

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography Page Count: 16 Word Count: 1,581

Book Summary

The explorers Lewis and Clark owe much of their success to the brave support of a young Native American woman: Sacagawea. Thanks to her, the expedition completed its mission, and Sacagawea's name became widely known—and surrounded by myth and speculation. In this biography, the author presents the actual facts connected to Sacagawea's life and involvement in the expedition, followed by a brief look at her death and the fates of her children. Illustrations and maps accompany the text and provide more detail.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Ask and answer questions to understand text
- Identify elements of a biography
- Classify names of people as proper nouns
- Recognize and use foreign vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources that are available on the website.

- Book—[Sacagawea](#) (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Sacagawea U.S. dollar coin
- Index cards
- [Ask and answer questions, elements of a biography, proper nouns: names of people worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

- **Content words:**
 - Story critical: *character* (n.), *contributions* (n.), *Corps of Discovery* (n.), *interpreters* (n.), *kidnapped* (v.), *Shoshone* (n.)
 - Enrichment: *expedition* (n.), *fortitude* (n.), *Louisiana Territory* (n.), *navigational* (adj.), *negotiations* (n.), *Northwest Passage* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Hold up a Sacagawea coin for every student to see. Ask students whether they can identify the woman on the coin. Have students call out her name if they know it. Explain to students that the country puts a person's profile on money when she or he has had an important impact on our country's history.

- Write *Sacagawea* on the board. Read the name aloud and have students repeat. Have students share with a partner any details they know about Sacagawea. Invite volunteers to share information with the rest of the class. Have students examine the cover of the book, and ask students if they can provide any more details about Sacagawea on the basis of the illustration.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, authors' names, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Review with students that engaged readers help themselves to understand what they are reading by asking questions before and during reading, and searching for the answers while they read. Discuss with students how asking and answering questions will help them understand and remember what they read.
- Model how to ask questions.
Think-aloud: Even before I begin reading, I may have questions that I want answered. Information on the cover or in the title could prompt questions. For example, on the cover of the book is a close-up picture of Sacagawea and a child. I can see from her dress that she is a Native American. What tribe is she from? Whose child is she carrying? I know from the title that this story will be about Sacagawea. Her name is familiar, and I know she had an important role in history, but I'm not sure what exactly she did. Why is Sacagawea famous? I will search for the answers to all these questions as I read.
- Introduce and explain the **ask-and-answer-questions worksheet**. Create a chart on the board similar to the one on the ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Write your questions from the think-aloud in the first box of the chart.
- Have students preview the cover and title, review the table of contents, and think about the questions they can generate from this information. Ask them to share at least one question with a partner. Then, have them record the question(s) in the first box of the chart on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet.
- Invite volunteers to share a question with the rest of the class, and record it on the board. Encourage students to search for answers to their questions as they read.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Elements of a biography**

- Ask students to explain to a partner the difference between a biography and a fictional story. Remind students that a biography is a true account of a real person's life written by someone else and a fictional story is a made-up account of characters' lives written by the author.
- Point out to students that *Sacagawea* is a biography. Ask students to identify the person who is the subject of the biography.
- Remind students that biographies often focus on three aspects of a person: personality, accomplishments, and influence. Write the words *Personality*, *Accomplishments*, and *Influence* on the board. Discuss with students the meaning of each. A personality is comprised of the qualities that make a person unique, accomplishments are successes achieved through practice or training, and influence is the effect a person has had on other people or groups.

- Read page 4 aloud and have students follow along. Model identifying elements of a biography. **Think-aloud:** *The first page introduces Sacagawea as a famous and revered Native American. She was a brave girl who was known for being part of a famous exploration trip during the early 1800s. She was the only female in the group and had to endure hunger, illness, bad weather, and isolation. She faced all of this while also taking care of an infant. This information provides clues about Sacagawea's personality. I know she was brave and a hard worker. I will look for more details describing her personality as I read, as well as information about her accomplishments and influence.*
- Write the words *brave* and *hard worker* beneath the *Personality* heading on the board.
- Have students identify the details from the think-aloud that show Sacagawea as being both brave and hard-working. Invite volunteers to share their reasoning with the rest of the class.
- Ask students to discuss with a partner the information they learned about Sacagawea's accomplishments or influence from this page (accomplishments: she was a part of a famous expedition, she survived many hardships; influence: she became one of the most famous Native Americans in history). Invite volunteers to share details with the rest of the class, and record the information beneath the appropriate heading on the board.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to sound out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for words within words, and prefixes and suffixes. They can use the context to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Introduce the story-critical vocabulary words and write them on the board. Remind students that vocabulary words are often in boldface print in a story. Have students work with a partner to find all six words in the book, and encourage students to race and see who can find all six words first.
- Have students work with their partner to examine the word in its context on the page and discuss possible definitions for it. Encourage students to turn to the glossary on page 16 and compare their definitions with those in the glossary. Discuss with students the meaning of each word.
- Pass out twelve index cards to each set of partners. Have students write the vocabulary words on six of the cards and the definitions for the words on the remaining six cards. Have students use the cards to play a memory game with their partner, where they match a word with its definition.
- Have students work with their partner to create oral sentences for the vocabulary words. Invite volunteers to share a sentence with the rest of the class.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about Sacagawea's life and influence. Encourage students to continue asking and answering questions and to focus on the elements of this biography as they read.


During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 4 to the end of page 7. Encourage those who finish early to go back and reread. Ask students to review the questions on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet with a partner and see whether this part of the text answered any questions.
- Model asking and answering questions. **Think-aloud:** *Before I began reading, I had some questions. I wondered what tribe Sacagawea was from. The first part of the biography taught me that she was from the Shoshone tribe. I also wanted to know about the child she was carrying. At the end of page 7, I discovered that she was pregnant and had a child right before the expedition started. Apparently, the child she was carrying on the cover was her own son! Finally, I wanted to find out why Sacagawea*

became famous. So far, although I know she was hired as an interpreter, I haven't learned anything that would have led to her being historically renowned. I will continue to search for the answer to that question. I will also look for the answers to new questions I thought of while I read. Was Sacagawea a good interpreter? How did she fare on the expedition with a baby?

- Record the answers in the second box of the chart on the board, and record the new questions in the first box of the chart. Have students read through the questions on the board and point to ones the story has answered in these first few pages. Invite volunteers to share the answers with the rest of the class, and record them in the second box of the chart.
- Have students write the answers to their questions in the second box of their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Ask them to discuss with a partner new questions they thought of as they read, and have them write these questions in the first box on their worksheet.
- Invite volunteers to share a new question with the rest of the class. Record questions in the chart on the board.
- Review with students the three elements of a biography. Have students work in groups of three to discuss the information they read about Sacagawea. Have one student in each group focus on one of the three elements of a biography and then have each student share with the group what he or she learned about Sacagawea's personality, accomplishments, or influence.
- Invite volunteers to share a detail with the rest of the class and identify whether this fact describes her personality, accomplishments, or influence. Have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree with the designation. Record the information under the appropriate heading on the board: *Personality, Accomplishments, or Influence*.
- If a student shares a fact that doesn't seem to belong to any of those three categories, discuss with students why they think the author included that information and whether it is somehow related to the three elements of a biography.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 8 through 11. Have them write answers they found while reading on their worksheet and any additional questions that came to mind. Have students share their new questions with a partner and discuss the answers they found for earlier questions.
- Introduce and explain the [elements-of-a-biography worksheet](#). Have students discuss with a partner new information they read that reflects Sacagawea's personality, accomplishments, and influence. Then, have them review the information recorded on the board. Have students write three details on the worksheet in the appropriate boxes.
- Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class one detail they recorded and explain why it is one of the elements of a biography. Record details under the appropriate heading on the board.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to look for answers and write them on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Encourage them to continue adding new questions as they read. Ask students to continue examining the story for examples of Sacagawea's personality, accomplishments, and influence.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Have students discuss with a partner final questions they had while reading and record them on their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet.

- **Think-aloud:** *Now that I have finished reading the story, I can check to see if it answered all my questions. I wanted to learn whether Sacagawea was a good interpreter and how she handled caring for an infant while embarked on a difficult journey. According to the high praise the team leaders bestowed on her, it is clear she did her job well. Also, she was with the group from the beginning to the end and was a valued member of the team, so she was okay even doing all of this as a new mother. Finally, I was curious about what made Sacagawea famous. Now I know. She is famous because she was a very important member of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and she helped them even while being younger and having a baby to care for. The expedition she was a part of was a big deal for our country. Knowledge of the Western territories was a key to expansion and development. Without Sacagawea, the men may never have completed their mission. I clearly see why Sacagawea is famous. Asking questions helped me to focus on the story and kept my interest about what I was reading throughout the story.*
- Discuss with students the remaining questions on the board and whether the book answered them. Invite volunteers to share an answer with the rest of the class, and record answers in the second box of the chart on the board.
- Invite volunteers to come to the board and circle unanswered questions. Discuss with students how they can find more information to answer these questions, using reference material from other sources, such as encyclopedias, the Internet, and other books on the subject. Write the unanswered questions in the third box on the chart to indicate that these questions pose topics of interest to readers.
- Point out to students that finding answers will often generate other questions. For example, when the story answered the question about the baby being Sacagawea's son, it triggered the question about how she was able to fare on the expedition with a baby. Invite volunteers to suggest topics that they are still curious about, and record this information in the third box of the chart on the board.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete their ask-and-answer-questions worksheet. Have students review their questions, write the answers they found in the second box of the chart, and then fill in the third box with topics related to Sacagawea that students want to know more about. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class information they wrote in the third box of their chart.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review with students the information on the board beneath the *Personality*, *Accomplishments*, and *Influence* headings. Invite students to share with the rest of the class new details they learned about Sacagawea in the final pages of the story and what element of a biography best classifies them. Add new information to the board beneath the appropriate heading.
- Have students discuss in groups how Sacagawea's personality affected her accomplishments and how both were tied to her influence on history. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class. Discuss with students why they think the author chose Sacagawea as a subject for a biography.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the elements-of-a-biography worksheet. If time allows, have them compare their worksheet with a partner's and explain why they chose the details they did.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about the life and legacy of Sacagawea. What does her life teach others about endurance and courage? How did she affect American history?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Proper nouns: Names of people**

- Ask students to share with a partner the meaning of a noun. Remind students that a *noun* identifies a word as a *person*, *place*, or *thing*. Call on random students to share with the rest of the class a noun from the story.

- Write the following sentence on the board and read it aloud with students: *Lewis and Clark asked Sacagawea to serve as an interpreter to the Shoshone tribes.* Have students point to the nouns they see in the sentence. Ask students to share with a partner what these nouns have in common (they are all people; all are capitalized).
- Ask students to explain to the rest of the class why these nouns are capitalized. Point out that these words are examples of proper nouns.
- Review or explain to students that a *proper noun* is a word that identifies a *specific person, place, or thing*. Point out that a name refers to a specific noun, and therefore, all names are proper nouns. Remind students that names of places and things are also proper nouns.
- Write the following words on the board: *canoes, William Clark, Rocky Mountains, horses, expedition, Thomas Jefferson, Louisiana Territory, and Sacagawea.* Read the words aloud with students, and have them nod their head if all the words are nouns. Point out that the list includes common and proper nouns. Have students work with a partner to determine the words that are proper nouns. Invite volunteers to come to the board and erase all the words that are not proper nouns.
- Have students discuss the remaining words with a partner and distinguish the proper nouns that are the names of people. Invite more volunteers to come to the board and erase the names of places and things so only the names of people remain.
- Remind students not to confuse a proper noun with a capital letter used at the beginning of a sentence or in a title.



Check for understanding: Have students locate and circle all the proper nouns in the story. Then, have students put a star beside every proper noun that is the name of a person. Have students compare their work with a partner's and circle any proper nouns they missed. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class a proper noun that is the name of a person, and have other students give a thumbs-up signal if they agree.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **proper-nouns: names-of-people worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Foreign vocabulary**

- Have students review the first few pages of the story and pick out words that look like they are not part of the English language. Ask students to put their fingers on several of the words they see. Invite volunteers to share a word with the rest of the class.
- Explain to students that these words are part of Native American languages. Explain to students that Sacagawea spoke two languages, Shoshone and Hidasta. Point out that most of the foreign words in this story originate in those two languages.
- Discuss with students how different languages have different pronunciations for letters than what students are used to and different alphabets. Ask students to raise their hand if they speak another language in addition to English or have tried to learn a new language. Invite volunteers to share with the class words they know in a different language, and have other students guess the language.
- Practice with students the pronunciation for *Sacagawea*. Point out that the book helps readers with the pronunciation in the parenthesis on page 4. Explain to students that many books will assist readers in pronouncing foreign or complex words.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students locate and underline all the foreign words that have a pronunciation guide in parenthesis. Invite students to share the page number where they found an example of a foreign word, and have other students locate and point to the word. Ask students to practice pronouncing the word aloud. Point out that *Toussaint Charbonneau* is not Native American but an example of French, a different language from Europe.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students demonstrate to someone at home how a reader asks questions then reflects on the answers while reading.

Extend the Reading

Biographical Writing and Art Connection

Discuss with students other historical people referred to in the book, such as President Jefferson, Meriwether Lewis, and William Clark. Add to the list other well-known people from the early 1800s. Have students choose a name from the list and research their subject. Provide a graphic organizer for students to take notes on the person's personality, accomplishments, and influence. Have students use their notes to write a two-page biography on their chosen subject. Remind them to use an introduction and conclusion, body paragraphs with topic sentences and details, and include at least five paragraphs. Have students draw an illustration of their historical figure as a title page for their report.

Visit WritingA-Z.com for a lesson and leveled materials on biographical writing.

Social Studies Connection

Discuss with students the items they think Sacagawea, Lewis, and Clark needed for their expedition. Record a list of possibilities on the board. Have students review the story with a partner, searching for items they might not have thought of, and invite volunteers to add more items to the list. Draw a Venn diagram on the board, and label one side *Items taken on the expedition* and the other side *Items taken on a family vacation today*. Have students discuss with a partner what items they would need for a vacation and how they compare to the provisions the Corps of Discovery needed. Have students draw their own Venn diagram on a separate sheet of paper and work with their partner to sort the items from their discussion into the appropriate spots. Invite volunteers to share their classifications with the rest of the class. Fill out the Venn diagram on the board. Discuss with students how travel has changed from Sacagawea's time to modern day and how explorers like Lewis and Clark made modern day transportation possible.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment**Monitor students to determine if they can**

- consistently use the strategy of asking and answering questions to comprehend the text during discussion and on a worksheet;
- accurately identify the elements of a biography during discussion and on a worksheet;
- correctly classify names of people as proper nouns during discussion and on a worksheet;
- accurately identify and read foreign vocabulary in the text and during discussion.

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)