

Streams To The River, River To The Sea



By

Scott O'Dell

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

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About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

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Suggestions and Expectations

Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two or three chapters of *Streams to the River, River to the Sea* and is comprised of these distinct sections:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (page 7) as well as a **Checklist** (page 6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include Sacagawea, exploration of United States, historical fiction, Lewis and Clark, 18th Century North America, indigenous peoples of the western United States.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Identification of root words
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identifying parts of speech
9. Identify *personification*.

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Complete a Plot Outline for a Sequel
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist/antagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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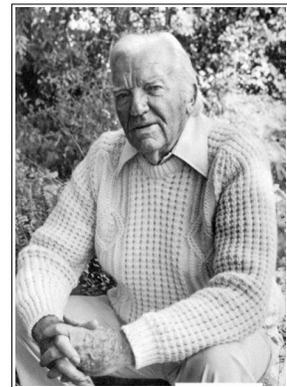


Synopsis

Streams to the River, River to the Sea is the story of **Sacagawea**, a young Shoshone woman who guided Lewis and Clark on their journey across the United States. It follows Sacagawea from her home with the Shoshone, through her time with other tribes having been kidnapped, and finally on her trek to see the Pacific Ocean. [Courtesy of [Goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com)]

Author Biography Scott O'Dell

Scott O`Dell (1898-1989), one of the most respected authors of historical fiction, received the Newbery Medal, three Newbery Honor Awards, and the Hans Christian Anderson Author Medal, the highest international recognition for a body of work by an author of books for young readers. His many books include *Island of the Blue Dolphins*; *Black Star*, *Bright Dawn*; *Streams in the River*, *River to the Sea*; and *The Black Pearl*. He was born O`Dell Gabriel Scott in Los Angeles, but when his name appeared incorrectly on a book, he decided to keep the name Scott O`Dell. He served in the air force during World War I. Before becoming a full-time writer he was a cameraman and technical director. (The Publisher)



Streams To The River, River To The Sea



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Name: _____

Streams To The River, River To The Sea

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Chapters 1-2



Before you read the chapters:

The protagonist of *Streams to the River, River to the Sea* is a young Shoshone girl, **Sacagawea**, an historical figure who lived more than two centuries ago in the frontiers of the United States. How might reading about an historical character like this be more fascinating than reading about a character from more modern times? What might make this time period more challenging for the reader?

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Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| quaking | shiftless | mourning | stealthily |
| sachem | lingering | sprawling | roached |

1. Jason's collision with the tall grade eight student sent him _____ to the ground.
2. My uncle is a _____ rascal who has never held down a job for more than a week.
3. The young Minnetaree with _____ hair stood off at a distance.
4. Seeing what was in the haunted house left Teresa _____ like a leaf.
5. Kevin and Giorgione are always _____ about the schoolyard.
6. The _____ of Sacagawea's village was more esteemed than anyone else.
7. The big dog crept _____ across the room, hoping not to disturb the cat.
8. The people of Canada went into _____ when they received the terrible news.

Questions



Good to Know - Blackcaps

At the beginning of Chapter One, Sacagawea and Running Deer are gathering blackcaps. Blackcaps are a variety of black raspberries which still are a popular delicacy, with a rich sweet taste.



1. What is the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One?

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2. What was it that first made the girls nervous? Why might this have been cause for alarm?

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3. What did you learn about Sacagawea's character from these first two chapters? Please support your answer with evidence from the story.

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4. The **Minnetarees** (Hidatsa) were deadly enemies of the Shoshone people. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three interesting facts about these people.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |

5. Sacagawea and Running Deer headed straight for home when their village was attacked. Think of an alternative choice they might have made at this time. Why do you think they chose the strategy that they did?

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6. What prevented Sacagawea from escaping on the trip to the camp of the Minnetarees?

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7. Sacagawea's captor's name was _____.

8. What caused Sacagawea to attack her captor?

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9. How did Running Deer display her cleverness on the trip to the camp of the Minnetaree?

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10. What event finally stopped Sacagawea and Running Deer from talking about escaping?

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11. Investigate: It states that Black Moccasin was the sachem of the Minnetarees. Was is the meaning of **sachem**?

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Language Activities



A. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is, . . . *the weapons that spit smoke and fire* . . . In this example, how is the weapon personified?



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Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

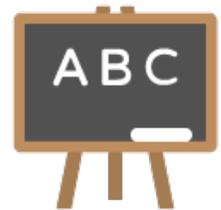
a) the crackle of a bonfire

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b) how you feel when you get a stone in your shoe

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B. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here is such an example from Chapter 1: *Some Minnetarees moved out of camp ...*



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Sound of an owl. | |
| The stars on a cloudless night. | |
| Your choice. | |

C. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first two chapters of *Streams to the River, River to the Sea*.

| Word | Anagram | Clue |
|--------|---------|--|
| stream | | Overlord. |
| north | | Handle this with care. |
| silent | | Loves hanging around a Christmas tree. |
| horses | | The edges of a body of water. |
| scream | | Rises to the top of milk when left standing. |
| sharp | | Specialty of angels. |
| pieces | | Money in the form of coins*. (A Hard one!) |

D. Cliffhanger

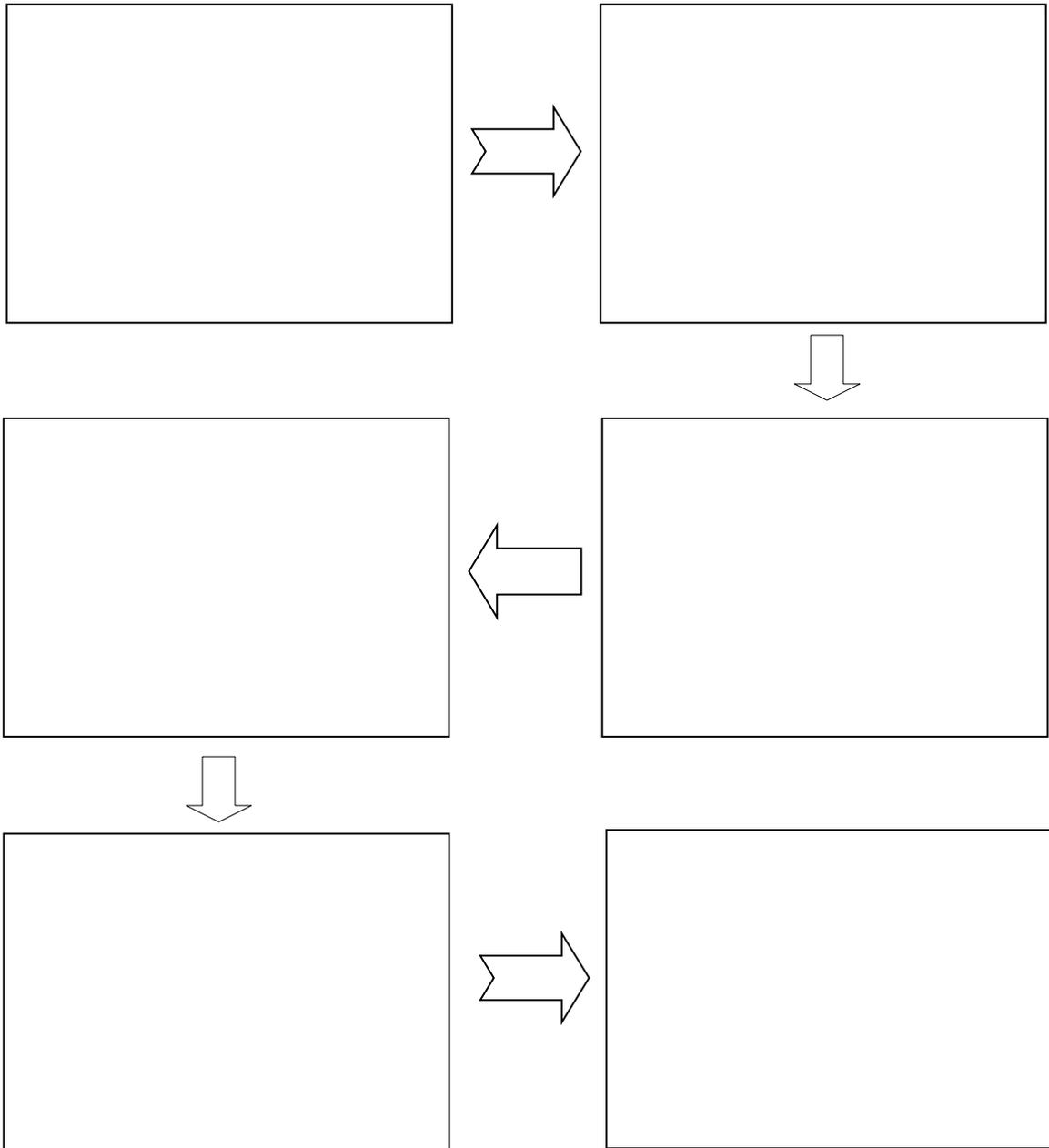
Chapter One contains an important literary device called a **cliffhanger**. A cliffhanger usually occurs at the end of a chapter when the author leaves the reader in suspense. How is this true in Chapter One? Why do you think the author ended the chapter this way?



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E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in these chapters. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



F. 5 Ws and an H.

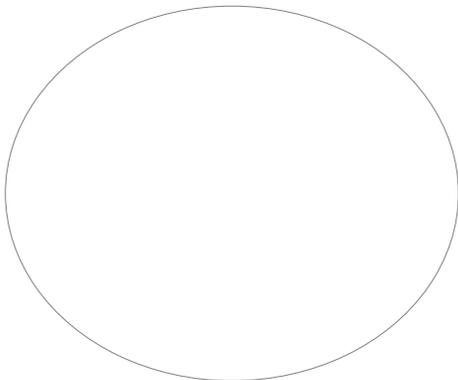
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



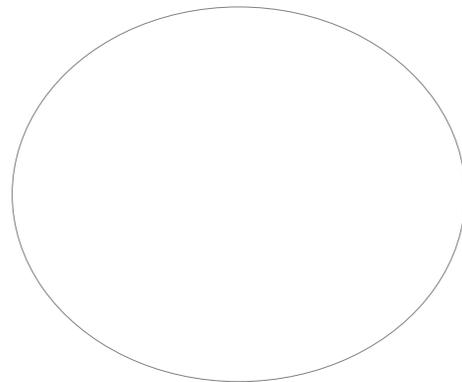
WHO?



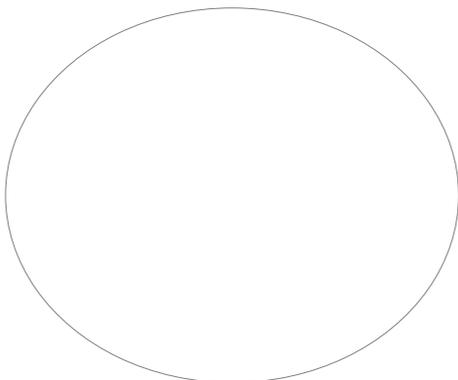
WHAT?



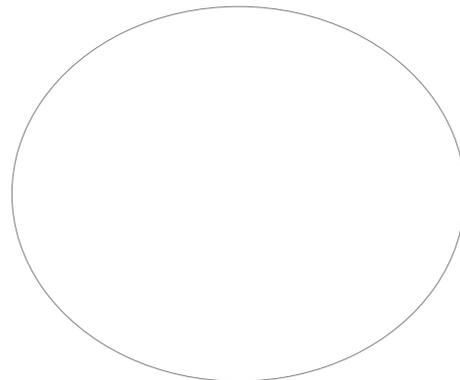
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words



Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of these chapters.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Beginning Picture: | Beginning: |
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| Middle Picture: | Middle: |
| | |
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| Concluding Picture: | Concluding: |
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