly bear photo

**Bag 31 X**

- 15-stripe US flag

**Bag 32 X**

- Arikara-style pot
- Earth lodge photo

**Bag 33**

- Bag of loose tobacco
- Photo of earth lodge village painting

**Bag 34**

- Buffalo shoulder blade bone

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**Preparation:**

- Lay the floor mat out on the Observation Gallery floor.
- Put 3 or 4 chairs along the wall by the water exhibit for teachers/chaperones.
- Put one chair near the mat for yourself. Have the cart with the bags near the staircase. The bags with the X's should be placed in the top rack – they need to be distributed first. (There are 18 bags with X's and 34 bags total.)

**In the lobby:**

- Take the docent bag with you and meet the group at the front door. Point out the restrooms and allow a few minutes if needed. Give teacher the evaluation form and envelope.
- Gather the group in the lobby and explain what they will be doing.
  - Ask if the class has studied Lewis and Clark. Explain that today they are going to be learning about Lewis and Clark's South Dakota adventure. It wasn't called South Dakota when they traveled through it in 1804, but later on became the state. They are NOT seeing the entire museum (unless the teacher has arranged for/allowed time for a tour after the class)
  - Show the class the bag (don't show them what's inside). Explain that everyone in the group will be getting a bag with something inside that relates to the adventure. No peeking allowed!
- Lead the group to the Observation Gallery. As they come past the cart, hand each one a bag being sure to hand out the X'd bags first. Teachers and chaperones get a bag, too, if they want.
- Have the students sit or kneel around the perimeter of the floor mat and place their bags on the mat in front of them. Teachers/chaperones sit on the chairs. Avoid using the blue couches.

**Class Steps:**

- You read aloud the information for the introduction and each of the 11 stops at each stop.
- Ask the questions, if needed.
- Have the students with the bags for each stop pick them up and guess what might be inside.  
Have the other students offer suggestions after those holding the bags have had their turn.
- Have each student with a bag for the stop open the bag and take out the item or items inside and hold them up so the entire class can see them. They do NOT pass the items around because at the end of the adventure everyone gets a few minutes to look at and handle all of the objects.
- Have the students place the items on top of the items' bag on the floor mat.
- Move on to the next stop and repeat through all 11 stops.
- When the 11th stop has been completed, have everyone pick up their item or items. Have them pass their items to the person on their right. Give them a little time to examine the object, and then repeat – passing items until they come back to the original holder. The original holder puts them back in their bag.
- The students stand up and give the bags back to you. Lead the class back down to the lobby. Thank them for coming.

**NOTE:** It's hard to sit/kneel on the floor for the length of the class, so there are deliberate stand-up-and-move times built into the class. These are at Stop 2, Stop 5, Stop 9, and Stop 11. DO NOT SKIP THE STAND-UP parts of the adventure, even though the same action is repeated at Stops 2, 9, and 11. It gives the students a chance to move around a bit.

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**Introduction**

**Read aloud**

After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, President Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark's expedition, the Corps of Discovery, to explore the Missouri River and its tributaries. The explorers observed all aspects of the new territory – native tribes, animals, plants, and climate. Today we are going to explore some of their findings and experiences in what would one day be South Dakota.

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**Question:** What is the name of the river on the center of the floor map? (Missouri).  
Show the photograph of the Missouri River

**Question:** What types of boats did Lewis & Clark use on their journey?  
(power boats? steamboats? rowboats?)

Let's see what the boats they used looked like:

- a. The keelboat (show model) was 55 feet long and 8 feet wide. It had 22 oars, but could also be sailed, poled like a raft, or towed from the riverbank.
- b. The pirogues (PER-rogues) (show photo) were two wooden row boats that also made the journey up the river. These boats could be sailed or towed as well.

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**STOP 1**

**Read aloud:**

On August 25, 1804, Lewis and Clark decided to go and see a hill in the area that all the local tribes avoided. The Indians called it the mountain of the little people, or spirits. It was supposed to be the home of small devils in human form, 18 inches high, with very large heads and armed with sharp arrows that could kill at a great distance.

Lewis & Clark climbed the hill and didn't find any little 18-inch devils, but they did see a beautiful landscape with herds of buffalo feeding in all directions.

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**Question:** What was the hill Lewis & Clark climbed called? (Spirit Mound)

Bag 2 items –

- a. Spirit Mound photograph
- b. Buffalo figurine

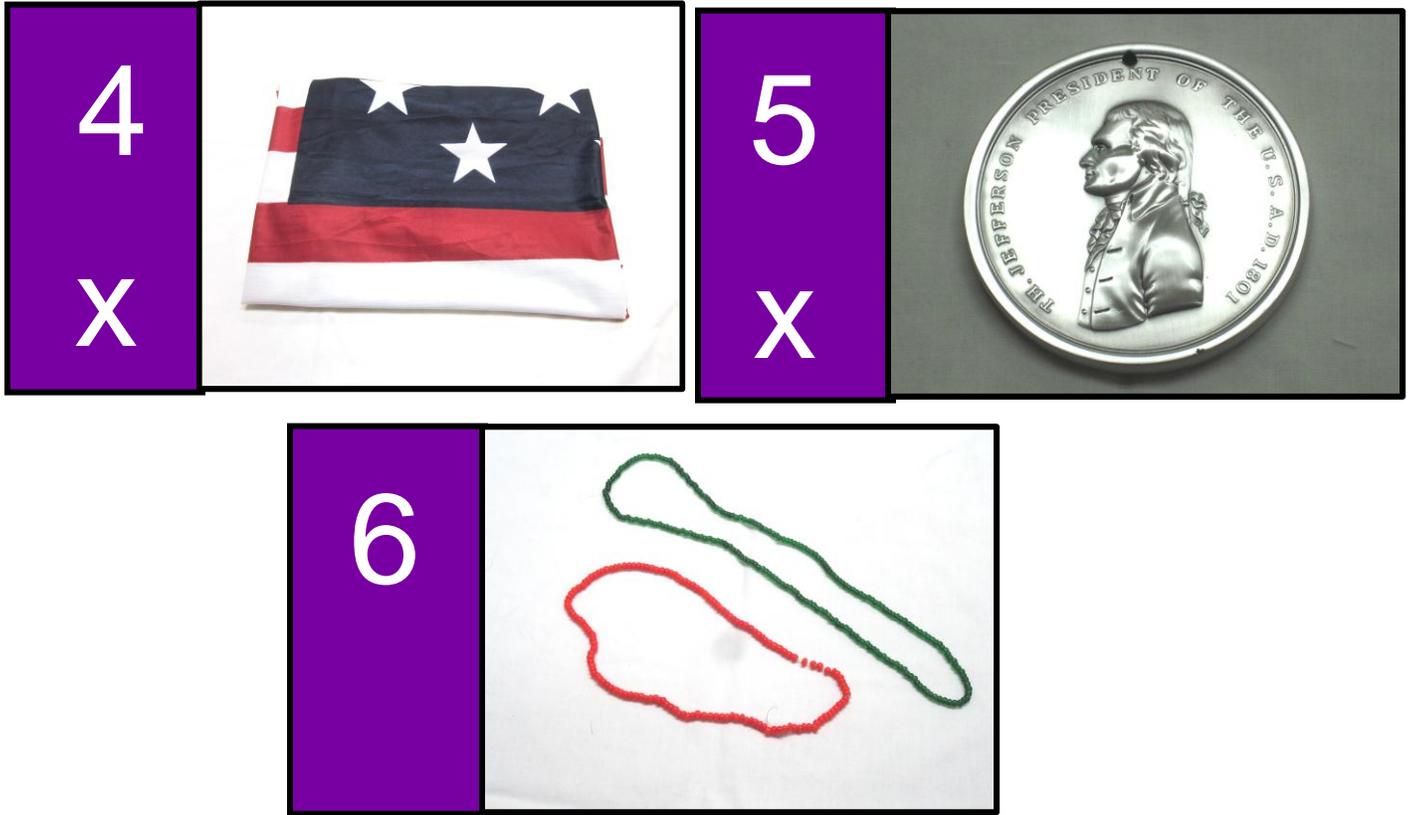
On August 23, 1804, in South Dakota, Lewis and Clark feasted on their first buffalo. The big animals were a good source of food for the expedition. Each man ate about nine pounds of meat every day when the hunting was good.

Bag 3 items –

- a. Buffalo herd photograph
- b. Buffalo track molds

Buffalo can grow up to 6 feet tall at the shoulder and weigh 2000 pounds.

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**STOP 2**

**Read aloud**

The expedition met with the Yankton Sioux tribe on August 30, 1804. Lewis and Clark met with the chiefs and warriors under an oak tree near a spot where they had set up a high flagpole. They made a speech and gave the chiefs medals, clothes, and tobacco.

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Bag 4 item –

- a. 15-stripe flag. Between 1795 and 1818, the official flag of the United States had 15 stripes and 15 stars. It was the only flag to have more than 13 stripes. Lewis & Clark carried this flag on their journey and flew it whenever they met with local tribes.

Have the student stand and hold the flag up (they may need a neighbor to help hold it). Have the rest of the group stand, turn to the person on their right and bow or shake hands. Do the same to the person on their left. Sit back down.

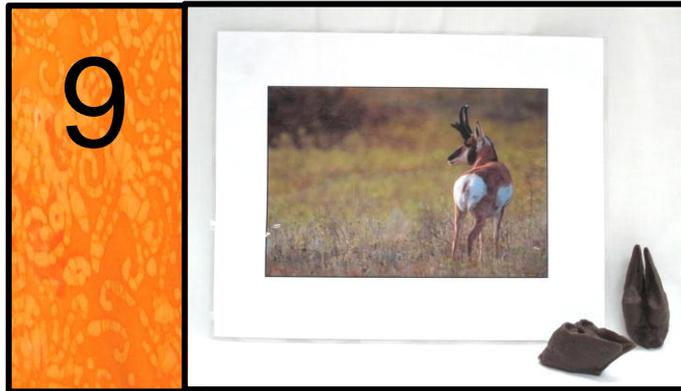
Bag 5 item –

- a. Jefferson Peace medal. Lewis & Clark took along several different sized medals to give to the Native American chiefs along their route. This is a replica of the medium-sized medal Lewis & Clark took along.

Bag 6 items –

- a. Two strings of trade beads. Lewis and Clark took gifts of beads, tobacco, clothing and other items to give to the Indian tribes they met.

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**STOP 3**

**Read aloud:**

Clark wrote in his journal about seeing “wild goats” on September 3, 1804. A few days later Lewis described the animals in more detail, noting that it was difficult to get close without spooking them and that they ran so fast they almost looked like birds flying rather than animals running.

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**Question:** What animal did they encounter? (pronghorn antelope)

Bag 7 items –

- a. pronghorn figurine
- b. pronghorn photograph

Pronghorns are only found in the American Great Plains. They can run up to 60 mph. Both males and females have horns.

Bag 8 items –

- a. pronghorn horns
- The horn has two parts, a bony core covered by a black outer sheath made up of a stiff, hair-like substance.

Bag 9 items –

- a. pronghorn track molds
  - b. pronghorn photograph
- Like deer and mountain goats, pronghorns have two-part hooves that leave tracks that look like upside-down hearts.

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**STOP 4**

**Read aloud:**

Lewis and Clark encountered their first "town" of these little animals on September 7, 1804. In their journals, they describe how the animals sit erect at the edge of their holes and slip down the hole when something spooks them. They shake their tails and whistle when they are alarmed, too.

**Question:** What animal are Lewis & Clark talking about? (prairie dog)

**Read aloud:**

The explorers captured one of the animals alive by having all the men on the boats haul water from the river and pour it down the prairie dog's hole to flush him out. The following April they sent the prairie dog to President Jefferson with the group that returned downriver to St. Louis. The prairie dog survived the journey.

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Bag 10 items –

a. prairie dog figurine

Prairie dogs feed on grasses, roots, and seeds. They communicate with loud cries. The animals will run down their holes when a warning cry lets them know a predator is coming. A second, "all-clear" call tells them the danger has passed.

Bag 11 items –

a. prairie dog pelt

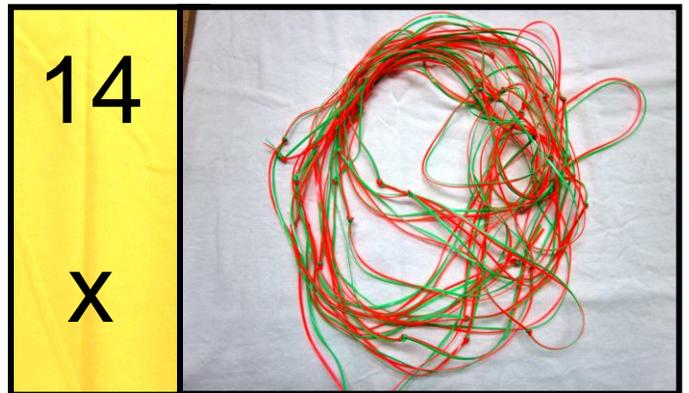
Lewis & Clark collected skins, bones and teeth from the animals they found on their journey. These samples, along with their written descriptions, helped people study and learn more about the animals.

Bag 12 items –

a. prairie dog skull

b. prairie dog photograph

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**STOP 5**

**Read Aloud:**

On September 10, 1804, Clark found the fossilized backbone, teeth and ribs of a large marine mammal called a plesiosaur (pleez-ee-au-sore). The backbone was 45 feet long! The expedition members thought the bones belonged to a large fish. Some of the bones were sent back to Washington, DC, and are supposedly in the Smithsonian Institution.

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Bag 13 item –

a. plesiosaur figurine

Plesiosaurs were long-necked marine reptiles who lived in the warm seas that covered South Dakota 65 million years ago. Plesiosaurs became extinct at the same time as the dinosaurs.

Bag 14 item –

a. 45-foot measuring cord

How big is 45 feet anyway? Have all the students stand up. The student with the cord stands in the corner next to the elevator. The rest spread out in a line to the corner next to the stairwell. Have them hold the cord along the line. Note – They may have to put a “bend” in the cord at the stairwell. Have the student with the cord bag wrap the cord back up and everyone return to their places.

**Question:** Would a 45-foot plesiosaur fit in the Observation Gallery?

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15  X		16  X	
17		18	
19		20	

**STOP 6**

**Read aloud:**

The open grasslands of the Great Plains were a new experience for the Corps of Discovery. On September 17, 1804, Lewis described the view in his journal as “a fine level plain extending as far as the eye can reach. This scenery, already, rich, pleasing, and beautiful, was still further heightened by immense herds of buffalo, deer, elk, and antelope which we see in every direction feeding on the hills and plains.

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Bag 15 items –

- a. deer antlers
- b. deer photograph

Lewis & Clark collected specimens such as antlers, skeletons and pelts from the animals they encountered on their journey.

Bag 16 items –

- a. elk figurine
- b. elk photograph

Bag 17 items –

- a. deer figurine
- b. deer photograph

Bag 18 items –

- a. deer track molds
- b. deer photograph

Like antelope and elk, deer have two-part hooves that leave heart-shaped tracks.

Bag 19 items –

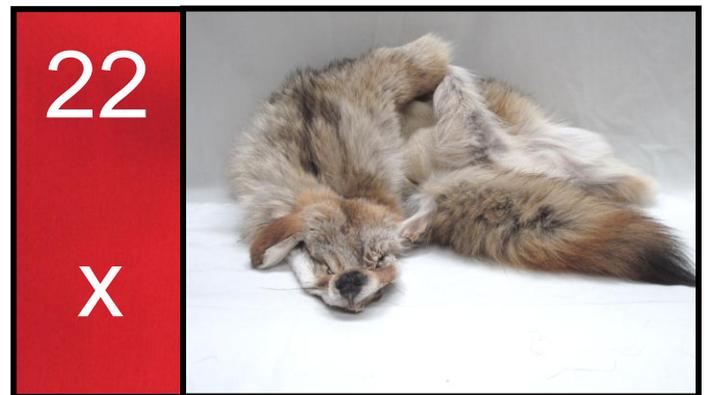
- a. elk track molds
- b. elk photograph

Bag 20 items –

- a. bison hide sample
- b. bison photograph

Lewis remarked in his journal that he did not exaggerate when he said he could see about 3,000 bison in one view.

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**STOP 7**

**Read aloud:**

On September 18, 1804, Clark killed an animal he referred to as a “prairie wolf.” He described the animal as being about the size of a fox with a bushy tail. It burrows in the ground and barks like a small dog. The explorers see many of these animals.

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**Question:** What animal are they seeing? (coyote)

Bag 21 items –

- a. coyote figurine
- b. coyote photograph

The coyote’s distinctive howls, yips, whines and barks often break the quiet of a prairie night.

Bag 22 item –

- a. coyote pelt

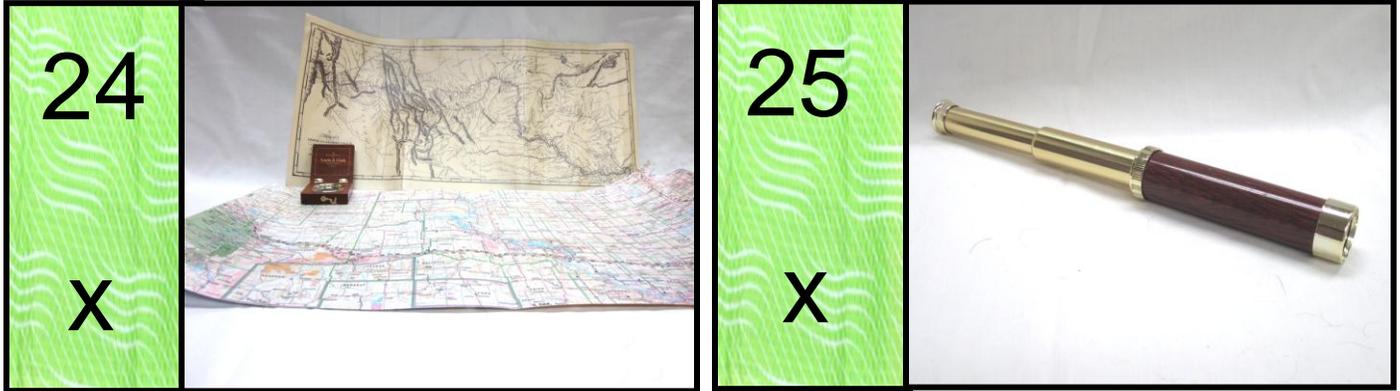
It is easy to see from the pelt how Lewis and Clark may have mistaken a coyote for a small wolf or fox.

Bag 23 items –

- a. coyote jawbone
- b. coyote track molds

Coyote tracks look much like those of our pet dogs.

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**STOP 8**

**Read aloud:**

The Missouri River bends and twists its way across the prairie. The expedition encountered one especially big bend in the river on September 20, 1804. The land strip from river to river was only 1.25 miles across. It was a 30-mile trip to go around the big bend by water.

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Bag 24 items –

- a. compass
- b. 2 maps

The explorers recorded each day's journey. They used the compass to know what direction they traveled. Using their notes and small maps they drew in their journals, Lewis and Clark were able to create one large map of their entire journey.

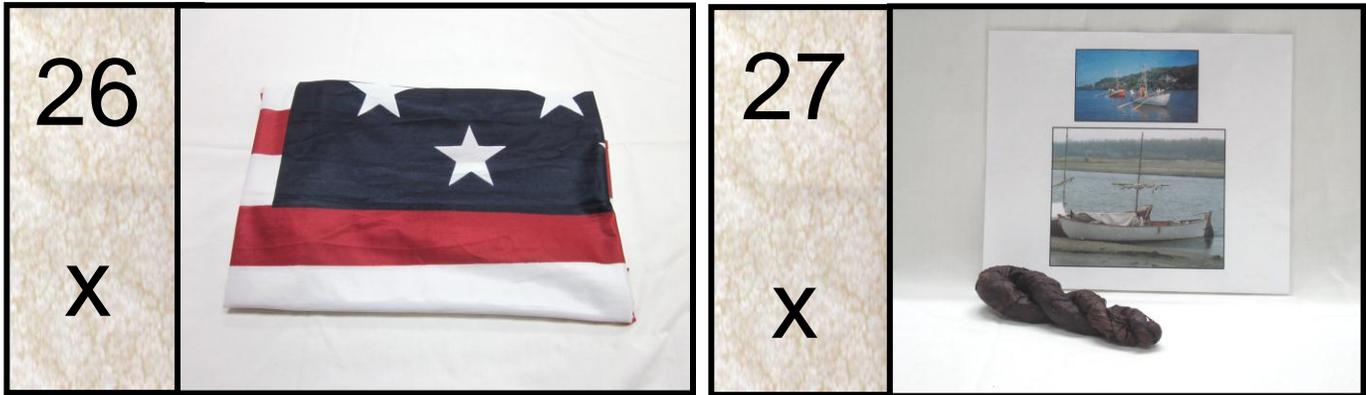
**Question:** Can you find the Big Bend on both maps?

Bag 25 item –

- a. spyglass

This is another useful tool that the explorers carried on their journey.

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**STOP 9**

**Read aloud:**

Without a good interpreter, Lewis and Clark had an uneasy meeting with the Teton Lakotas on September 25, 1804. The explorers met with the tribe in council and made speeches, and gave medals and gifts. The Tetons were a powerful tribe who made other tribes pay tolls or payments to use the Missouri River. They tried to seize one of the expedition's pirogues as a toll, but did not succeed. The expedition stayed with the tribe for three days, always on guard.

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Bag 26 item –

- a. 15-stripe flag. Just as when they met the Yanktons earlier, the Corps met with the Tetons under this flag. Have everyone stand up and once more greet their neighbors to the left and the right. Sit back down.

Bag 27 items –

- a. tobacco twist or carrot
- b. pirogue photograph

The Tetons tried to stop and hold one of the expedition's pirogues. After some discussion (probably loud discussion), the explorers gave the men holding the pirogue's rope a twist or carrot of tobacco and they let the rope go.

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**STOP 10**

**Read aloud:**

Although Lewis and Clark never saw one of these big mammals while they traveled through what would be South Dakota, they did see its tracks by the Moreau River. They called the tracks "very large."

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**Question:** What animal left the tracks they found? (Grizzly bear)

Bag 28 item –

- a. grizzly track mold

On one occasion, a grizzly chased Lewis into the river (it left him alone and did not attack.) The explorers developed a healthy respect for the bears.

Bag 29 items –

- a. grizzly bear jawbone
- b. grizzly bear photograph

Grizzly bears can grow up to 7 ft long and weigh as much as 700 lbs.

Bag 30 items –

- a. grizzly bear claw
- b. grizzly bear photograph

Grizzly claws could grow to over 4.5 inches long.

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**STOP 11**

**Read aloud:**

Lewis and Clark met the Arikaras near the present SD-ND border on October 12, 1804. As they had with the other tribes, the explorers made speeches and gave the chiefs gifts. The Arikaras lived in earth-lodge villages and raises crops which they traded with other tribes.

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Bag 31 item –

- a. 15-stripe flag.

The expedition met with the Arikaras under this flag. Have the group stand and greet their neighbors one more time, then resume their seats.

Bag 32 items –

- a. Arikara style pot
- b. Earth lodge photograph

The Arikaras used clay from the Missouri River area to make pottery. Their earth lodges were 30 to 40 feet in diameter, coneshaped, with an opening at the top to let smoke pass through.

Bag 33 items –

- a. bag of loose tobacco
- b. earth lodge village painting by George Catlin

The Arikara grew tobacco, corn, beans, and squash.

Bag 34 items –

- a. buffalo shoulder blade bone

Buffalo bones were useful for many purposes. Attaching a handle to the bone by tying it on with sinew or strips of leather made the bone into a good hoe.

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**Conclusion / Review**

**Question:** What is the name of the river that Lewis & Clark traveled on through the area that would become SD? (Missouri)

**Question:** Can you name three animals that Lewis & Clark described in their journals? (pronghorn, prairie dog, coyote, grizzly bear, bison)

**Question:** What three tribes did the Corps of Discovery meet traveling in what would become SD? (Yankton Sioux, Teton Lakota, Arikaras)

Ask/discuss these questions as the students are passing their objects around the circle so everyone can see all the items. Remind students to be sure and put the items they took out of their bag back into the correct bag.

Have students stand up and bring the bags back to the cart. Lead the group back to the lobby.