

# Worksheet 3: The Louisiana Purchase and Adventures of Lewis and Clark

Thomas Jefferson was the third president of the United States, serving from 1801-1809. When Jefferson took office, our nation was not the size you and I know it as today. President Jefferson bought some land from the leader of France, Napoleon Bonaparte, and doubled the size of our nation. This sale, a famous event in history, is referred to as “The Louisiana Purchase.”

President Jefferson then found he had a problem with the maps of his newly purchased land. Most of the maps he owned were drawn from second-hand sources, and he was afraid they were not very accurate. Jefferson arranged for a group of people—led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark—to go on a dangerous journey and explore this unknown Western land. This journey, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, took place from August 1803 to September 1806 and covered approximately 9,000 miles. Among other goals, President Jefferson asked the explorers to make careful observations on their journey and create a more accurate map of the land. Jefferson hoped that this more precise map would lead to discovery of new natural resources and the settlement of the West.