Fourth Grade

# Explorers in Kansas

No. I-4

## Overview

This lesson is designed to teach students about four early and influential expeditions in Kansas. Students will read cards about the explorers (Coronado, Lewis and Clark, Pike, and Long), assume the explorer's identity, and then be interviewed by a team of two students. All students will experience both roles of explorer and interviewer. The lesson is designed to take three class periods but can be adjusted to meet individual class schedules.

## Standards

Current standards can be found on kshs.org.

## Objectives

Content:

- The student describes the experiences of early-day explorers in Kansas.

Skills:

- The student locates main ideas and details.
- The student compares and contrasts the experiences of four expeditions.
- The student reads maps to locate information.

## Essential Questions

- What does an explorer do?
- Why do countries send out explorers?

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## Activities

**This activity uses the following *Read Kansas* cards:**

- **Coronado Explores Kansas**
- **Lewis and Clark Explore Kansas**
- **Zebulon Pike Explores Kansas**
- **Stephen Long Explores Kansas**

**Day 1**

1. Introduce the topic of explorers to the class. Ask students to share names of explorers, past and present, and discuss their achievements.
   - What do explorers do?
   - Why are they important?
   - Who sends them out to explore?
2. Explain that this lesson deals with four explorers and their expeditions that came through Kansas prior to it becoming a state. The explorers were sent to collect information for their governments. Some had more success than others.
3. Model the first exercise with the class using the **Coronado Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* card.
   - Distribute the **Coronado Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* card to every student along with a copy of the **Interview the Explorers** worksheet.
   - Review the text features used in the **Coronado Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* card including the title, author, captions, illustrations, and maps.
   - Have students read the **Coronado Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* card.
   - Place a copy of the **Interview the Explorers** worksheet on an overhead projector. Ask students to assume the role of Coronado, with the knowledge they have just gained from reading the card, and help you answer the questions on the worksheet.
   - When you have completed all six questions, have students record the information from the overhead on their worksheets.
4. Prepare the **Role Card Nametags**. You will need one set of three role cards for each group of students. Divide the class into groups of three students. With the three cards face down on the desk, have each student select one card. This will be their assigned role for this activity. Have the explorer write his “explorer name” in pencil on the nametag (e.g., Lewis and Clark).
5. Distribute the **Lewis and Clark Explore Kansas** *Read Kansas* card to every student along with a copy of the **Interview the Explorers** worksheet.
6. Give the students time to read the card.
7. When the students are finished reading, have the interviewers ask the explorer the six questions on the **Interview the Explorers** worksheet. Both Interviewer A and Interviewer B will interview the explorer. They will take turns asking questions and both students will record the answers on their **Interview the Explorer** worksheets. Questions are numbered to allow students to alternate questions between the interviewers.

8. Using an overhead projector, have students share their answers to the questions while the teacher records them on the overhead. Have students correct their own interview worksheets. The student who was the explorer also will need to record all of the answers as they are added to the projected worksheet. Students should keep their worksheets; the reading card should be returned to the teacher.

**Day 2:**

1. Using the same student groups as Day 1, distribute the **Zebulon Pike Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* cards and the **Interview the Explorers** worksheets.
2. Have the "explorer" from yesterday erase their "explorer name". Have students rotate the cards within the group so Interviewer A becomes the next explorer and Interviewer B becomes the new Interviewer A. This will allow each student to be an explorer for one round and interviewers for the other two rounds. The new explorer will write his or her "explorer name" on the role card nametag in pencil.
3. For Zebulon Pike, complete the same process as done for Lewis and Clark on Day 1.
4. Distribute the **Stephen Long Explores Kansas** *Read Kansas* cards and repeat as above. Students again rotate role cards.

**Day 3:**

1. Distribute the **Exploration Timeline** worksheet. Create the timeline by cutting the page in half along the dotted line. Overlap the top half over the bottom half at the edge as marked and glue. Using the four **Interview the Explorer** worksheets, have students complete the timeline by writing the explorer's names next to the corresponding arrow at the correct year marker. If time permits, encourage the students to add an important fact about the explorer and decorate the timeline. As an extended activity students can add other important dates in American history.
2. Lead a discussion with the class about the explorers. Ask students to compare and contrast the motives or reasons for the explorers' expeditions.

## Assessment

1. Observe how the students participate in the interview process.
2. Evaluate how the students completed their **Interview the Explorers** worksheets and **Exploration Timeline** worksheets.
3. Observe how the students participate in the discussion about the explorers.

## Role Card Nametags

*Meet the Explorer*

**Hello**

**I am an explorer.**

**My Name is: _____**

*Meet the Explorer*

**Hello**

**I am Interviewer A**

*Meet the Explorer*

**Hello**

**I am Interviewer B**

# For the Teacher

## Background

Native peoples have lived on the land that would become Kansas for thousands of years. European explorers were the first non-native people to come into the area. The first Europeans to come to this new land were the Spanish. Later, explorers came from France. After the U.S. purchased the Louisiana Territory, American explorers came to learn more about the land and what it might offer to settlers. Historians study the journals and letters written by these explorers.

### Coronado

Francisco Vasquez de Coronado was born into a wealthy family in Spain and came to New Spain to serve in the government. Coronado documented his explorations in letters written to the king of Spain. He spoke of "shaggy cows" (buffalo) he and his men saw on the plains. He described the people he met in the province of Quivira, home to the Wichita people, north of Mexico. The land Coronado saw was similar in landscape to Spain, and he described it as "very fat and black and being very well watered by the rivulets and springs and rivers." According to Coronado, "I found prunes like those of Spain and nuts and very good sweet grapes and mulberries."

### Lewis and Clark

The first American explorers in the area of Kansas were Lewis and Clark. The Corps of Discovery spent relatively little time in Kansas as they traveled north on the Missouri River. William Clark recorded his discoveries in his journal (his spelling and punctuation retained). "This great river of the Kansas … recves its names from a nation which dwells at this time on its banks and 2 villages … those Indians are not verry noumerous … at this time, reduced by war with their neighbours … above this river in an open and butifull plain are verry noumerous at the time the French first Settled the Illinois, I am told they are a fierce and warlike people, being badly Supplied with fire arms, become easily conquered by the Aiauway and Saukees who are better furnished with those materials of wars, This nation is now out in the plains hunting the Buffalow."

### Zebulon Pike

Before Lewis and Clark returned from their expedition, Pike began his. Pike was the first American to travel overland. In his journal Pike describes the country: "These vast plains of the western hemisphere, may become in time equally celebrated as the sandy desarts of Africa; for I saw in my route, in various places, tracts of many leagues, where the wind had thrown up the sand, in all the fanciful forms of the ocean's rolling wave, and on which not a speck of vegetable matter existed."

### Stephen Long

Stephen Long's publications echo what Pike said about the region. Long's map was labeled: "The Great Desert is frequented by traveling bands of Indians who have no place of residence but roam from place to place in quest of game." He further described the land as "almost wholly unfit for cultivation, and of course uninhabitable by a people depending on agriculture for their subsistence." Later, this place became known as the "Great American Desert."

Below are the answers for the **Interview the Explorer** worksheets.

| What is your name? | **Francisco Coronado** | **Meriwether Lewis and William Clark** | **Zebulon Pike** | **Stephen Long** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| What country sent you to explore? | Spain | United States | United States | United States |
| When did you explore? | 1540 | 1804-1806 | 1806 | 1819 and 1820 |
| What were your reasons for exploring? | • To expand the Spanish empire.<br>• To search for gold. | • To find a water route across the United States to the Pacific Ocean. Began by following the Missouri River.<br>• To meet and learn about Indians living in the West.<br>• To record information about the new land. | • To find the sources of the Red River and the Arkansas River.<br>• To set the boundary between Spain and America.<br>• To return Indians to their homelands.<br>• To make peace between the Osage and Kansa.<br>• To make contact with the Comanche.<br>• To collect information on natural resources. | • To build a fort in Montana to protect the United States from the British.<br>• To map the plains to the Rocky Mountains.<br>• To find the source of the Platte, Arkansas, and Red Rivers. |
| What did you observe or experience in Kansas? | • Soldiers wore armor during July in Kansas. They were very hot.<br>• Met the Wichita. | • Celebrated the first Fourth of July in the West.<br>• Named two rivers in honor of the day.<br>• Saw buffalo for the first time.<br>• Visited a Kansa village.<br>• Collected the last specimen from the expedition--the Raccoon Grape Leaf. | • Recorded information about the Flint Hills.<br>• Thought eastern Kansas would be good for farmers and ranchers.<br>• Met the Pawnee.<br>• Had the Pawnee replace their Spanish flag with an American flag. | • Sent artists and scientists to explore Kansas.<br>• Traveled through Kansas in the summer and it was very hot.<br>• There were many pests.<br>• Were starving and had to eat a black wolf.<br>• The Kansa helped them by giving them food.<br>• Thomas Say recorded important information about the Kansa. |
| What happened as a result of your expedition? | • There was no gold in Kansas.<br>• Were the first Europeans in the state that would become Kansas and the first to meet the Wichita Indians.<br>• He lost his job.<br>• He was tried and found guilty of mistreatment of native peoples. | • Did not find a river route across the West.<br>• Met more than 50 Indian tribes.<br>• Identified many new plants and animals.<br>• Opened the West for settlement. | • In 1807 he published a report about his trip**.**<br>• He described the plains as dry and sandy.<br>• He was the first to call this area the "Great Desert."<br>• His report kept Americans from being interested in settling on the plains.<br>• He thought America should trade with Spain. This led to the development of the Santa Fe Trail. | • He named Long's Peak.<br>• His men climbed Pike's Peak.<br>• He drew a map of his trip and labeled the central plains as the "Great American Desert."<br>• Because of what he found, Americans did not think the land was good for farming.<br>• The U.S. government moved eastern Indians here.<br>• The eastern tribes had a hard time living in Kansas. |

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Resources for this lesson are from:

- Kansas State Historical Society collections
- Michael Haynes (*Lewis and Clark at Independence Creek*) Lewis and Clark Explore Kansas card
- Library of Congress

Name: _____

# Interview the Explorer

**[A] What is your name?**

**[B] What country sent you to explore?**

**[A] When did you explore?**

**[B] What were your reasons for exploring?**

**[A] What did you observe or experience in Kansas?**

**[B] What happened as a result of your expedition?**



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Name: _____

# Exploration Timeline

| 1500-1549 | 1550-1599 | 1600-1649 | 1650-1699 | 1700-1749 | 1750-1799 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 1775-1783-<br>Revolutionary War |

Cut apart here

**(overlap and glue from above)**

| 1800-1849 | 1850-1899 | 1900-1949 | 1950-1999 | 2000- |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1854-Kansas becomes a territory<br><br>1861-Kansas becomes a state | 1914-1918-World War I<br><br>1939-1945-World War II | 1969-First landing on the moon | |



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