

ARE WE THERE YET? THE MORE OR LESS TRUE STORY OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

By Burton Bumgarner

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**ARE WE THERE YET?
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AND CLARK EXPEDITION**

A One Act Comedy of Historic Proportions

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SYNOPSIS: Following the American Revolution the country's western border ended at the Missouri River. In 1803 President Jefferson charged his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, with gathering an expedition party and traveling inland across the unexplored wilderness of North America. Lewis and Clark took a perilous two and a half year journey of discovery from St. Louis to the Pacific Northwest. This is the story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition as it might be told by Monty Python.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(7-10 female, 6-8 male, 4-6 either, 1 extra;
doubling possible, gender flexible)*

DR. DULL (m/f) A very boring teacher (*29 lines*)
DR. KEAN (m/f)..... A very interesting teacher (*22 lines*)
THOMAS JEFFERSON (m)..... Third President of the United States
(*34 lines*)
MERIWETHER LEWIS (m) Explorer, uptight and not interested in
exploring (*96 lines*)
CONGRESSMAN 1 (m)..... Congressman, pushy and shallow
(*7 lines*)
CONGRESSMAN 2 (f) Congressman, pushy and shallow
(*5 lines*)
MESSENGER (m/f)..... Delivers packages and letters, frustrated
(*13 lines*)
WENDY CLARK (f) Explorer, gung-ho and a go-getter
(*44 lines*)
YORK (f) Clark's servant, tired of being treated
poorly (*15 lines*)
ALBERTA GALLATIN (f) Map girl, kind of goofy (*7 lines*)
SALESMAN (m/f)..... Sells boats and horses, pushy car
salesman type (*10 lines*)

DOG (m/f).....A Newfoundland dog, goofy (10 lines)
REUBEN FIELD (f)Explorer, Girl Scout type (14 lines)
JOEY FIELD (f)Explorer, lumberjack type (10 lines)
GEORGE DROUILLARD (m).....Explorer, pirate type (11 lines)
PIERRE CRUZATTE (m)Explorer, urban type (15 lines)
FRANÇOIS LABICHE (m).....Explorer, skier/snowboarder type
(13 lines)
FLOYD (m/f).....Explorer, pioneer type (3 line)
CHARBONNEAU (f)Explorer, French artist type (7 lines)
NATIVE 1 (m).....Hippie type (2 lines)
NATIVE 2 (f).....Hippie type (1 line)
LAKOTA 1 (m)Pioneer type (1 line)
LAKOTA 2 (f)Pioneer type (2 lines)
LAKOTA 3 (f)Pioneer type (1 line)
SIGN CHANGER (m/f).....Medieval monk type (Non-Speaking)

**The roles of the CONGRESSMEN, GALLATIN, FLOYD the SALESMAN, the NATIVES and the LAKOTAS may be doubled. The role of CHARBONNEAU may be doubled with one of the CONGRESSMEN or the SALESMAN.*

DURATION: 40 minutes

SCENES

SCENE 1: *Prologue* - Dull, Kean, Jefferson

SCENE 2: *1803 – Part 1* - Jefferson, Lewis, 2 Congressmen

SCENE 3: *1803 – Part 2* - Lewis, Kean, Dull, Messenger, Clark

SCENE 4: *Map Girl, Salesman, Dog* - Gallatin, Lewis, Salesman, Dog

SCENE 5: *St. Louis Missouri* - Dull, Kean, Clark, York, Reuben, Joe,
George, Pierre, François, Dog

SCENE 6: *1804 – Part 1* - Explorers, Dog, Lewis, Clark, 2 Natives, 2
Lakotas

SCENE 7: *1804 – Part 2* - Explorers, Lewis, Clark, Dog, Charbonneau

SCENE 8: *1805* - Dull, Kean, Explorers, Dog, Messenger, Jefferson,
Salesman

SCENE 9: *1806 Home* - Kean, Dull, Lewis, Clark, Charbonneau, Explorers,
Dog

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PRODUCTION NOTES

Are We There Yet? may be performed on a bare stage with furniture and props. Costumes may be as elaborate, over the top or as simple as the director desires. Many of the roles can be male or female.

Furniture and props that are moved around on stage may be moved by Stage Crew, usually dressed in black, or by the actors themselves.

An easel with the names of scenes is DSR. At the beginning of each scene a Sign Changer enters and places a large poster with the name of each scene on the easel. The Sign Changer can slowly lumber across the stage and act thoroughly bored with the job. The lettering for the signs must be clearly readable for all in the theater.

The script accurately portrays the events of the journey to the Pacific. Lewis and Clark are studied in U.S. history classes beginning at the elementary level. This script would be appropriate for elementary age on up.

COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

DR. DULL – robe, mortarboard, horn rimmed glasses

JEFFERSON – three cornered hat, powdered wig, white shirt

DR. KEAN – casual – jeans, t-shirt

LEWIS (as Jefferson’s secretary) – three cornered hat, powdered wig, white shirt

LEWIS (as Explorer) – raccoon hat, vest, other pioneer accessories

CONGRESSMEN – business attire – shirts & ties / skirts and blouses

CLARK – traditional coat, 3 cornered hat / Hawaiian shirt, jams, sunglasses

SALESMAN – tacky sports jacket

DOG – dog ears on headband, tan pants and shirt, dog makeup on face

REUBEN – boy / girl scout

JOEY – lumberjack – plaid shirt, overalls, boots

GEORGE – pirate shirt, eye patch

PIERRE – hoodie

FRANÇOIS – ski jacket, goggles

FLOYD – raccoon hat, vest, pioneer accessories

CHARBONNEAU – white shirt, beret, penciled moustache, anything French

NATIVES – hippie attire, beads, headbands, tie-dyed shirts

LAKOTAS – buckskin attire, headbands

SIGN CHANGER – medieval rob

PROPERTIES

- Easel with posters for scene changes
- Small table
- Glass of water
- Small desk with writing quill and paper, and chair
- School desk
- Podium
- Report card
- Road maps and guide book
- Luggage
- Fruit drinks
- Kazoos for cast
- Police whistle
- Compass (or something small to resemble a compass)
- Magnet (something small to resemble a magnet)
- Legal pad and quill
- Sketch pad and quill
- Binoculars
- Small cardboard box for prairie dog
- Coin for flipping
- Cupcake
- Umbrellas, rain ponchos

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SCENE 1

Prologue

AT RISE: A podium and small table with a water glass are DSC; a small desk with a quill pen and a school desk are DSL. A school desk is UPS. A sign with "Scene 1: Prologue" is already on the easel. DR. DULL enters, crosses to the podium, removes notes from a briefcase, clears throat, takes a drink of water, gargles, looks around for a place to spit, shrugs shoulders, swallows, then speaks in a dull monotone.

DULL: Today's topic for history class is the Lewis and Clark Expedition. You should listen carefully to my lecture and take a lot of notes. There will be a test.

Offstage ACTORS moan. DULL clears throat, starts to take a drink of water, thinks better of it, then begins.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

JEFFERSON enters and crosses center.

JEFFERSON: "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for ..."

DULL: (To *JEFFERSON*.) This isn't about the American Revolution. It's the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

JEFFERSON: Oh. I knew that.

DULL: (To *AUDIENCE*.) Jefferson, the third President of the United States, took office on March 4, 1801.

JEFFERSON holds up his right hand as if taking the oath.

JEFFERSON: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

DULL: (To *JEFFERSON*.) You may leave now.

JEFFERSON: But I haven't given my inaugural address yet.

DULL: It's not part of this lesson.

JEFFERSON: Please let me deliver it. It's a great speech.

DULL: LATER!

JEFFERSON shrugs shoulders and exits.

The population of the country was five million, three hundred and eight thousand, four hundred and eighty-three people. The nation's boundaries extended from the Atlantic in the east to the Mississippi River in the west, from the Great Lakes in the north to the Gulf of Mexico in the south. Roughly one thousand miles by one thousand miles. Isn't that amazing?

DR. KEAN enters and crosses center.

KEAN: (To AUDIENCE.) This can NOT continue!

DULL: Excuse me?

KEAN: You're boring! I'll take it from here.

DULL: What am I supposed to do?

KEAN: Go cure insomnia.

Shoves DULL offstage. The podium is moved upstage, the desk and chair are moved DSL.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls ... cats and dogs ... the more or less real story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. President Jefferson and his personal secretary, Mr. Meriwether ... that's right, his name was Meriwether ... Lewis.

KEAN exits. SIGN CHANGER enters and changes sign to "Scene 2: 1803 – Part 1".

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SCENE 2

1803 - Part 1

JEFFERSON and LEWIS enter. JEFFERSON sits at the desk and writes with the quill. LEWIS stands close by.

JEFFERSON: Come in, Mr. Lewis. Have a seat.

LEWIS looks around. There's no place to sit.

LEWIS: I'll ... uh ... just stand if you don't mind, sir.

JEFFERSON: You know, I'd like to get some more land for this country. You can't have enough land. What do you think, Meri?

LEWIS: I don't know, sir. The more yard you got, the more yard you got to mow. Know what I mean?

JEFFERSON: No, I don't.

LEWIS: You got trees, you got shrubs, you got flowers.

JEFFERSON: We have this whole continent here, and if we don't claim it the British or the French or somebody like that is going to get some of it.

LEWIS: The French already have quite a bit of it.

JEFFERSON: We're going to buy the Louisiana territory from the French.

LEWIS: They're going to sell Louisiana?

JEFFERSON: They're hard up for cash, and we can use the land. Don't forget about New Orleans. We'll end up with some great Cajun food.

LEWIS: How much is Louisiana going to cost?

JEFFERSON: Fifteen million dollars. (*LEWIS gasps.*) That's four cents an acre, Meri.

LEWIS: Sir, my first name is Meriwether, not Meri.

JEFFERSON: Really? Anyway, I have my eye on a bigger piece of real estate. We really don't know what's between here and California. (*Stands and paces.*) Even though our nation is only eighteen years old, I believe we are going to become the greatest power on the face of the earth! This is our manifestation destination!

LEWIS: Don't you mean manifest destiny?

JEFFERSON: Whatever. First I need to come up with some more money. (*Crosses to desk, sits and writes.*) Let's see if I can get some of those guys in congress to cough up the bucks.

LEWIS: How much money are you asking for?

JEFFERSON: I think twenty-five hundred will be enough.

LEWIS: To purchase the rest of the continent?

JEFFERSON: No, silly. To EXPLORE the rest of the continent. We need someone to go see what's out there.

Finishes writing and hands the paper to LEWIS.

Take this to one of our friends in congress. Don't let anyone else see it.

CONGRESSMAN 1 and CONGRESSMAN 2 enter right. LEWIS crosses to the CONGRESSMEN.

CONGRESSMAN 1: Look who's here! It's Meriwether Lewis! The president's personal secretary!

CONGRESSMAN 2: Hey, Meri! How's the weather?

(*CONGRESSMEN laugh.*) Get it? Meri! The weather?

LEWIS: You two think you're funny, don't you?

CONGRESSMAN 1: Of course we're funny.

CONGRESSMAN 2: We're congressmen.

CONGRESSMAN 1: So, what's that? (*Indicating the paper.*)

LEWIS: Nothing.

Holds the paper behind his back. CONGRESSMEN struggle for the paper.

You can't have it!

They finally get the paper.

CONGRESSMAN 1: What do we have here? A request for twenty-five hundred dollars.

CONGRESSMAN 2: Why does President Jefferson want twenty-five hundred bucks?

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LEWIS: I can't tell you.

CONGRESSMEN twist LEWIS' arm behind his back.

Hey! That hurts!

CONGRESSMAN 1: Why does the President want that money?

LEWIS: He wants to explore the west! Are you happy now?

They let go of LEWIS.

CONGRESSMAN 1: Explore the west?

CONGRESSMAN 2: You know, that's not a bad idea. There might be something really important out there. Like...I don't know ...dinosaurs.

CONGRESSMAN 1: We'll take the request and make sure the money is delivered.

CONGRESSMAN 2: You can count on us.

CONGRESSMEN exits right. LEWIS crosses to JEFFERSON.

LEWIS: Okay. I got your money. Can I go home now?

JEFFERSON: I have something else in mind for you.

LEWIS: (*Excited.*) Is it a promotion?

JEFFERSON: You could think of it that way. Have a seat.

LEWIS looks around. There is no place to sit.

LEWIS: I'm okay standing.

JEFFERSON crosses to LEWIS and puts his arm around his shoulders.

JEFFERSON: We've been friends for a long time, haven't we, Meri?

LEWIS: It's Meriwether.

JEFFERSON: Whatever. You grew up in the wilderness of Virginia. You know how to hunt, how to fish, how to live off the land.

LEWIS: I never really liked living off of the land.

JEFFERSON: You have a military background.

LEWIS: I didn't really like military life.

JEFFERSON: You know how to write and express yourself ... except that you're not very good at spelling.

LEWIS: A citizen of this country should be free to spell hard words anyway he chooses!

JEFFERSON: But you can't even spell easy words. Look, you're not all that great a secretary. But you'd make a terrific explorer.

LEWIS: Explorer?

JEFFERSON: I want YOU to get some people together and go from here to the Pacific Ocean ... and you can't go around South America to get there.

LEWIS: But sir! That's never been done!

JEFFERSON: I want you to make maps and keep journals so I can read about your adventures. Maybe somebody can help you with the spelling.

Shakes hands with LEWIS.

Good luck, Wether-meri. You'll need it.

JEFFERSON exits.

LEWIS: That's Meriwether.

SIGN CHANGER changes signs to "Scene 3: 1803 – Part 2". LEWIS crosses DS.

SCENE 3

1803 - Part 2

LEWIS: *(To AUDIENCE.)* I really don't want to do this.

KEAN enters and crosses DS.

KEAN: *(To AUDIENCE.)* Mr. Lewis really didn't want to do this.

LEWIS: *(To KEAN.)* I just said that.

KEAN: *(To AUDIENCE.)* President Jefferson sent Lewis back to school to study botany, zoology, navigation and medicine.

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The school desk is moved DS. LEWIS sits. DR. DULL enters and crosses DS.

DULL: (*Monotone.*) Of the many interesting plants that grow in the Arctic, none is perhaps more interesting than ...

LEWIS: (*Annoyed.*) I'm not going to the Arctic!

DULL: Let's try zoology. Of the many interesting animals that live along the Amazon River, none is more interesting than ...

LEWIS: I'm not going to the Amazon!

DULL: Let's try navigation. In order to find your way across the Sahara desert you'll need to understand the location of the constellations.

LEWIS: That sounds useful.

DULL: But first I'll present a lecture on ancient Rome.

LEWIS: I don't need ancient Rome! I'm traveling up the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean.

DULL: The west is full of dinosaurs and leprechauns. You'd better take a secret ray gun.

LEWIS: Where did they find you?

DULL continues to lecture LEWIS unheard by the audience.

KEAN: (*To AUDIENCE.*) Lewis studied and worked hard and tried to make up for his lack of formal education.

DULL hands LEWIS a report card.

DULL: Your report card.

LEWIS: Unsatisfactory in conduct?

DULL: You distracted the other students.

LEWIS: There are no other students! I'm the only student!

DULL: There might have been more if you hadn't been so disruptive.

LEWIS: An "F" in spelling?

DULL: Correct spelling is important.

LEWIS: You know, if I had a business partner I might not have to work so hard.

DULL exits. School desk is moved US.

KEAN: *(To AUDIENCE.)* So Lewis thought about his former army commander, Wendy Clark.

LEWIS: *(LEWIS sits at DS desk and writes.)* “Dear Wendy ... How are you? I hope you are good. How would you like to go on a road trip next spring? It will be fun. Your friend, Meriwether Lewis.” *(Folds the letter. MESSENGER enters left.)* Take this to Wendy Clark.

CLARK enters right, reading a tabloid.

MESSENGER: Why don't you take it yourself? She's standing right over there.

LEWIS: *(Annoyed.)* Take the letter! Now!

MESSENGER takes the letter and crosses to CLARK.

CLARK: For me?

MESSENGER: Yes ma'am!

Holds out hand waiting for a tip. CLARK hands him a coin from his pocket. Disappointed.

A dime? A whole dime? Gee, thanks lady! *(Sarcastic.)* I hope you can afford it!

CLARK: *(Reading.)* “Dear Wendy ... How are you? I hold you are groad. How wood you lock to go on a rode trick nest string.” What's a rode trick nest string? *(Hands MESSENGER letter.)*

MESSENGER: *(Hands letter to CLARK.)* Sorry, ma'am. I can't translate gibberish.

CLARK: *(Reads.)* “It will be fun. Your fiend, Meriwether.” I remember Meriwether. He couldn't spell his own name. *(Looks at letter.)* He still can't spell his own name.

MESSENGER: Do you want to send a reply?

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CLARK: As I recall the guy was kind of whiny and wasn't a lot of fun to be around. On the other hand, what else have I got to do? Tell him okay. I wonder where we're going. I hope it's some place cool like Fort Lauderdale.

MESSENGER crosses to LEWIS.

MESSENGER: She said okay. (*Holds out his hand for a tip.*)

LEWIS: You're kidding, aren't you? All you had to do was walk over there. (*LEWIS begrudgingly hands MESSENGER a coin.*)

MESSENGER: A nickel? You make that lady look like a big spender.

Exits. LEWIS and CLARK cross center.

LEWIS: Hey, Wendy. I'm really glad you're going on the trip. I can use your courage, your judgment and your knowledge of the frontier.

CLARK: I thought we were going to Fort Lauderdale for spring break.

LEWIS: We can go there after we get back.

CLARK: Back from where?

LEWIS: Back from the Pacific Ocean.

CLARK: Wow! That's gonna be a long trip!

LEWIS: I know a lot about navigation and plants and living off of the land.

CLARK: So we won't be staying in hotels?

LEWIS: We will if we can find any.

CLARK: Okay. I'll go pack. Why don't you get some maps?

CLARK exits. SIGN CHANGER changes signs to "Scene 4: Map Girl, Salesman And Dog".

SCENE 4

Map Girl, Salesman and Dog

ALBERTA GALLATIN, a travel agent, enters with a stack of road maps, and sits at the desk. LEWIS crosses to GALLATIN.

GALLATIN: Hi there. I'm Alberta Gallatin, the girl to see for maps. How may I help you?

LEWIS: I'd like to get some maps.

GALLATIN: You've come to the right place. Where are you going? New York? Washington? Boston?

LEWIS: I'm going to the Pacific Ocean.

GALLATIN: Wow! I tell ya, the best way to get there is to go to Spain, get on a Spanish ship and sail around the tip of South America. You should be there in a couple of years.

LEWIS: Actually, I want to cross the continent.

GALLATIN: As in North America? (*LEWIS nods.*) Let's see what I got. (*Unfolds a map.*) Here's Missouri. That's about as far west as these maps go. I got some others here. (*Looks at another map.*) This one shows California as an island. That doesn't sound right. (*Another map.*) This one shows some tiny little mountains called the Rockies. (*Points on a map.*) We know we've got the Columbia River way over here. If you go to St. Louis, sail up the Mississippi River and hang a left onto the Missouri River you'll end up at some Mandan villages way up here. (*Points on the map.*) That's as far as anyone's been.

LEWIS: That's it? That's the best you can tell me?

GALLATIN: Let's look up the West in my handy little guide book. (*Looks in book.*) Here we go. No restaurants. No hotels. No gas stations. No recommended stops. It says no one's ever been there, and it's not recommended for families with small children.

Hands LEWIS the book.

LEWIS: (*Looking through the book.*) It looks like I'm going to need some compasses, a surveyor's chain to measure the speed of the current of the rivers, an octant and a sextant.

GALLATIN: A guy to clean up your building?

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LEWIS: That's a sex-TON. A sexton is like a custodian. A sex-TANT is an instrument for measuring the altitude of a celestial object above the horizon. It helps to determine distances.

GALLATIN: Wow. You're really smart ... for a guy who's getting ready to do something really stupid. By the way, I think you might need a boat. Otherwise you're gonna have to do a lot of swimming. Good luck. Call us if you need roadway assistance. Of course, if you're not on a road we can't help. (*Takes maps and exits.*)

LEWIS: She's right. I'd better get some boats. (*Exits.*)

KEAN: Lewis spent the summer of 1803 in Pittsburgh overseeing the construction of a large keelboat.

SALESMAN and LEWIS enter. KEAN exits.

SALESMAN: I tell ya, Mr. Lewis ... Meri. May I call you Meri?

LEWIS: NO!

SALESMAN: Oh. Okay. Anyway, Mr. Lewis. This beauty has everything. Tinted windows, power steering, power breaks ...

LEWIS: It doesn't have windows, you steer it with a big oar and the only way it slows down is if it runs on shore.

SALESMAN: And for those very reasons I'm gonna cut you a deal. I'll have to check with my manager, but I think I can put you in this little beauty for a thousand bucks.

LEWIS: Are you crazy?

SALESMAN: Okay. I can let her go for eight hundred! ... Seven fifty! ... Seven twenty-five! Come, Mr. Lewis. You gotta work with me here!

LEWIS: I'm not the one buying it. The government is paying for it.

SALESMAN: In that case you can have it for three thousand. And I need to see the cash up front.

LEWIS: That's outrageous!

SALESMAN: I tell you what. I'll throw in a dog.

LEWIS: A dog?

SALESMAN exits and enters with DOG.

SALESMAN: Every boat needs a dog. (*DOG smiles and pants.*) Besides, I don't like dogs. (*DOG frowns and growls.*) He's all yours ... for twenty-five dollars. (*Quickly exits.*)

LEWIS: A dog. Man's best friend. Someone to fetch the newspaper and take on walks and lay by my feet on cold winter nights. (*Pets DOG.*) Good boy. (*DOG growls. LEWIS pulls his hand away.*) What kind of dog are you?

DOG: I'm a Newfoundland. I'm big, I slobber a lot and I love to play in the snow.

LEWIS: I hope you've had all your vaccinations.

DOG: (*To AUDIENCE.*) Vaccinations?

LEWIS leads DOG offstage. SIGN CHANGER changes sign to "Scene 5: St. Louis, Missouri".

SCENE 5

St. Louis, Missouri

DULL enters, moves the podium DSC and read from notes.

DULL: (*Monotone.*) The keelboat Lewis had built was fifty-five feet long, eight feet wide and was able to carry ten tons of supplies. It moved through the water by way of sails, oars, poles or sometimes by crewmen wading through the water pulling the boat with ropes.

KEAN enters and crosses to DULL.

KEAN: You're doing it again.

DULL: Doing what again?

KEAN: Making the story boring. (*Hands DULL some money.*) Here. Go to Starbucks and get us a couple of mochas.

DULL: Thanks.

DULL exits. KEAN moves the podium UPS and returns DSC.

KEAN: Where were we?

DULL: (*Offstage.*) St. Louis.

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KEAN: Right. In the summer of 1803 Clark made her way to St. Louis to recruit members for the expedition. She brought along her servant York.

CLARK and YORK enter. CLARK wears a Hawaiian shirt, jams, sunglasses, etc. YORK enters carrying two suitcases.

CLARK: Come along, York. We don't want to keep Mr. Lewis waiting.

YORK: I don't care how long he waits.

CLARK: Did you get everything we need? Sun screen, swimsuits, snacks, something to read?

YORK: From the weight of the luggage I'd guess you brought half of the Library of Congress.

CLARK: You know, York. This is going to be fun.

YORK: You're not the one carrying the luggage.

CLARK: Crossing uncharted wilderness. Living off of the land. Sleeping out under the stars. Think of the amazing adventures we'll have.

YORK: I'm thinking about the mosquitoes.

CLARK: Here comes Mr. Lewis and the rest of the expedition.

LEWIS enters with REUBEN, JOEY, GEORGE, PIERRE, FRANÇOIS and DOG.

LEWIS: (To CLARK.) What are you wearing?

CLARK: You said to dress casual.

LEWIS: We're going to the Dakotas! You're going to freeze!

CLARK: I brought a sweater.

KEAN: Aren't you going to introduce the members of your expedition?

LEWIS: They can introduce themselves.

EXPLORERS form a line and step forward as they introduce themselves.

REUBEN: I'm Reuben. I like selling cookies.

JOEY: And I'm Joey. Short for Josephine. I like chopping down trees.

REUBEN / JOEY: We're siblings! (*REUBEN salutes. JOEY bows.*)

GEORGE: Ahoy maties! I'm George. I like pillaging and making poor slobs walk the plank. I also like pizza, long walks on the beach and snuggling up in front of a warm fire.

PIERRE: I'm Pierre. I know my way around the wilderness. I got street smarts. Well ... tree smarts.

FRANÇOIS: My name is François. I'm French and like to eat croissants and snails. And I'm great at skiing and snowboarding.

CLARK: Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the explorers!

ALL but LEWIS march in step and sing. DOG barks.

EXPLORERS: Hi ho! Hi ho! It's way out west we go!
We're going to see a lot of snow,
Hi ho! Hi ho! Hi ho!

LEWIS: (*Interrupting.*) Hey! This isn't a Disney musical!

EXPLORERS: Sorry. (*DOG whines.*)

LEWIS: Let's go.

LEWIS crosses to the desk and writes in his journal. Others exit. SIGN CHANGER changes sign: "Scene 6: 1804 – Part 1."

SCENE 6

1804 – Part 1

LEWIS: (*Writing.*) May 14, 1804. Today we left St Louis. Some of the crew work harder than others.

REUBEN and JOEY enter with beach towels, sunglasses, drinks with straws.

REUBEN: You know, this cruise isn't all that I expected.

JOEY: These fruit drinks are good. Cheers. (*They toast and drink.*)

LEWIS: (*Writing.*) July 4, 1804. Our group celebrates the first Fourth of July west of the Mississippi.

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CREW enters playing “Yankee Doodle” on kazoos. They cross center and finish the song.

CLARK: HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY, EVERYBODY!

ALL cheer. They play “Yankee Doodle” and exit right.

LEWIS: *(Writing.)* August 3, 1804. We held our first council with a small group of Oto and Missouri Indians. Later this area will become known as Omaha.

NATIVE 1 AND 2 enter left. CLARK and CREW enter right. They meet center. REUBEN and JOEY carry boxes.

CLARK: *(To CREW.)* Let me handle this. *(To NATIVES.)* I am Clark. We brought you some stuff. *(To REUBEN.)* Show them.

REUBEN takes a compass from the box and hands it to the NATIVE 1.

NATIVE 1: What’s this?

REUBEN: A compass. *(Looks at compass and points UPS.)* North. *(Points DS.)* South.

JOEY: No. It’s the other way. *(Points DS.)* North. *(Points UPS.)* South.

GEORGE crosses center.

GEORGE: You got it wrong. That’s north. *(Points left.)* And that’s south. *(Points right. PIERRE crosses center.)*

PIERRE: Actually that’s north *(Points right.)* And that’s south. *(Points left.)*

FRANÇOIS: You guys don’t even know how to read that thing! And you call yourselves explorers!

YORK: I never called myself an explorer!

An argument follows with everyone speaking and pointing at the same time creating a wall of incomprehensible noise. DOG barks. NATIVES watch in amazement.

REUBEN: (*Pointing.*) THAT'S NORTH AND THAT'S SOUTH! WE'VE BEEN TRAVELING NORHT, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION! UPRIVER IS NORTH! SOUTH IS THE OTHER WAY! (*Etc.*)

JOEY: (*Pointing.*) THAT'S SOUTH AND THAT'S NORTH! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION! YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT DIRECTION YOU'RE GOING! MOM WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU! (*Etc.*)

GEORGE: YOU'RE BOTH WRONG! THAT IS EAST AND THAT IS WEST! THAT COMPASS NEVER WORKED RIGHT! THE RIVER GOES NORTH AND SOUTH AND ACCORDING TO THAT THING WE'RE GOING EAST AND WEST! (*Etc.*)

PIERRE: (*Pointing.*) NORTH! SOUTH! NORTH! SOUTH! NORTH! SOUTH! (*Etc.*)

FRANÇOIS: (*Pointing.*) SOUTH! NORTH! SOUTH! NORTH! SOUTH! NORTH! (*Etc.*)

YORK: How did I ever end up in the middle of nowhere with a bunch of lunatics who can't even read a compass? Which way is Virginia? I wonder if I can walk back. Let's see, St. Louis is south, so if I start walking east ... Which way is east? (*Etc.*)

CLARK: WOULD YOU GUYS KNOCK IT OFF? YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME! HERE WE ARE TRYING TO IMPRESS PEOPLE AND YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A PACK OF KINDERGARTENERS! (*Etc.*)

LEWIS: DO YOU MIND? I'M TRYING TO KEEP A JOURNAL HERE! HEY! KNOCK IT OFF! (*Crosses center.*) I CAN'T HEAR MYSELF THINK OVER THERE! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE CIVILIZED!

Noise continues until LEWIS takes out a police whistle and blows it. ALL are suddenly quiet. They hold their ears in pain.

YORK: Wow! That was really loud.

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