

# Essay Contest

Open to Delaware Valley students in grades 6-8

You are about to set out on a journey to an unexplored portion of the planet. The expedition team has to record its daily experiences and document what they see, in part by keeping a journal and bringing back specimens of what they see. Each member of the team has to select ten items to bring along, either as instruments or supplies. But before any item can be accepted for the journey, each member has to justify why it should be brought along.

You decide to do a little research and look into what the famous explorers Lewis and Clark took with them on their similar journey - to explore the Louisiana Purchase and to find a water route to the Pacific Ocean.

You discover that in the spring of 1803, Meriwether Lewis was sent by President Jefferson to Philadelphia to purchase supplies and to meet with and learn from the scientific experts of the day. Lewis bought many items from city merchants and gathered, from the military stores at the Schuylkill Arsenal, goods which he felt would be necessary for the expedition west. The planning, forethought and anticipation that this required was prodigious as Lewis knew little of the territory and difficulties that would be encountered. The fact that all but one of the expedition members returned is a tribute not only to the leadership of Lewis and Clark, but to Lewis' skill in selecting the supplies here in Philadelphia.

When you review the list of supplies that Lewis bought you realize that, although 200 years have passed, there are some supplies that you could take with you on your journey.

What five items will you take on your expedition that Lewis also took with him? What five modern items will you add to your list? What would you expect each to contribute to the successful completion of the expedition? As Lewis received training in Philadelphia you will need training as well. What training would you request? Explain and justify your requests.

## \$500 prize

and an opportunity to read the essay to attendees at the Annual Meeting of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Fdn. at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel in Philadelphia on Wednesday, August 13th, 2003.

### *The Purpose:*

To recognize students who demonstrate a superior understanding of the role of planning and knowledge in the successful implementation of an exploratory expedition.

### *The Rules:*

Entry essay will be in English, double spaced, on 8 1/2"x11" paper and is not to exceed 750 words. Use 11pt Times New Roman font in Word97 or WordPerfect 5.2, PC format. (Do not use Mac format.)

Please submit a cover sheet with the following information:

- Your name and grade
- Your home address & telephone number
- Your school's name & address
- Your school's telephone number
- Your teacher's name
- Name & address of your local newspaper

Your name should only be on the cover sheet.

Send one electronic and three hard copies of the essay to:

Lewis & Clark Essay Contest  
3020 Midvale Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19129

Entries are to be submitted by June 6, 2003

Entries will be judged on their originality, creativity and understanding of the topic.

### *More Info:*

Further background material may be obtained from [www.lewisandclarkphila.org](http://www.lewisandclarkphila.org)