



Explore the Legacy - Earn the Patch

Introducing the Lewis and Clark Youth Activity Project

(Revised August 2025)

The [Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance](#) (LCTA) is dedicated to telling the full, rich story of the Corps of Discovery (1803 – 1806)—also known as the Lewis and Clark Expedition—and honoring the many individuals and communities who made the journey possible. We support the lessons that can be learned and applied today for our nation’s youth.

We also advocate and help to promote the 4,900-mile-long Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the many significant historical and cultural sites connected to this journey.



Now, we invite young people to join us in this important work through our new **Youth Activity Project**, a fun, educational, and inspiring way to engage with history, explore the outdoors, and earn a commemorative patch.

This program is for individuals aged 10–17 who participate in various settings, including:

- Scouting America
- Girl Scouts
- American Heritage Girls
- Camp Fire
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Children and Youth (LDS)
- Homeschoolers
- Other youth organizations and programs

Leaders, educators, and parents can support youth participants using the [LCTA Educational Resources and Curriculum Guides](#), available as a free download. These guides provide background information, activity suggestions, and context to help young explorers succeed.

To earn your patch, complete **three required activities and two optional activities**—five in total. Along the way, you will discover the enduring impact of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and learn why stewardship, storytelling, and diverse perspectives matter. There is a \$5 fee to cover the cost of the patch and mailing.

Adventure awaits—start your journey today!

Required Activities — Complete All Three

To earn your Lewis and Clark Youth Explorer Patch, complete all three of the required activities below. Each one will help you follow in the footsteps of the Corps of Discovery and gain a deeper understanding of the journey, the people, and the legacy of the Trail.

Requirement #1: Keep a Lewis & Clark-Style Journal

Become your own explorer by keeping a journal—just like at least seven members of the Corps of Discovery did during their expedition. These explorers recorded everything they saw, felt, and learned, leaving us with priceless insights into their journey and the Native peoples they encountered.

During your study of the Expedition, create your own journal using whatever format you like: a notebook, binder, scrapbook, handmade book, or even a digital journal. Be sure to include:

- A list of the activities you plan to complete.
- Notes about places you visit, people you meet, and what you observe (do not forget to date each entry)
- Weather conditions during your outings
- Descriptions or sketches of wildlife, plants, landscapes, or landmarks
- Drawings, maps, or other creative visuals
- A list of books, websites, or other resources you explore.
- A pocket or envelope to collect brochures, maps, photos, and keepsakes.

Requirement #2: Explore the [Discover Lewis & Clark Website](#)

Visit the **Discover Lewis & Clark** website, managed by the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance. Dive into the stories of the Expedition, the places they traveled, and the people they encountered.

- In your journal, write a concise summary about **three important things you discovered while reviewing the website.**
 - These can be facts about key individuals, historical locations, major events, or latest information that surprised or inspired you.
- Research the [American Indian Tribes](#) who lived in the areas explored by the Expedition
 - Throughout their journey, the Corps of Discovery met multiple American Indian tribes who welcomed the Corps into their homelands. Tribal people gave the Corps gifts of food and supplies, they traded with them, provided information and maps about the route ahead, and held councils with the two captains. Learn about Sacagawea, the young Shoshone woman who accompanied the Expedition and was integral to the survival of the Corps.
- Research the story of [York](#), William Clark's enslaved servant who was the first black man to explore the route along the Trail

Requirement #3: Share What You Learned

Learning becomes even more powerful when you share it with others! Choose one of the following ways to present what you have learned:

- **Create a public exhibit or project** for a classroom, library, museum, or a program like National History Day [www.nhd.org]
 - **Incorporate your learning into a school assignment** or design a presentation for a group or club.
 - **Invite a speaker** who knows about Lewis and Clark or Indigenous history to join your group or class and reflect on what you have learned.
 - **Share your journal**, an activity, or a new skill you developed with your friends, family, or group
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Optional Activities — Choose Any Two

Select at least **two** of the following activities to deepen your understanding of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the people they encountered, and the places they traveled. Each activity offers a unique way to explore, learn, and contribute.

1. Visit a Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center or Tribal Heritage Site

Use www.lewisandclark.travel to find a nearby museum, visitor center, or tribal site with exhibits related to the Lewis and Clark Expedition or Indigenous history. After your visit, reflect in your journal—what did you see, what did you learn, and how did it make you feel?

2. Explore Part of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

Take a journey along a section of the Trail. Before you go, [read](#) about the Corps of Discovery's experience in that area. Then hike, bike, canoe, kayak, snowshoe, or ride a horse for **at least five miles**. Use your journal to record the distance, weather, and what you observed.

3. Visit a High Potential Historic Site

Travel to a National Park Service-recognized site of significance from the Lewis and Clark journey. Use www.lewisandclark.travel to find one. In your journal channel your inner Corps of Discovery to describe what you experienced and include photos, drawings, or a story about what you learned.

4. Complete a Trail Service Project

Give back to the Trail! Participate in a conservation or volunteer activity such as trail clean-up, invasive plant removal, planting native species, or helping at a community event that your leader approves. Projects can be individual, or group based. Be sure to document what you did, when, where, and who helped.

5. Read a Book About Lewis and Clark

Choose a book related to the Expedition—biographies, historical fiction, or nonfiction (see the LCTA resource list for suggestions). After reading, write a short reflection in your journal: What did you learn? What surprised you? How did it change your perspective?

6. Explore Historic Foodways — Then Cook!

Research the [foods eaten by the Corps of Discovery, Native peoples, or early American communities](#). Learn about cooking techniques from the early 1800s. Plan a meal based on your research, prepare it, and share it with your family or group. In your journal, record your menu, ingredients, where you found your recipes, and what you learned.

7. Attend a Reenactment or Historic Encampment

Take part in—or visit—a reenactment or living history event that interprets the Corps of Discovery, fur trade, or Native life. Learn a new skill, talk to presenters, and experience history in action. Use your journal to capture your reflections and any direct activities you tried.

8. Participate in a [Junior Ranger](#) program provided at various Federal, State, and Local Parks and Interpretive Centers. Include this information in your journal.

9. Find and Document Trail Markers

Use www.lewisandclark.travel or www.trailresearch.org to locate at least **two** historic markers related to the Expedition. Visit each one, take a photo of yourself there, and note in your journal:

- The date and location
- What the marker says
- Why the site is significant.
- The condition of the marker and any cleanup you did
- GPS coordinates, if possible
- Any additional exploring you did nearby.

10. Research and Write an Essay

Explore your [favorite story](#) about the Corps of Discovery that interests you and write an essay in your journal that tells the story of a specific member of the Corps/tribal leaders, cartography, blacksmithing, boats, clothing, etc.

Lewis and Clark Trail Youth Patch Program – Resource Guide

Books

Youth

- *The Lewis and Clark Expedition* by Richard L. Neuberger (ages 9–12)
- *Lewis and Clark for Kids: Their Journey of Discovery with 21 Activities* by Janis Herbert
- *Seaman: The Dog Who Explored the West with Lewis and Clark* by Gail Langer Karwoski (historical fiction, grades 3–6)
- *How We Crossed the West: The Adventures of Lewis and Clark* by Rosalyn Schanzer
- *Streams to the River, River to the Sea* by Scott O'Dell (Sacagawea, historical fiction)

American Indian History & Culture (associated with Trail Tribes)

- *Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears* by Cornelia Cornelissen (grades 4–7)
- *Children of Native America Today* by Yvonne Wakim Dennis
- *The People Shall Continue* by Simon J. Ortiz (timeless classic by a Native author)

Adult & Educator Favorites

- *Undaunted Courage* by Stephen Ambrose
- *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* by James P. Ronda
- *Sacajawea* by Anna Lee Waldo (historical fiction)
- *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, edited by Bernard DeVoto
- *The Lewis and Clark Journals: An American Epic of Discovery* - Gary Moulton
- *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, edited by Frank Bergon
- *River of Promise: Lewis and Clark on the Columbia*. David Nicandri
- *The Making of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend* - Donna Kessler
- *Those Tremendous Mountains: The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* - David Freeman Hawke
- *The Character of Meriwether Lewis: Explorer in the Wilderness* – Clay Jenkinson
- *Passage Through the Garden: Lewis and Clark and the Image of the Northwest* - John Logan Allen
- *The Fate of the Corps: What Became of the Lewis and Clark Explorers After the Expedition* - Larry Morris
- *Exploring Lewis and Clark: Reflections on Men and Wilderness* - Thomas Slaughter
- *Acts of Discovery: Visions of America in the Lewis and Clark Journals* - Albert Furtwangler'

Websites

Lewis and Clark Trail Information

- www.lewisandclark.travel — Plan visits, explore historic sites, get maps.
- www.nps.gov/lecl — National Park Service: Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail
- [Discover Lewis and Clark](#) — Rich educational content on people, places, and ideas.
- [Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition](#) – Also includes online copy of Ronda’s book

American Indian Nations (Encountered in the Expedition)

- [Discover Lewis and Clark](#)
- [NPS American Indian Heritage](#) — Tribal relationships and heritage in the National Parks

Service & Conservation

- [Earth Day](#)
- [Leave No Trace](#)
- [National Environmental Education Foundation \(NEEF\)](#)
- [Junior Ranger Program \(NPS\)](#)
- [American Trails — Trail stewardship and programs](#)
- [National Trails Day](#)

Suggested Service Projects

- Trail or park clean-up (alone or part of a group)
- Tree or native plant planting
- Historical marker restoration, care, or clean-up
- Host a school, scout, or library display about the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail
- Organize a community presentation on local Indigenous history.
- Participate in a community cleanup (Earth Day, citywide, etc.)
- Help with a local nature center, tribal heritage event, or history museum.
- Assist with data collection or wildlife surveys with park rangers or naturalists.
- Help with an event that shares the story of the Corps of Discovery [i.e., an exhibit, an encampment/living history demonstration, a program/presentation/lecture]

Patch Award Application

Date:

Youth Name:

Unit Name:

Unit Mailing Address:

Unit Phone Contact:

Unit Leader who Supervised the Activities:

Unit Leader E Mail Address:

Unit Leader Signature to certify Requirements completion:

Patch Award Requirements Certification

Please submit a written report detailing how you completed both the mandatory and optional requirements for the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance Patch Award.

1. Mandatory Requirement #1: Maintain a Lewis & Clark-Style Journal

- a. What format did you use for your journal (e.g., digital, handwritten, bound notebook)?
- b. Include photographs or scans of your journal entries.
- c. Describe your journaling process. How often did you write? What did you include in your entries?
- d. Share highlights from your journal. What were the most interesting or educational insights you gained during this experience?

2. Mandatory Requirement #2: Explore the Discover Lewis & Clark Website

- a. Identify and describe three new facts or pieces of information you discovered from the website.
- b. Discuss what you learned about the American Indian Tribes the Corps of Discovery encountered.

- c. What is the most interesting thing you learned about Sacagawea?
- d. What fact stood out to you most about York, the African American member of the expedition?

3. Mandatory Requirement #3: Share Your Learnings

- a. Explain how you shared what you learned with others. For example, did you give a presentation, lead a group discussion, create a display, or use another method?

4. Optional Requirements

- a. Indicate which two optional activities you chose to complete.
 - b. Explain how you met the criteria for each selected optional requirement. Describe your experience and what you discovered.
 - c. Include relevant supporting materials such as:
 - Essays, reports, or creative projects
 - Photos of places you visited.
 - Notes from interviews
 - Any other documentation for your work
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Final Steps

Once the report is complete:

- Have your Unit Leader review your work to confirm all requirements have been fulfilled.
- The Unit Leader signed off the form and complete requested contact information.
- Submit the completed form and documented report along with a \$5 check made payable to cover the cost of patch, certificate, and mailing.

Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance
P.O. Box 3434
Great Falls, MT 59403
406 454 1234
info@lewisandclark.org

You can expect to receive your patch and certificate within 30 days of the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance receiving your complete documentation and payment.