

TRAVEL WITH FATHER JACQUES MARQUETTE

Note to teachers: This supplement includes a discussion guide, lessons and Michigan Content Standards to use with the Michigan Time Traveler page. You may reproduce the pages in this supplement to use with students.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

(SOC.1.1. Time and Chronology; SOC.1.2. Understanding the Past; SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past; ELA.1. Meaning and Communication in Context)

- **Who Was Father Marquette?** Find Laon (NE of Paris) on a map of France. Laon was a well-established city when Jacques Marquette was born. The church he worshipped in was already 400 years old when he was a boy. What made him want leave Laon and travel to a new land that had few modern structures or conveniences? (missionary work) What would motivate you to go to live in an undeveloped place?
- **Down the Mississippi.** Did Marquette and Jolliet find that the Mississippi was a route to the Pacific Ocean? (no) How far down the Mississippi did they travel? (to the mouth of the Arkansas River) How many miles did they travel? (over 2,500) How long did their trip last? (about 5 months) Using a map and its scale, or a Web mapping service such as Mapquest, determine approximately how long a trip along the same rivers from St. Ignace and back to Green Bay, WI, would take by automobile today. (approx. 2,545 miles; (2 days, 4-5 hrs with no stops)
- **Father Marquette's Journal.** What does Fr. Marquette call the Indians? (savages) Explain that he used the word *sauvages*, meaning "of the woods" in French. Translated to English, it means wild or uncivilized. How do his notes show the native peoples to be "of the woods," but quite civilized for their environment? (They shared information for maps, shared pipes to smoke, invited Frenchmen to their village and had developed a system to keep mosquitoes from bothering them.) How do the explorers determine where they are during their trip? (degrees of latitude) What unit of measurement do they use? (league: 2.4 to 4.6 miles, generally about 3 miles)
- **Father Marquette's Time Line.** Using a world map, plot the geographic markers of Fr. Marquette's life. Discuss the means of travel that he might have used during the mid-17th century for each stage of his journey from Laon, France, to Quebec, New France (Canada). What inconveniences would he have faced?

ACTIVITY ONE: Marquette's 17th Century

(SOC.1.1. Time and Chronology; SOC.1.2. Understanding the Past)

Jacques Marquette lived from 1637 to 1675, the middle 17th century. Europeans expanded their nations by exploring lands overseas. They made scientific discoveries. It was the "century of the newspaper" as the first printed weeklies appeared in Europe. Thus, people learned of the explorations and discoveries. Assign the following topics to students in small groups for research.. Ask them to write a news story about the event and share it with the class. When all reports have been given, discuss and show ways in which the 17th and the 20th centuries were similar in their exploration and scientific advancements. (20th century: exploring the moon and outer space, breaking the sound barrier, computers, lasers, DNA, artificial heart, vaccines, antibiotics, etc.)

- Galileo (1564-1642) invents a telescope and determines that the earth travels around the sun.
- William Harvey (1578-1657) discovers that blood, pumped by the heart, circulates around the body.
- Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) invents the first reflecting telescope and develops the theory of gravity.
- Antony van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) develops brighter microscopes and discovers bacteria.
- Realistic painting, including art by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-69) and Jan Vermeer (1632-75), is popular.
- The North American colonies of Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620) are founded.

ACTIVITY TWO: Map Marquette’s Travels Down the Mississippi

(SOC.1.2. Understanding the Past; SOC.2.3. Location, Movement, and Connections)

Distribute copies of the map (page 3) to students. Below is a time line of Marquette and Jolliet’s exploration of the Mississippi. Using a classroom wall map, trace their travels with students. Ask students to mark and label each place on their maps as they locate it. Then discuss: Although they did not find a route to the Pacific Ocean, their trip accomplished these things: (1) They found many Indian villages (40) that would be potential places for Jesuits to seek converts to Christianity. (2) They found a new route from the Great Lakes to Florida and the East Coast. (3) They mapped and described beautiful country that could be the setting for future colonies. (4) They helped establish France’s claim to territory that would be part of the U.S.’s Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

1672	Marquette learns the language of the Illinois while at the St. Esprit mission (near present-day Ashland, WI). He decides that he would someday establish a mission in the country of the Illinois people. The governor of New France decides to send Louis Jolliet to explore the Mississippi River . Marquette is chosen to accompany Jolliet on his journey.
1672-1673	Jolliet prepares for the journey at St. Ignace during the winter. He and Marquette make a map and gather provisions.
May 17, 1673	Marquette, Jolliet and five voyageurs leave St. Ignace. They travel along the northern shore of Lake Michigan into Green Bay where they stop briefly at the St. Francis Xavier Mission (near present-day De Pere, WI). They travel down the Fox River and portage to the Wisconsin River to continue their journey.
June 7, 1673	The group of explorers arrives at the village of the Maskoutens , probably along the Wisconsin River near present-day Portage, WI.
June 17, 1673	The explorers enter the Mississippi River . They paddle south, passing the Missouri and Ohio rivers .
July 17, 1673	After reaching the village of the Akensea at the mouth of Arkansas River , the explorers decide to turn around and return to Green Bay. They go as far as the Illinois River and, leaving the Mississippi River, paddle along the Illinois to Lake Michigan, stopping to visit the Indian village of Kaskaskia . They paddle north along the western Lake Michigan shore. They turn west and cross the Door Peninsula north of the present day city of Sturgeon Bay .
September 1673	They return to the St. Francis Xavier Mission where they spend the winter.

ACTIVITY THREE: What Is That Animal?

(ELA.2. Meaning and Communication: Writing)

The Jesuits required their missionaries to keep notes. These were assembled in Quebec and sent to France, where the Jesuits published some of them and carefully stored all of them. Consisting of reports (relations), letters, memos and journals, they give us a wonderful first-hand picture of Native Americans, the fur trade, the missions and other aspects of North American history during the 17th century. Between 1896 and 1901, Reuben Gold Thwaites translated *Father Marquette’s Journal* as part of the *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*.

Distribute the hand-out (page 4), a selection from *Father Marquette’s Journal*. Point out that explorers often not only described peoples and locations, but also the plant and animal life. Ask students to read the page or read it to them. Ask: What animals (and fish) does Marquette describe? What are the pisikious? (bison) How do you know?

Assign: Take time to really look at your pet or another animal. Write a description of it without naming it. Share the descriptions by reading them aloud in class. Ask other students to guess what animal was described when each author/reader is finished.

The Mississippi River



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From *Father Marquette's Journal*

The Missisipi [*sic*] river takes its rise in various lakes in the country of the northern nations. It is narrow at the place where Miskous empties; its current, which flows southward, is slow and gentle. To the right is a large chain of very high mountains, and to the left are beautiful lands; in various places, the stream is divided by islands. On sounding, we found ten brasses of water. Its width is very unequal; sometimes it is three-quarters of a league, and sometimes it narrows to three arpents. We gently followed its course, which runs toward the south and southeast, as far as the 42nd degree of latitude. Here we plainly saw that its aspect was completely changed. There are hardly any woods or mountains; the islands are more beautiful, and are covered with finer trees. We saw only deer and cattle, bustards and swans without wings, because they drop their plumage in this country. From time to time, we came upon monstrous fish, one of which struck our canoe with such violence that I thought that it was a great tree, about to break the canoe to pieces. On another occasion, we saw on the water a monster with the head of a tiger, a sharp nose like that of a wildcat, with whiskers and straight, erect ears; the head was gray and the neck quite black; but we saw no more creatures of this sort. When we cast our nets into the water we caught a sturgeon, and a very extraordinary kind of fish. It resembles the trout, with this difference, that its mouth is larger. Near its nose—which is smaller, as are also the eyes—is a large bone shaped like a woman's busk, three fingers wide and cubit long, at the end of which is a disk as wide as one's hand. This frequently causes it to fall backward when it leaps out of the water. When we reached the parallel of 41 degrees 28 minutes, following the same direction, we found that turkeys had taken the place of game; and the *pisikious*, or wild cattle, that of the other animals.

We call them "wild cattle," because they are very similar to our domestic cattle. They are not longer, but are nearly as large again, and more corpulent. When our people killed one, three persons had much difficulty in moving it. The head is very large; the forehead is flat, and a foot and a half wide between the horns, which are exactly like those of our oxen, but black and much larger. Under the neck they have a sort of large dewlap, which hangs down; and on the back is a rather high hump. The whole of the head, the neck, and a portion of the shoulders are covered with a thick mane like that of horses; it forms a crest a foot long, which makes them hideous, and, falling over their eyes, prevents them from seeing what is before them. The remainder of the body is covered with a heavy coat of curly hair, almost like that of our sheep, but much stronger and thicker. It falls off in the summer, and the skin becomes as soft as velvet. At that season, the savages use the hides for making fine robes, which they paint in various colors. The flesh and the fat of the *pisikious* are excellent, and constitute the best dish at feasts. Moreover, they are very fierce; and not a year passes without their killing some savages. When attacked, they catch a man on their horns, if they can, toss him in the air, and then throw him on the ground, after which they trample him under foot, and kill him. If a person fire at them from a distance, with either bow or a gun, he must, immediately after the shot, throw himself down and hide in the grass; for if they perceive him who has fired, they run at him, and attack him. As their legs are thick and rather short, they do not run very fast, as a rule, except when angry. They are scattered about the prairie in herds; I have seen one of 400.

Glossary:

Arpents: a unit of length equal to one side of a square constituting one arpent (.85 acre)

Aspect: appearance

Brasses: units of length equal to a fathom

Busk: a thin rigid strip of metal, whalebone, or wood inserted in the front of a bodice or corset for stiffening and support used from the 16th to the 19th centuries

Corpulent: large, fat

Dewlap: large fold of skin that hangs down under the neck

Miskous: the Wisconsin River

Plumage: feathers

FURTHER RESOURCES

Web Resources

The Explorers: Marquette, Jolliet, others (Museum of New France – Canadian Museum of Civilization)
http://www.civilization.ca/vmnf/explor/explcd_e.html

The French Connection by Gary Peterson (*Home and Away Magazine*)
<http://www.homeandawaymagazine.com/archives/french.html>

Louis Jolliet And Jacques Marquette: Discovering The Mississippi (Library of Canada)
<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/24/h24-1470-e.html>

Marquette & Jolliet, Instructional Guide (Famous Explorers Series, Film Ideas. Inc.)
<http://www.filmideas.com/guides/dlmarquettejoliet.pdf>

Mississippi River States Map/Quiz Printout (Enchanted Learning)
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/statesbw/mrstates/ms.shtml>

The mystery of Père Marquette's final resting place by Vivian M. Baulch (*The Detroit News*)
<http://detnews.com/history/marq/marq.htm>

National Rivers Hall of Fame: The Pathfinders (Mississippi River Museum)
<http://www.mississippirivermuseum.com/pathfind.htm>

Père Marquette and the Legacy of the French in Wisconsin
<http://www.uwgb.edu/wisfrench/library/history/marquett/index.htm>

Wisconsin Stories: The Jesuit Relations (State Historical Society of Wisconsin)
<http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/wisconsinstories/documents/marquette/jesuit.htm>

Books

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Hamilton, R. N. *Father Marquette*. Great Men of Michigan Series. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publisher, 1970.

Kelly, Regina Z. *The Picture Story and Biography of Marquette and Joliet*. The Library of American Heroes Series. Chicago: Follett Pub. Co., 1965.

Kjelgaard, Jim. *The Explorations of Père Marquette*. NY: Random House, 1951.

Michigan History for Kids. *French Michigan*. Lansing, MI: *Michigan History Magazine*, Fall 2001.

Free PDF: <http://www.michiganhistorymagazine.com/kids/issues.html>

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