

Crossing the Continent to the Pacific



Sacagawea 1787?–1812?

Many years ago, much of America's land was wild, unknown, and dangerous. In 1804, President Thomas Jefferson asked Lewis and Clark to explore it. Sacagawea was a young Indian woman who was their guide, interpreter, and an important member of the expedition. Without her, Lewis and Clark might never have reached the Pacific Ocean.

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Sacagawea

Crossing the Continent to the Pacific

Cast: *Narrator*
Sacagawea, Indian guide and interpreter
Meriwether Lewis, explorer
William Clark, explorer
Cameahwait, Indian Chief
Chorus

Narrator: The year is 1804. The United States has just bought land from France, and President Thomas Jefferson wants to explore it. The land is huge, wild, unknown, and dangerous. He asks Lewis and Clark to lead an expedition.

CHORUS: *And so they went,*
And so they went,
Exploring, exploring
The unknown land.
Exploring, exploring
The unknown land.

Narrator: Travel was not easy. When winter came, they set up camp in an Indian village and waited until spring to travel again. They did not know the way. Who would help them? One day, an Indian woman came to the camp with her husband. Her name was Sacagawea.

CHORUS: *Sacagawea!*
Sacagawea!
What is your story?
Tell us your story.
Please tell us
About yourself.

Sacagawea: I am a Shoshone. My family were nomads. We traveled from place to place. When I was eleven, another Indian tribe attacked my village, and I was kidnapped. I learned the languages of many Indian tribes.

CHORUS: *How awful!
How awful!
How very, very awful!
What happened then?
What happened then,
Sacagawea?
What happened then?*

Sacagawea: After about four years, they sold me to this man, Charbonneau. He became my husband. And this is my baby, just four months old.

Lewis: Sacagawea, can you come with us? Can you come on this expedition? We need a guide. We need someone who can be an interpreter. We need someone who knows the land and these languages. Can you come?

Sacagawea: Yes, yes, I would be happy to come. My husband and I will go with you.

CHORUS: *And so she went,
And so she went,
With a baby
On her back,
With a baby
On her back,
Guiding, helping
Along the way.*

Narrator: One day, the boat she was in came upon rough waters. It almost sank. Valuable things started to float away. Everybody panicked except Sacagawea. She saved all the valuable goods.

CHORUS: *Sacagawea!*
Sacagawea!
You saved the day!
You saved the day!
Thanks to you,
Little was lost.
Sacagawea,
You saved the day!

Narrator Then, later in the voyage, something very unusual happened. Sacagawea, Lewis, and Clark came to an Indian village. As Sacagawea approached the Indian village, she stopped. She couldn't believe her eyes. Could it be? Was it possible? Was it really possible?

CHORUS: *Sacagawea,*
It is true.
This is your home
Of long ago.
Sacagawea,
Sacagawea,
Welcome home!
Welcome home!

Sacagawea: And these are my people! Look, there's my friend, my beautiful friend. But they say my sister is gone! She's dead! But I am happy to be among my people again! I am home again! I am home!

Clark: Sacagawea, the chief has called a council meeting. Let us go and meet him. You can interpret for us. These are your people.

CHORUS: *And so they sat*
Inside a tent.
Cameahwait,
The Indian Chief,
Began to speak,
Began to speak.

Sacagawea: Cameahwait! Cameahwait! Is it you? I don't believe it! I can't believe it! Don't you know me, Cameahwait? I am Sacagawea. I'm your sister! Your sister!

Cameahwait: My sister! My beloved sister! My sister who was kidnapped! My sister who was lost is here! We are together again. Do not cry, dear sister!

Sacagawea: These are tears of joy, my brother. These are tears of joy for meeting my brother again. At last! We are together again.

Cameahwait: Come, sister, let us talk. Let's talk of days gone by.

Narrator: And so Sacagawea told her brother about the years gone by. She also explained that Lewis and Clark were friendly.

Lewis: We need horses to get across the mountains.

Clark: Cameahwait, can you help us? Can you give us horses?

Cameahwait: Yes, we can help. We will give you the horses you need. But, Sacagawea, my sister, will you stay with us? Can you return to your people?

Sacagawea: No, my brother, I cannot stay. I have a new life. I have a husband. I have a child. I have learned new ways. I cannot stay. I will help my new friends. And I, too, want to see the great ocean. Goodbye, my brother.

Cameahwait: Goodbye, my dear sister, 'til we meet again.

CHORUS: *Sacagawea, Sacagawea,
Your old life is gone.
Your old life is gone.
Gone like the wind,
Gone like the wind.
Your new life is here,
Exploring the land.*

Narrator: And so, on November 7, 1805, after a long, hard journey across the wide plains and the high mountains, Lewis and Clark reached the Pacific Ocean, thanks in great part to Sacagawea, the quiet, brave woman who helped them so much as a guide, interpreter, and friend.