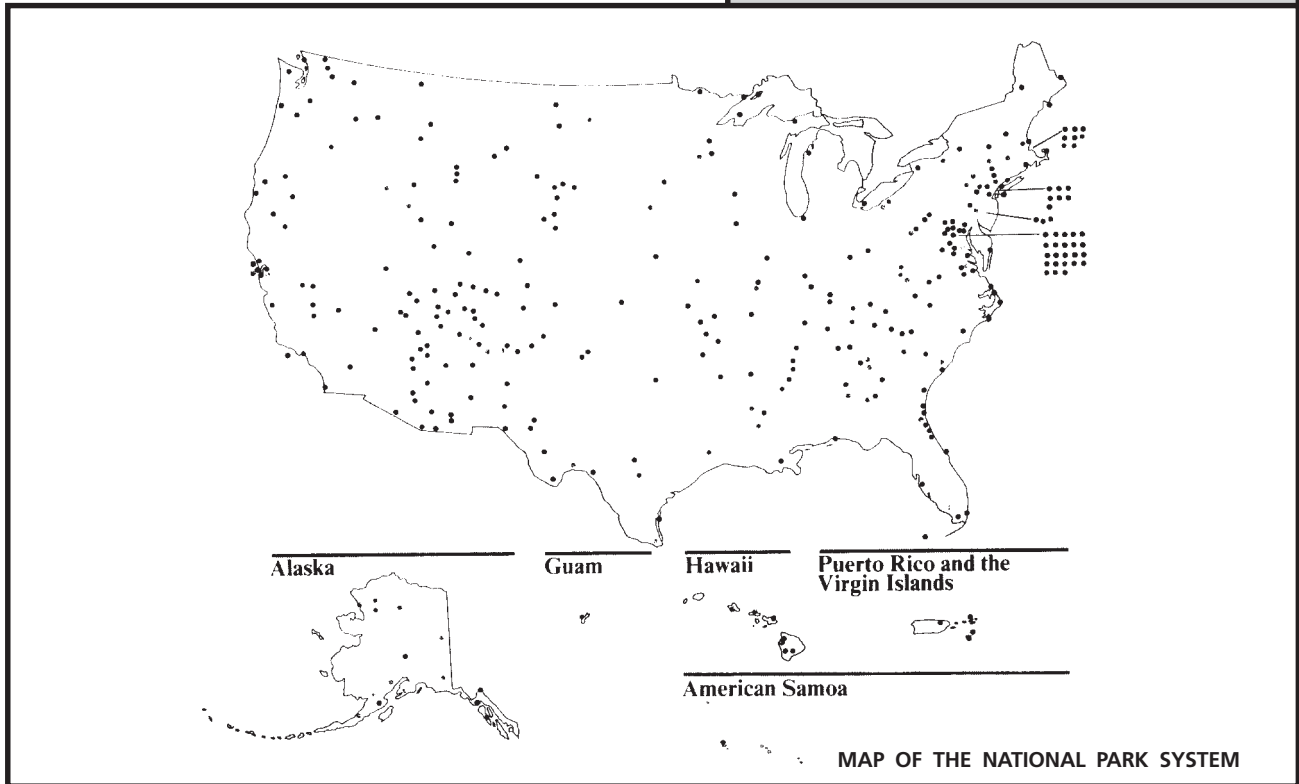


*The National Park Service is “the largest university in the world, with 367 branch campuses.”*

Robin Winks  
Yale Historian, 1992

As of 2002, the number of National Park units extended to 385, all of which are here for you.



Any questions or comments on this Teacher Activity Guide are welcome. Contact the Director of Education at:

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial  
11 North Fourth Street  
St. Louis, MO 63102  
(314) 655-1600

Produced by the Division of Museum Services and Interpretation: 1996  
Revised: October 2002



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your valuable suggestions. You requested activities specific to each program topic that can be used before and after your museum visit. We listened and have designed this Teacher Activity Guide (TAG) especially for you. It is an investigative, hands-on approach to history.

The activities are based on curriculum guidelines for the states of Missouri and Illinois; they integrate cooperative learning, conflict resolution, and are relevant to real world experiences. In addition, suggested activities extend across the curriculum, providing an interdisciplinary approach, thereby enhancing the learning process.

We are also excited to introduce you to the National Park Service through an integrated theme concept. In addition to our basic program format, sections on career education and enrichment activities provide a multifaceted guide that can be used for a variety of student levels and subject areas.

We hope you find this guide “user-friendly” and look forward to hearing from you again. We appreciate your feedback and ask that you complete the enclosed Program Evaluation. If you have any questions or need further information, please call us at (314) 655-1700.

Sincerely,

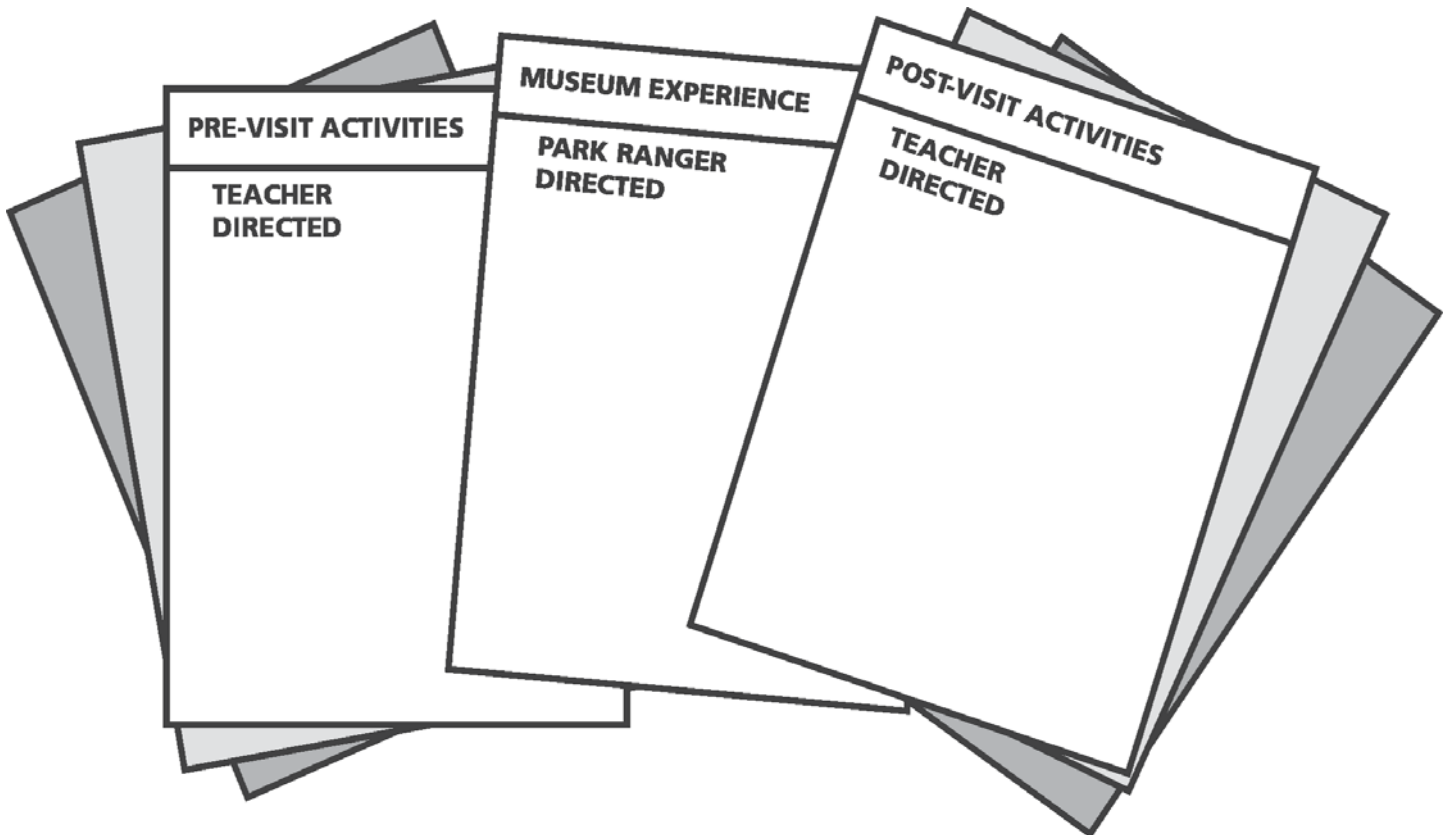
Gary W. Easton  
Superintendent

## **“USER FRIENDLY” FORMAT**

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The activities in the TAG follow a simple format.

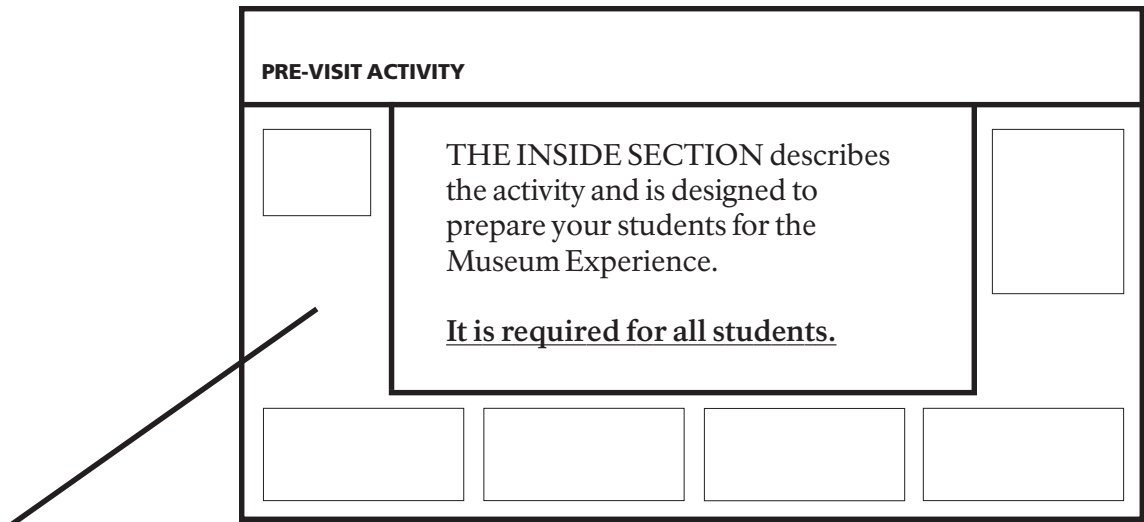
- Three PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES prepare your students before the MUSEUM EXPERIENCE. We suggest you use all three activities in sequence as access strategies. Depending on the performance level of your students, however, you may wish to move ahead to the REQUIRED activity.
- The MUSEUM EXPERIENCE briefly summarizes the program in which your students will participate at the Museum of Westward Expansion or Old Courthouse.
- Three POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES complement each of the three PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES and are designed for you to use after the MUSEUM EXPERIENCE. They are designed in sequence, yet also provide the flexibility to accommodate the specific needs of your students.



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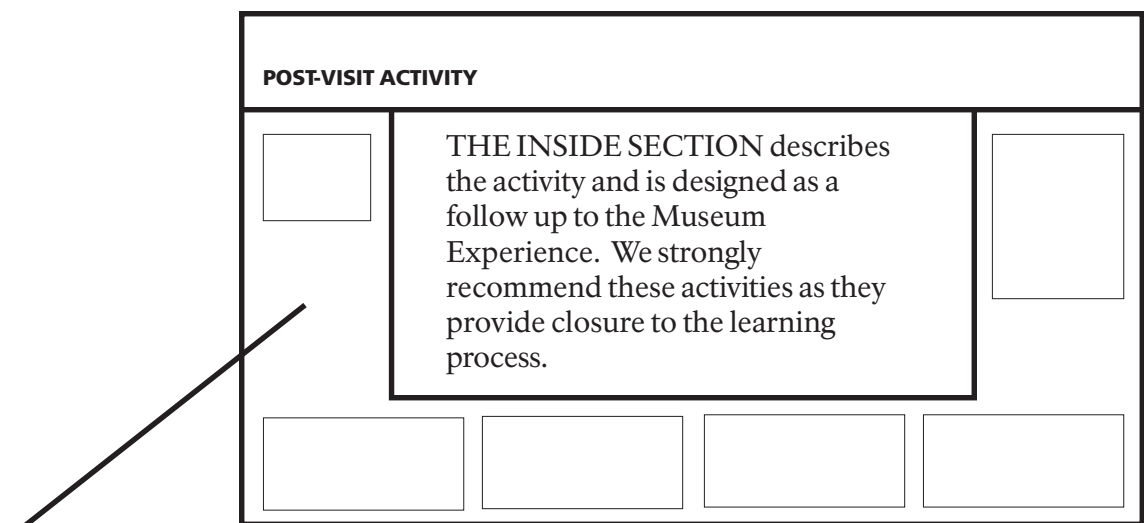
Each activity is designed in a wrap-around format to provide flexibility in your lessons and provide enrichment for a variety of student abilities.

### PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY



THE WRAP-AROUND MARGIN conveys a relevant real world connection to the activity. Exploring a National Park Service career and related site provides an enrichment opportunity that models career choices and encourages productive citizenship. This section is optional; however, it can serve as a significant reinforcer of generalization skills.

### POST-VISIT ACTIVITY



THE WRAP-AROUND MARGIN enhances the carry-over of real world connections by extending the lesson across the curriculum into Language Arts, Math, Science, Art and Music. This section is suggested and can be used at your discretion.



## INTRODUCTION

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During the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s, the lure of the western frontier attracted many groups of people. Even before railroads linked the American West with the East, hundreds of thousands of pioneers traveled across the great continent to claim, work, and settle the land. These emigrants or "overlanders," as they came to be called, helped to create America's pioneering spirit.

Historians estimate that over 300,000 people moved west across the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails. Of that number, approximately 40,000 were children. It was possible to reach the Western coast by sailing around Cape Horn of Africa and some travelers did choose this more costly option. Yet, it is the image of the pioneer's covered wagon heading westward that is planted in our collective historic memory.

Following the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, western explorers and fur traders laid claim to the northwest Oregon country. In 1836, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, along with Henry and Eliza Spalding, headed for Oregon as missionaries to spread Christianity to the American Indians. Proving it was possible for women and families to travel overland to Oregon, their trip opened the door for mass settlement. By 1843, over 1,000 pioneers had crossed what would be called the Oregon Trail. Many more followed in the years to come.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 led to a new wave of travelers in 1849. Known as "forty-niners," these emigrants followed much of the Oregon Trail and later turned south on the California Trail. Settlement came rapidly to California. By 1850 it had become the thirty-first state in the Union.

Another pioneer trail to the West was the Mormon Trail. Religious persecution forced the Mormons to leave Nauvoo, Illinois in 1846. Seeking religious freedom in a new land, thousands of Mormon families traveled along this route to the Great Salt Lake, in present-day Utah, during the period 1846-1869.

This Teacher Activity Guide and museum program will focus primarily on the lifestyles of the pioneer families who prepared to go overland on the Oregon Trail, seeking a better life and new opportunities. From the trail's starting point in Independence, Missouri, it was over 2,000 miles to the Willamette Valley in Oregon. On average, it took a wagon train of emigrant from five to six months to complete the trip. This grueling journey required much advanced planning and cooperation from all involved.

In the early days of the trail, many overlanders used guides who knew the way. Later on, as the trail became well worn, a guide was no longer necessary. Guide books were written that provided important information for the travelers. Many of the people who went west feared attacks by American Indians. In reality, there were very few such incidents and many pioneers experienced positive contact with Indians. Accidents and disease along the trail turned out to be the real enemies.

Gradually, travel to the West became easier and took less time. In 1869, the railroads linked the nation from one end to the other. The pioneer overland trails never completely faded away. Parts of them became the nation's roads and highways. Today, these pioneer trail routes and the overlander's history associated with them are preserved for future generations. Many national park sites, like Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, preserve and commemorated the pioneers' daily life on the journey west.



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