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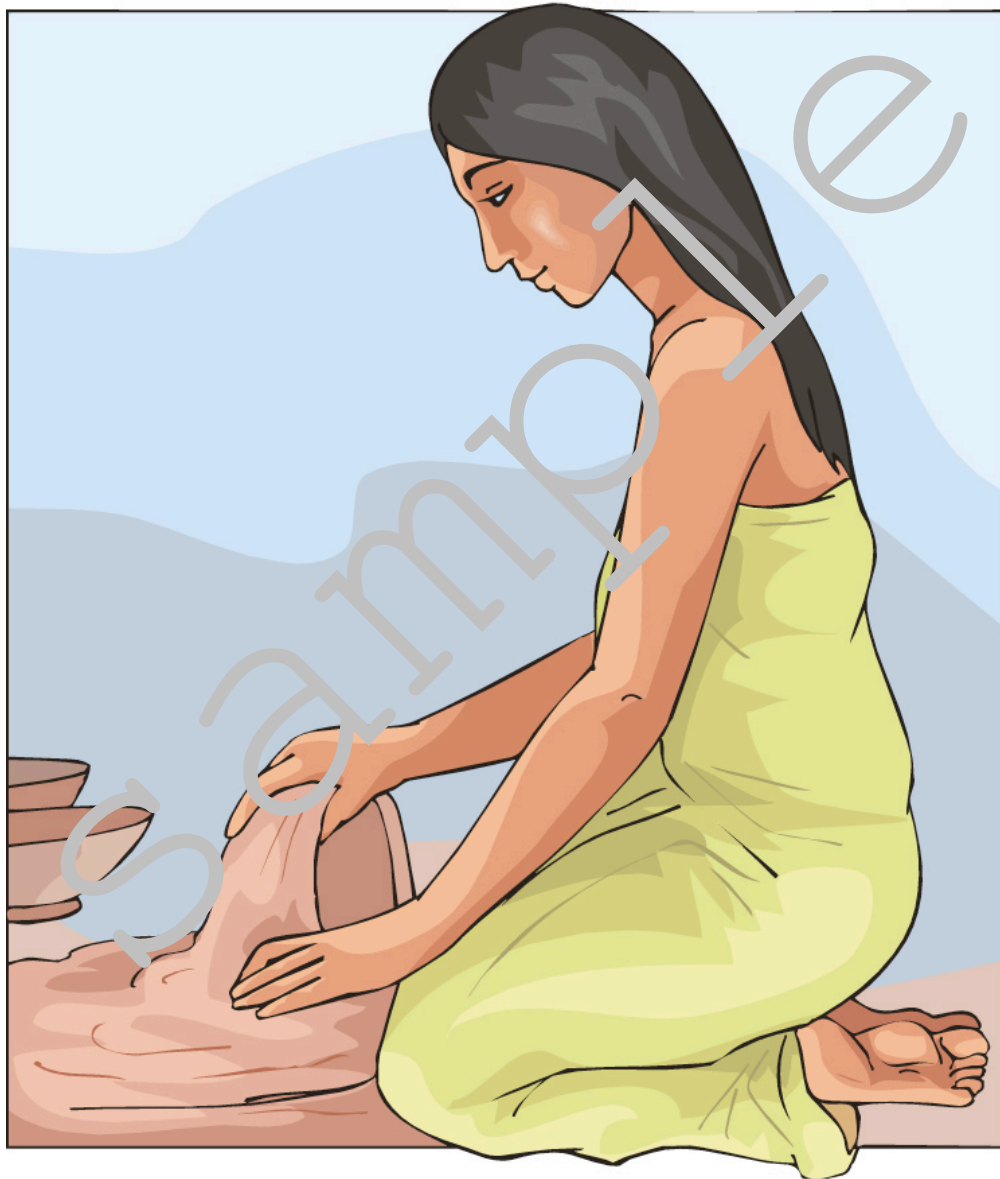
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Sacajawea

“Bird Woman”



Sacagawea

Little Bird and the other captives walked over 500 miles to the Minnataree village. It was in a place which is now known as Bismarck, North Dakota.

Everything about the Minnataree was confusing to Little Bird. The people spoke to her in a language very different from her own. The food and customs were strange. She was treated harshly and had to work as a slave.

The Minnataree had an entirely different way of life from the Shoshone. They lived in round lodges made of mud and grass. These had sunken floors that were hard as stone. Each lodge had a fire pit in the center of the room and a hole at the top where the smoke went out.



Instead of catching or picking their food, the Minnataree had learned how to grow crops from the Mandan Indians, a neighboring tribe across the Missouri River. They raised sunflowers, five kinds of beans, pumpkins, nine kinds of corn, and many types of squash and tobacco.

Little Bird's people had looked down on those who planted crops and stayed in one place such as the Minnataree. But the young girl learned from the women who were excellent farmers. Now she knew the way of the Shoshone and Minnataree. This knowledge would add to her value to the Corps of Discovery.

Read each sentence below. Fill in the missing blank.

1. Little Bird walked over 500 _____ to the Minnataree village
2. The Minnataree had learned how to grow _____ from the Mandan Indians.
3. Knowing the ways of the Shoshone and the Minnataree added to Sacagawea's _____ to the Corps.

Sacagawea



The President also wanted these young men to meet with Indians along the way. They were to be told that the territory no longer belonged to the French, but to the United States. It was hoped they could also persuade them to stop warring among themselves. This would help the fur business and let more settlers come West.

If the Indians were loyal to the United States, Jefferson promised to protect them. However, the President also wanted the Corps to learn from the various tribes, to know how they lived and to benefit from what they knew of the land that the expedition would travel through. They were to record everything they learned in journals.

The expedition built a camp near the Minnatartee called Fort Mandan. Charbonneau was eager to join the men, but one of the early concerns was that here was no waterway through the Rocky Mountains. The only way across would be by horse. The only way they could get horses was from the Shoshone.



Although she was soon expecting her baby Sacagawea was considered by the Corps to be of great value to them in their mission. As she had been a Shoshone, perhaps she could communicate with them.

It was not just this that made her valuable. She knew the way of the Shoshone, moving and not knowing what to expect from day to day. When she was captured by the Minnatartee she had learned their way of life. When she was sold to Charbonneau she had to learn the ways of white people. Sacagawea was strong and adaptable. Even with a baby she was too valuable to leave behind.



Sacagawea

CRISS CROSS

Can you fit these words into the criss cross?
Use a pencil so you can erase if you need to.

bird expedition fort guide
trail woman horse maps

