Mountain Men

Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Unit
Dedication:

Thank you to the Fur Trade Symposium at Bent's Fort, and particularly all the living historians who gave so generously of their time and expertise.

Today you’ll be going back in time to become a fur trapper, or mountain man. You’ll face trackless wilderness, wild animals, and untold dangers. The ones who make it through alive…win.

Choose your mountain man identity. These are all real people who worked as fur trappers in the Rocky Mountains in 1829. You’re about to leave St. Louis, Missouri, and travel across over 1,200 miles of trackless wilderness. What’s your new life as a trapper going to be like? Can you survive your time in the mountains?

So begins our Time Travel Field Trip to 1829. It’s unlike any history lecture, textbook or presentation you’ve ever seen. Why?

First of all, it’s incredibly engaging. History is so often taught as a fait accompli, something where the conclusion is already known, something that happened a long time ago to other people.

This is different.

• Engaging
• Emotional
• Memorable
• Fun to learn and easy to teach
• Accurate and detailed history, complete with primary sources
• Meets the standards you have to teach anyway…but in a way that makes 4th graders want to continue playing history at recess.

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www.timetravelfieldtrips.com
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Introduction

Welcome to Time Travel Field Trips, where your students love to learn by playing history!

Why Playing History?

How many people say that history was their favorite subject in school? Show of hands? (*crickets chirping*) Right.

Why? Partly because history is often taught with the dullest and least effective methods, such as lecture, but there’s more to it.

History is generally taught as something that happened to someone else a long time ago. Why should kids today care about that?

However, if you can put students into the roles of real people in history, give them real decisions to make with life-or-death outcomes, something magical happens.

Make it Personal and Emotional

Students are highly engaged, because living through something is completely different than hearing about it second-hand.

And because they are emotional about their experiences, they remember this history lesson for a long time.

Active Learning

This is a highly-interactive unit, where the students are taking on the identities and making all the decisions. They are active in all elements of the unit, from learning vocabulary, to acting out plays, to rolling dice.

Additionally, many of the activities are done in groups, so students can express their thinking and consider the perspectives of others.
Introduction

Appropriate for All Students

The included videos and challenging questions make the unit appropriate for all learners; it is designed to activate higher-level thinking regardless of reading level.

Easy to Teach

With this book and the PowerPoint presentation you downloaded, you are ready to go!

Background information about the time period is included for your convenience, but everything you need to know is already spelled out in the student materials and game information.

As soon as you finish the steps listed under Preparation, you are ready to teach.

Here we go! Have fun!
Types of Pages

Pretest

- The optional Pretest lets you check for prior knowledge and assess growth.
- Standards are listed on the bottom of the answer key.

### Built-in Background Knowledge

In addition to the traveling back in time movies (part of the PowerPoint presentation), your unit includes:

#### Vocabulary

- Vocabulary includes special terms used in the unit.
- It is especially important for ELL students.
- Key terms are included in the PowerPoint presentation.
- You can hand the vocabulary sheet out to students who need support.

#### Comics

- Comics for Reader’s Theater builds essential background knowledge in a fun way.
- Comics are included in PowerPoint presentation.

#### Plays

- Short plays engage your dramatic students.
- Plays help students act out and understand key information.

#### Primary Sources

- Primary sources are presented as letters from the past.
- They are carefully timed to coincide with an important decision so students feel the information is relevant and helpful.
- Sources are presented in movie format on the included PowerPoint presentation, so the information is accessible to all students.
- Additional primary sources for each student experience are included in the appendix.
PREPARATION

Step 1: Download this PDF and the PowerPoint presentations.

- The PowerPoint presentation is broken into parts to make your download faster.
- Print all or some of this PDF.
- You only really NEED to print the student materials, marked on the side with the yellow COPIES box. You'll be reading aloud from this booklet, so do whatever is most comfortable for you - print, iPad, computer, Mirror of Erised, etc.....

Step 2: Make copies (see Materials page).

Step 3: Divide your class into 4 groups.

Step 4: Set your classroom up into 4 table groups.

Step 5: Hang up the Points Chart and laminated score markers (see Materials page).

Step 6: Get a total of 4 dice (one for each group).

Step 7: Open to the first Lesson page (green rectangle on side) and play!
Teacher Tips:  
From Teachers to Teachers

This lesson has been extensively tested in a variety of classrooms by a number of different teachers. They suggest using the following strategies to easily teach this lesson:

1. Print the whole unit, in color.

2. Put the unit in a 3-ring binder with divider tabs.

3. Some teachers like to preview the time period by having their students read the related section in the history textbook. Although each unit does include required background knowledge, priming the pump makes some classes more successful.

4. Make sure your scorekeeper is good both at paying attention and at math. He or she will need to deal with both positive and negative numbers.

5. Use a bell or chime for attention.
   - You will be constantly transitioning back and forth between teacher instructions and student actions.
   - This is a really fun way to learn, but it is very exciting and stimulates a lot of student chatter.
   - It is helpful to have a bell or some sort of way of quickly gathering the students' attention.
   - Personally, I run a contest; the team that gains the most listening points gets a small prize at the end of the day.
Greetings, O Copy Master! We hail thee and the might of thy Copy Machine!

Print and go (only one copy needed):

- p. 26 Points Chart (print in color)
- p. 27 Game Pieces (print in color, cut out)
- p. 28-31 Identity Sheets
- p. 32 Map (print in color)
- p. 33 Roles for the play

Make one per group (4):

- p. 34 Score sheet
- p. 35 Decision One: Company or Free Trapper?
- p. 36 Decision Two: Where to Trap?

Odd numbers of copies:

- p. 37-38 Mountain Man Play (at least* 5 copies)

Optional copies:

- p. 39 Pretest
- p. 40 Post-test
- p. 41 Vocabulary
- p. 42-43 Letter from the Past: Life as a Mountain Man

* More if you want the class to be able to read along.
Meeting Student Needs

Standards:

This lesson addresses the following standards:
• (DOK 1) Students can define choice and opportunity cost.
• (DOK 2–3) Students can analyze different choices and their opportunity costs.
• (PFL) (DOK 1–2) Students can identify risks that individuals face.
• (SS09-GR.4-S.1-GLE.2) Students know about the historical eras and groups in Colorado history.

Assessments:

The optional pre- and post-test are included for your convenience. You may use them for ongoing assessment, if you wish.

You may use the assessments orally or in writing.

Time for the pre- and post-test is NOT included in the timing of the unit.

Differentiation:

Most students of any skill level are able to do everything in this lesson.

Reading Level:

The primary sources are presented in writing and as a movie, so that everyone can hear, see, and understand the content, regardless of reading level.

Vocabulary support:

There is a vocabulary sheet included for students who would benefit from extra vocabulary support.

Key words are also defined in the PowerPoint presentation at appropriate times, so you do not have to go over vocabulary ahead of time, though it would be a good idea if you have a lot of ELL students in your class.

Time to go over the vocabulary sheet would be in addition to the time allotted for the lesson.
### Overview

Total Time: 1.5-2 hours (Two 45+ min. lessons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Lesson p.</th>
<th>Materials p.</th>
<th>PP Slide #</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin Lesson One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not included</td>
<td>optional, not part of lesson timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Begin PowerPoint Part 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your mission and life points</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>movies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to essential question</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 minute or less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Choose roles for the play</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain man play (background knowledge)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37-38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>reader's theater 5 roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recap learning from the play</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect leaders</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose ID</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28-31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to keep score Prepare score sheet</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>movie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to do dice rolls</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel back in time movie</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2 min. 15 sec</td>
<td></td>
<td>movie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome to 1829</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10 sec.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Begin PowerPoint Part 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary: mountain man</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30 sec</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Life as a mountain man and discuss what students learned</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42-43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>primary source movie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary: choice and risk</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30 sec.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision 1: Company or free trapper</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>5 minutes+</td>
<td>individual choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note choice on score sheet</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
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<td>Begin Lesson Two</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary: Opportunity cost and competition</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10 seconds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision 2: Where to trap</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13-17</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>useful to also have the map visible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dice rolls</td>
<td>17-22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
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<td>move along briskly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Add up points for section 1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td>teams change markers on points chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free trapper consequences</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company trapper consequences</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add up final points</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td>teams change markers on points chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit essential question - risks and rewards of being a mountain man</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23-24</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate your decision to be a free or company trapper</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>primary source</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean up</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>End Lesson Two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>optional</td>
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</table>
LESSON PLAN

DIRECTIONS:

LESSON ONE BEGINS

1. **PRETEST:**
   Written or oral, depending on if you need a grade.

2. **YOUR MISSION:**  
   Play the movie about your mission today.

3. **LIFE POINTS:**  
   Play movie about what life points mean.

4. **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**
   Why did people choose to become Mountain Men (fur trappers)?
   - What were the risks and rewards of that choice?
     - That’s what we will focus on in this unit.
     - Also, everything in this game - from the identities, to the maps, to everything that happens, is real.
     - It all really happened.

5. **MOUNTAIN MAN PLAY:**  
   “Before you become a mountain man, you need to know more about them. We’re going to read a short play about mountain men.”
   Choose students for roles (roles sheet), act out the play.
   
   **Roles for strong readers:**
   Joe Meeks, John Coulter

   **Roles for average readers:**
   Lady Shopping, Jedediah Smith

   **Roles for struggling readers:**
   Shopkeeper

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**TIP:**
Students should already be seated in their teams.
Students will be discussing issues, voting, and rolling dice.
It is helpful for them to be facing each other at their table groups.

**MATERIALS:**
- Pretest (optional)
- Points Poster with group playing pieces (beavers) on board
- Mountain Men play (5 copies, 2 pages)
**LESSON PLAN**

**DIRECTIONS:**

6. **RECAP LEARNING FROM PLAY:**
   
   So far, what rewards or incentives made people want to be mountain men? What risks did they face?

7. **ELECT LEADERS:**
   
   Teams will now elect leaders.

   **Two important qualities for team leaders:**

   - **Fair**
     - You will face life and death decisions today.
     - You will need the combined thinking power of your whole group to come to the best decision.
     - Once you learn about the situation and your choices, your team leader will ask each person in turn what they think you should do.
     - One person speaks at a time.
     - Vote. Majority wins.
     - If you don’t win, practice good sportsmanship.

   - **Good sportsmanship**
     - Discuss what good sportsmanship looks like.

   - **Finger point vote**
     - On the count of three point to the person you want to lead today.
     - You may NOT vote for yourself.

8. **CHOOSE A MOUNTAIN MAN IDENTITY:**

   Each student should choose an identity off the white identity sheets. All these identities are real people who worked as mountain men during the 1820’s and 1830’s.

   To choose an identity, a student writes his or her name on the line next to the identity number. That identity is then taken and cannot be used by another student.

   All the identities are men. Some of the trappers were married, but women didn’t generally work as trappers.

   Tell the students everyone will take on the role of a man so they can experience life as a mountain man.

   Students should share their mountain man name and where they are from with their teams.
DIRECTIONS:

9. **SCORE KEEPING:** 3 min.

Play the movie about how to keep score.

**FYI:**
- The number on the score sheet matches the player’s identity number.
- Each person starts with 10 points.
- Individual points are marked next to the person’s name.
- Group points are noted in the group section at the bottom, not taken off individuals.
- At the end of each section, total points lost (individual and group together), and subtract from 80.
- Write your total on your group symbol on the points chart on the board.

10. **PREPARE SCORE SHEET:** 2 min.

Each team leader chooses a scorekeeper for the team.

That person should write the students’ names on the score sheet, being careful to match the number on the score sheet with the number on the identity sheet. So identity #1 would be listed as #1 on the score sheet.

11. **DICE ROLLS:** 1 min.

- Team leader rolls for the group, individuals for themselves.
- Before students roll, they must guess odds or evens.
- The die must land on the table.
- The teacher has to see the roll for it to count.

12. **TRAVEL BACK IN TIME:** 2 min.

Play the traveling back in time movie on the PowerPoint to give the students background knowledge about life in the 1830s.

13. **WELCOME TO 1829:** 10 sec.
PLAYING HISTORY

LESSON PLAN

DIRECTIONS:

End of PowerPoint Part One. Switch to Part Two.

Slide 2


Slide 3

15. LIFE AS A MOUNTAIN MAN: 5 min.

“You’ve become a mountain men in 1829! Let’s find out what it’s like here.”

Hand out Letter from the Past: Life as a Mountain Man, if using.

Note this includes quotes from primary sources, from people who were really there in the 1820s-1830s.

Play movie on PowerPoint.

Briefly discuss what life is like for mountain men.

Emphasize that everything in this game really happened.

Slide 4

16. VOCABULARY: CHOICE AND RISK: 30 sec.

Slides 5-10

17. DECISION ONE: COMPANY OR FREE TRAPPER 5+ min.

• Before you can trap beaver, you have to get your outfit - horse, food, and supplies.
• Go over the situation and possible choices of Mountain Man Decision One (page 35).
• Discuss possible risks and rewards of each choice.
• Each person makes his or her own choice.
• You will discover the consequences of your choice after your year in the mountains. (i.e. at the end)

Slide 11

18. NOTE CHOICE ON SCORE SHEET: 2 min.

• Write F for free trapper or C for company next to each person's name on the score sheet.
• Scorekeepers note -$600 in the money column next to each person who chose to be a free trapper, since they are in debt for their gear.

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LESSON PLAN

DIRECTIONS:

LESSON TWO BEGINS


20. DECISION TWO: WHERE TO TRAP: 10 min.

- Go over the situation and possible choices of Decision Two (page 36).
- Teams discuss options, focusing on possible risks and rewards of each choice.
- Remind them to vote, and that the majority wins.
- Write down the choice for each team.
- Wait until all teams have chosen before moving on.

21. DICE ROLLS: 15-20 min.

Do individual and group dice rolls.
Decision Two: Where to Trap?

GROUP DECISION: CONSEQUENCES

Mountain Men Experience #1

Choice One: Stay in known areas

This used to be rich beaver company. Unfortunately, it’s been trapped so heavily over the past several years that it’s well nigh trapped out. You have a hard time finding any beaver in this area.¹

Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.

Guess correctly: You get lucky and find just enough for the season.

Guess incorrectly: There just aren’t many beaver here. All that work for so little financial gain. Lose 5 group points.

Mountain Men Experience #2

Choice Two: Head east to the Platte River.

Unfortunately, the reason so few people hunt on the Platte is that it is filled with unfriendly tribes. One of your men is killed.

You have to turn back and find another place to hunt. Now you’re running behind.²

Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.

Guess correctly: Phew! You escape this fate!

Guess incorrectly: One man killed and the rest starting over. Lose 8 group points.

Mountain Men Experience #3

Choice Three: Explore new land.

Everything seemed to be great...at first. You made 8 miles the first day, and camped in a pass in the mountains. There your luck ended.

A group of Blackfoot Indians came over the pass. They seemed friendly enough, but unfortunately, one guy in your group recognized them as the same tribe that had killed his father. Under the cover of meeting their chief for peace talks, he pulled out a gun and shot the chief.

In the ensuing battle, 7 of your men and 7 of your Nez Perce allies are killed, with the same number wounded. The Blackfoot lost 26 men.³

Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.

Guess correctly: Phew! You escape this fate!

Guess incorrectly: So many killed and wounded. Lose 15 group points.

* You are an omnipotent and mysterious game god.

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Mountain Men: Rolling the Dice

GROUP DECISION: CONSEQUENCES

Mountain Men Experience #4

Choice Four: Follow the experienced trappers.

The trappers, who work for a different company, know you are following them. They have no intention of showing you their favorite hunting spots. They intentionally lead you into hostile Blackfoot territory.

You are attacked by a group of Blackfoot Indians, who don’t like having you on their land, taking the beaver they were planning to trap for themselves. One man is killed, and another is wounded.¹

You’ll have to find someplace else to hunt.

Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.  
**Guess correctly:** Phew! You escape this fate!  
**Guess incorrectly:** Men killed and injured. Lose 10 group points.

Individual Dice Rolls: Life as a Mountain Man

Mountain Men Experience #5

Identity 3

In a skirmish with the local Blackfoot Indians, you are shot. Although your men survive the battle and make it to a safe place, the arrowhead has broken off in your back. There are no doctors up here in the high mountains, so no one can do the necessary surgery to take out the arrowhead. You just have to hope it doesn’t get infected and that someday someone will be able to remove it safely from your back. ²

Call odds or evens and roll the dice.  
**Guess correctly:** This doesn't happen to you. Hooray!  
**Guess incorrectly:** I’m afraid you’ve been shot. Lose 4 points.

Mountain Men Experience #6

Identity 6

In trying to start a campfire with wet wood, you ask your friend for a little gunpowder. Instead of handing you a little, he pours the gunpowder directly on the smouldering tinder. The resulting explosion blows you both back six feet and knocks you out, but leaves you basically unharmed. You are lucky to have not been killed.³

Call odds or evens and roll the dice.  
**Guess correctly:** This doesn't happen to you. Hooray!  
**Guess incorrectly:** You’ve been knocked out. Lose 4 points.

FYI:

The identities do not roll in order; so Identity 1 is not first, etc. This is to heighten the excitement for the students, who never know when it will be their turn.
Identity 7

You’ve gotten separated from your group. One day you run into a guy who lost his mule in the deep snow. He hasn’t eaten in three days, so you share your small food supply with him.

Now neither of you has any food. Although you both hunt for the next five days, you find nothing, and you struggle on through the increasingly bad weather.

Finally, on the sixth day you spot a lone buffalo, grazing peacefully. You know you have to make this shot, or you’ll have to eat your horse to avoid starving to death. Obviously, you’d rather not eat your horse. Besides, that would leave you stranded to stagger on carrying all your belongings. You might never make it out of the mountains alive.

You raise your gun, and fire. 7

Calls odds or evens and roll the dice.

*Guess correctly:* Using fresh gunpowder and cap, you manage to kill the buffalo. Your lives are saved! Add 2 life points.

*Guess incorrectly:* The cap is damp, and bursts without firing the shot. You’ve missed. You are slowly starving to death and trapped without transportation. Things are looking grim. Lose 6 life points.

Mountain Men Experience #8

Identity 2

You’ve been attacked by a grizzly bear. You don’t have your gun with you. Can you run fast enough to get away? 8

Call odds or evens and roll the dice.

*Guess correctly:* You got away safely. Hooray!

*Guess incorrectly - what did the student roll? (Don’t roll again!):*

*Odd number:* The bear tried to eat your head, but your friends drove it away. Another trapper (not a doctor) sews you up. You’ll have a scar, but you heal OK. Lose 5 points.

*Even number:* You’ve been so badly injured your friends take all your supplies and leave you for dead. If you can drag yourself a hundred miles through the wilderness to get help, you might survive. Lose 8 points.

**FYI: OLD GUNS**

In the 1800's, some guns used a small cap filled with gunpowder. When the shooter pulled the trigger, the cap exploded, and that fired the gun.

However, when the cap got wet, the gun would not fire. This was a concern anytime it rained, or people crossed rivers, streams, etc.
**Mountain Men: Rolling the Dice**

**Mountain Men Experience #9**

**Identity 1**

You like to head out to the streams to trap without a partner, even though this makes you a target. One day, while standing in a stream setting your beaver traps, a gunshot is fired from nearby bushes. Your boss, who came out to yell at you for putting yourself in danger by trapping alone, drops to the ground to return fire, but the unseen assailant is gone.

The bullet has hit you in the leg, just below the knee. Your boss helps you back to camp. Both bones in your lower leg are shattered, with pieces of bone sticking out through the skin. Your only chance of survival is to cut off the damaged leg.

Grabbing a knife, you start cutting off your own leg, although you faint before you can finish. Your friends help you, and wrap the injured leg carefully in a dirty shirt. Despite all odds, you survive the blood loss, shock and dirty conditions long enough to be carried on a horse litter to winter camp. There a local tribe of Utes treat your injury with a special root and you heal. Later, you carve yourself a wooden leg, and are known for the rest of your life as "Peg-Leg."

**Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.**

*Guess correctly:* Phew! You escape this fate!

*Guess incorrectly:* Serious injuries. Lose 6 points.

**Mountain Men Experience #10**

**Identity 4**

You’ve come down with a mysterious ague (*A-*gew). High fever and shaking is followed by periods of chills. You have no doctor or medicine with you. Although the group pauses for a day to let you recover, soon everyone has to move on. You must make it to winter camp before you get trapped by bad weather.

The other trappers make you a litter out of poles and blankets so you can rest instead of riding a horse.

**Call odds or evens and roll the dice.**

*Guess correctly:* This doesn't happen to you. Hooray!

*Guess incorrectly:* I’m afraid you’re quite ill. Lose 4 points.
Mountain Men: Rolling the Dice

Mountain Men Experience #11

Identity 5

It is now the middle of winter in the Rocky Mountains. You and a bunch of other trappers are holed up in your winter camp near the Bear River. Although you have been daily expecting new food and supplies from the fur company, something clearly has gone wrong. The supply train is missing. You can’t hunt in this terrible weather. You are all beginning to starve.¹¹

Team leader calls odds or evens and rolls the dice.

Guess correctly: Phew! You escape this fate!
Guess incorrectly: You are weak and hungry. Lose 5 points.

Mountain Men Experience #12

Identity 8

Finally! It is summer, and you are on the way to the rendezvous! It’s been a hard year in the mountains, and you are eager to relax, catch up with friends, and get a new year’s supplies of food and treats.

On the way to rendezvous, you stop to collect the furs from the fall hunt that you cached before heading to winter camp. Digging up the cache, you are horrified to discover that it flooded over the winter. Half of the furs have been destroyed by water.¹²

Call odds or evens and roll the dice.

Guess correctly: This doesn’t happen to you. Hooray!
Guess incorrectly: Half your furs are destroyed. Lose 2 life points.

ADD UP POINTS:

Scorekeepers should add up all points lost in section one, individual or group points.
Subtract the total from 80.
Write the new total on the scoresheet and move the group playing piece on the points chart on the board.

FYI: VOCABULARY

SUPPLY TRAIN:
A group of mules and horses laden with supplies that traveled into the mountains. Not an actual train, as students may think.

CACHE:
A hole dug into the ground in which furs and goods are stored. The cache is covered with leaves to hide it so no one steals your stuff.

VOCABULARY

SUPPLY TRAIN:
A group of mules and horses laden with supplies that traveled into the mountains. Not an actual train, as students may think.

CACHE:
A hole dug into the ground in which furs and goods are stored. The cache is covered with leaves to hide it so no one steals your stuff.
Consequence for Decision One: Company or Free Trapper

Remember when you chose to be a company or a free trapper at the beginning of the game? Now you get to find out what happens to you!

GROUP DECISION: CONSEQUENCES

Mountain Men Experience #13

Everyone who chose to be a free trapper (see note)  5 min.

Each free trapper gets a turn to roll one die. This number represents how many 50 pound packs of beaver fur you harvested this year. At $3 per pound, you should be able to sell each pack for $150.

BUT, you have to subtract the $600 you owe to the fur company for your supplies.

Are you still in debt? Did you break even? Did you make money?

If you rolled a: 1, 2, or 3, you LOST money. Subtract 2 life points.
If you rolled a: 4, you BROKE EVEN. Your score stays the same.
If you rolled a: 5 or a 6, you MADE MONEY. Add two life points.

Scorekeeper should change your life points.

Mountain Men Experience #14

Everyone who chose to work for a company.  2 min.

You are getting paid $300 for your work this year.

You don’t need to roll the die to see how much beaver you caught, although you can if there is time. You have to give all your furs to the fur company anyway, and they will give you a new year’s supplies regardless of what you caught.

Gain 3 points per company trapper for the money you just made.
LESSON PLAN

DIRECTIONS:

22. **ADD UP POINTS:**  
   - Scorekeepers should add up all points lost in section two, individual or group points.
   - Add or subtract from your last total (end of section one).
   - Write the new total on the scoresheet and move the group playing piece on the points chart on the board.

23. **SHARE LEARNING:**  
   - What were the risks and rewards of being a Mountain Man? Discuss with the class. Possible answers on slide 25.

24. **EVALUATE CHOICES:**  
   - Read the primary source quote from Joe Meek on the life of a free trader. Do you agree that it is better to be a free trapper than a company trapper? Why or why not?
   * You can also use this as an alternative assessment.
   * Have students write a paragraph, using three pieces of evidence to support their position.

25. **CLEAN UP:**  
   - Put away papers. Return dice.

26. **POST-TEST:**  
   - Written or oral, depending on if you need a grade.
Name: ____________

MOUNTAIN MEN TEST

1. When were the mountain men trapping beaver in the Rocky Mountains? (1 pt.)
   a. 1742-1770  
   b. 1822-1840  
   c. 1842-1890  
   d. 1912-1940

2. List two risks Mountain Men faced. (2 pts.)

   2 of the following: cold, hunger, animal attacks, fights with Native Americans, accidents, illnesses, staying in debt, getting lost, losing furs or supplies.

3. What rewards could the Mountain Men get? (1 pts.)

   At least one of any of the following: adventure, discovery of new lands, wealth, health, freedom.

4. Was it better to be a free trapper or a company trapper? Why? (2 pts.)

   Students show understanding of the following:
   Company trappers were guaranteed a salary, though they had less freedom and choice.
   Free trappers had more individual freedom, but generally did not make much money.
   They often stayed in debt their entire careers.

5. Match each vocabulary word with its definition: (4 pts.)

   Choice          - The chance that something bad might happen.
   Opportunity cost-A non-native fur trapper who looked for beaver.
   Risk            - The act of making up one's mind.
   Mountain Man    - The cost or value of what you give up when you choose one thing over another.

STANDARDS:
(DOK 1) Students can define choice and opportunity cost. (DOK 2-3) Students can analyze different choices and their opportunity costs.
(PFL) (DOK 1-2) Students can identify risks that individuals face. (SS09-GR.4-S.1-GLE.2) Students know about the historical eras and groups in Colorado history.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-100+</td>
<td>Happy, healthy, and rich!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-80</td>
<td>You are pretty happy, fairly healthy, and have enough money. Life is pretty good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-70</td>
<td>Life is OK. You are sort of happy, kind of healthy, and may be struggling for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-50</td>
<td>Things are getting hard. You’re barely scraping by.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Life is rough. You’re not sure how you’re going to make it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>You’re feeling very poorly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Dead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Game Pieces
(Rocky Mountain Fur Trade unit)

Directions:
Print IN COLOR
Laminate if desired
Mountain Man Identities: Group 1

Identity 1: ______________________
Name: Tom "Broken-Hand" Fitzpatrick
Age: 30
From: Ireland
Nationality/Heritage: Irish
Wife: Unknown name, Snake Nation

Identity 2: ______________________
Name: Kit Carson
Age: 20
From: Missouri
Nationality/Heritage: American
Wife: Waanibe, Arapaho Nation

Identity 3: ______________________
Name: Peter Skene Ogden
Age: 35
From: Canada
Nationality/Heritage: French Canadian

Identity 4: ______________________
Name: John Colter
Age: 55
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American
Wife: Sally

Identity 5: ______________________
Name: Valentine Johnson "Rube" Herring
Age: 17
From: Illinois
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 6: ______________________
Name: Robert "Doc" Newell
Age: 22
From: France
Nationality/Heritage: French

Identity 7: ______________________
Name: Tom "Peg Leg" Smith
Age: 28
From: Kentucky
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 8: ______________________
Name: Simon Plamondon
Age: 29
From: Canada
Nationality/Heritage: French Canadian
Mountain Man Identities: Group 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity 1: __________________________</th>
<th>Identity 5: __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Osbourne Russell</td>
<td>Name: John Charles Fremont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 15</td>
<td>Age: 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From: Maine</td>
<td>From: Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife: Jessie Benton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity 2: __________________________</th>
<th>Identity 6: __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: John Davis Albert</td>
<td>Name: George Nidever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 23</td>
<td>Age: 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From: Maryland</td>
<td>From: Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity 3: __________________________</th>
<th>Identity 7: __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: James Beckwourth</td>
<td>Name: Alexander Harvey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 31</td>
<td>Age: 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From: Virginia</td>
<td>From: St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: Black American</td>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was originally born a slave</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity 4: __________________________</th>
<th>Identity 8: __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: William Craig</td>
<td>Name: Prewett Fuller Sinclair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 22</td>
<td>Age: 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From: West Virginia</td>
<td>From: Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
<td>Nationality/Heritage: American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife: Unknown, Nez Perce nation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mountain Man Identities: Group 3

Identity 1: _________________________
Name: James Bridger
Age: 25
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 5: _________________________
Name: Hugh Glass
Age: 29
From: Pennsylvania
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 2: _________________________
Name: William Becknell
Age: 41
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 6: _________________________
Name: Joshua Pilcher
Age: 39
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 3: _________________________
Name: Captain Benjamin Bonneville
Age: 33
From: Paris
Nationality/Heritage: French American

Identity 7: _________________________
Name: Charles Keemle
Age: 29
From: Pennsylvania
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 4: _________________________
Name: John Day
Age: 59
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 8: _________________________
Name: Alexander Sinclair
Age: 39
From: Tennessee
Nationality/Heritage: American
Mountain Man Identities: Group 4

Identity 1:________________________
Name: Jedediah Smith
Age: 30
From: New York
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 2:________________________
Name: Cyrus Alexander
Age: 24
From: Pennsylvania
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 3:________________________
Name: James Clyman
Age: 37
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 4:________________________
Name: Lucien Fontenelle
Age: 29
From: New Orleans
Nationality/Heritage: American
Wife: Bright Sun, Omaha nation

Identity 5:________________________
Name: Joseph Meek
Age: 19
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 6:________________________
Name: Joseph Reddeford Walker
Age: 31
From: Tennessee
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 7:________________________
Name: David Dawson Mitchell
Age: 23
From: Virginia
Nationality/Heritage: American

Identity 8:________________________
Name: William Henry Vanderburgh
Age: 29
From: Indiana
Nationality/Heritage: American
Mountain Men: Reader’s Theater Roles

Roles for Play

Joe Meeks:

John Colter:

Shopkeeper:

Lady Shopping:

Jedediah Smith:
## Mountain Men Score Sheet

**Directions:**

- Your Score Keeper will fill in this sheet for your group.
- Write each person's real name next to the number of their identity.
- When they gain or lose points in a round, write it down next to their name.
- Points for the whole group go in the group box near the bottom.
- At the end of each round, add up your total points (group points plus any individual points lost in that round) and subtract the total from your total at the end of the last round.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Mountain Men</th>
<th>Free or Company Trapper</th>
<th>Money owed (free trappers)</th>
<th>Value of furs or salary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Group Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>
TRAPPERS:

"The duty of a trapper, for instance, in the trapping season, is only to trap, and take care of his own horses. When he comes in at night, he takes his beaver to the clerk, and the number is counted off, and placed to his credit. Not he, but the camp-keepers, take off the skins and dry them." - Victor, p. 54

"A good hunter can take an average of 120 beaver skins in a year . . . worth in Boston about $1,000. [The trappers] can be hired for about $400 payable in goods at an average of 600 per [cent] profit." - Wyeth, in Wishart p. 197-198

Mountain Man Decision One: Company or Free Trapper?

SITUATION:

You have decided to become a fur trapper in the Rocky Mountains. Most people travel up into the mountains with a supply train, and then stay in the mountains all year long for one to three years.

The furs are best during cold weather, but the streams freeze in the middle of winter, making it impossible to catch the beaver. Beaver season is therefore in the fall and spring. Since it takes around 70 days - each way! - to get from the mountains to St. Louis, most mountain men wait out the winter (December to February) in the mountains with other trappers at winter camps.

To work as a trapper, you need: 1–4 horses or mules for transportation ($300 each); a rifle ($25); a set of 7 traps ($150); saddles, hatchet, knife, ammunition, cooking gear, blankets, clothing, and food. All this together costs around $600.

How will you get the supplies you need?

CHOICES:

1. Work for a fur company. The company will give you all the supplies you need for free, and will pay you a salary of $300 for the year. They’ll set you up with a camp, including cooks, hunters, and people to scrape and prepare the furs. The company will tell you where to hunt. You’ll have to do any job they ask you to do, and they’ll get all the furs you find.

2. Become a free trapper. Borrow the supplies you need from a fur company. You’ll owe them $600 at the end of the year, but if you find more furs than that, you can keep the difference. Also, you can band together with other free trappers (for safety), go where you want to go, and do what you want to do. You are totally independent.

William Ashley advertises in the newspaper for the first mountain men. -Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser, St. Louis, February 13, 1822

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"[William Sublette] reports the loss of eight of his party killed by the Indians last year - & 4 missing who no doubt have also been killed. I have recently heard of the loss of eight men more destroyed in the same way who together with 19 others have accompanied Mr. Smith down the river Rio Colorado of the West."

- William Ashley, in a letter to Governor John Miller of Missouri in 1828, as quoted in Gowans, p. 42

**DANGERS:**

- William Sublette reports the loss of eight of his party killed by the Indians last year - & 4 missing who no doubt have also been killed. I have recently heard of the loss of eight men more destroyed in the same way who together with 19 others have accompanied Mr. Smith down the river Rio Colorado of the West.

**SITUATION:**

It is August 1829. Your trip from St. Louis to the Rocky Mountains took 70 days, and then you and your new friends hung out at the rendezvous at Pierre's Hole near the Teton mountains.

Now it is time to decide where you will go to trap beaver this fall. There's a lot of competition in the mountains, and your safety and success depend on where you choose to go.

**CHOICES:**

1. **Stay in this area.** Men have been trapping beaver here for years. The cold winters mean thick pelts that bring good prices. Also, many times the summer rendezvous is held here at Pierre’s Hole, so you won’t have far to travel to get your supplies next year.

2. **Head east.** Go trapping on the Platte River. You have a decent map of the area. Not many people go there, so you might find more beaver there than in the heavily traveled areas.

3. **Explore new land.** Go southwest into places unknown by the fur companies. You might even make it as far as the Humboldt River. Of course, you’re not sure what’s out there, but new land has to have the most beavers since no one is trapping out there.

4. **Follow experienced trappers.** The greatest danger is getting lost in these trackless mountains. You don’t really know where you’re going. Follow the guys who have been up here for years. Surely they’ll lead you to the best places to hunt.
Mountain Men Play

Cast:
Joe Meeks
John Colter
Shopkeeper
Lady shopping
Jedediah Smith

Scene: A shop in St Louis, Missouri, 1829

Meeks: *(Runs in waving a newspaper)* John! Guess what?

Shopkeeper: Whoa! Slow down! You’re going to knock someone over!

Colter: What’s got you so excited?

Meeks: Look at the ad I saw in today’s paper!

Colter: *(Squints at paper)* Ladies’ boots are on sale?

Lady: They are? Where?

Meeks: *(Rolls his eyes)* No! Not that ad! This one! See? William Sublette is hiring men to go to the Rocky Mountains.

Colter: So?

Meeks: So, I’m gonna sign up! And you should come with me!

Colter: What? Are you crazy?!

Meeks: It’s a great opportunity!

Colter: It’s a great opportunity to get eaten by a grizzly bear!

Meeks: Just think of it! Travel, adventure, freedom!

Colter: I am thinking of it! Cold, wet, starvation, Indian attacks - and that’s if everything goes well!

Lady: I read stories in the newspaper about men who went out into that wilderness and never came back.

Meeks: But we’d find new places no one has ever seen before! Isn’t that right, Mr. Smith?

Smith: That’s true. I’ve clapped my eyes on a powerful lot of new land.

Lady: How exciting!

Shopkeeper: But wasn’t it dangerous?

Lady: Yes, where did you get all those scars on your face, Mr. Smith?

Smith: Grizzly bear tried to eat my head.

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Shopkeeper:  *(Faints. Lady tries to revive him.)*

Colter:  See! That's what I'm talking about!

Smith:  It's OK, though. I had a guy sew everything back on.

Lady:  A doctor?

Shopkeeper:  *(Starts to wake up.)*

Smith:  No, just my friend James Clyman.

Shopkeeper:  *(Faints again.)*

Colter:  Ugh! I'll stay right here in the good old United States of America, thank you very much.

Meeks:  *(Thinks for a minute)* You could get rich.

Colter:  What?

Meeks:  Those beaver furs are sure worth a lot of money. They say the mountains are just full of beaver.

Smith:  That's true.

Colter:  Hmm.

Meeks:  You can have the adventure of a lifetime, stories to tell your grandchildren, AND make enough money to buy land anywhere you like.

Lady:  Can a man really make that much money trapping beaver?

Meeks:  Sure! Look at William Ashley! He was only in the fur trade a couple of years, and now he's filthy rich and living the good life.

Smith:  I hear he's aiming to retire next year.

Meeks:  That could be us in a couple of years. You could do all those things you've been wanting to do.

Colter:  Well, I guess it wouldn't hurt to come to the interview. Just to find out more about it.

Meeks:  Yes! But they're only hiring 50 men, so we'd better go now, or all the spots will be gone.

Colter:  Well, OK. But I'd better not regret this!

Meeks:  You won't! It'll be amazing! *(Colter and Meeks turn and leave.)*

Smith:  *(Shakes his head.)* Was I ever that young?

Lady:  *(Takes his arm)* Tell me more about that grizzly bear.

Lady and Smith:  *(Walk away together, talking)*
10 points

Name: ______________________

MOUNTAIN MEN PRETEST

1. When were the mountain men trapping beaver in the Rocky Mountains? (1 pt.)
   a. 1742-1770
   b. 1822-1840
   c. 1842-1890
   d. 1912-1940

2. List two risks Mountain Men faced. (2 pts.)
   1. 
   2. 

3. What rewards could the Mountain Men get? (1 pts.)

4. Was it better to be a free trapper or a company trapper? Why? (2 pts.)

5. Match each vocabulary word with its definition: (4 pts.)

   Choice
   Opportunity cost
   Risk
   Mountain Man

   The chance that something bad might happen.
   A non-native fur trapper who looked for beaver.
   The act of making up one's mind.
   The cost or value of what you give up when you choose one thing over another.
10 points

Name:__________________

MOUNTAIN MEN POST-TEST

1. When were the mountain men trapping beaver in the Rocky Mountains? (1 pt)
   a. 1740-1770
   b. 1822-1840
   c. 1840-1890
   d. 1910-1940

2. List two risks Mountain Men faced. (2 pts)

   1.

   2.

3. What rewards could the Mountain Men get? (1 pts)

4. Was it better to be a free trapper or a company trapper? Why? (2)

5. Match each vocabulary word with its definition: (4 pts)

   Choice
   Opportunity cost
   Risk
   Mountain Man

   The chance that something bad might happen.
   A non-native fur trapper who looked for beaver.
   The act of making up one's mind.
   The cost or value of what you give up when you choose one thing over another.
Beaver: An animal that lives in streams. Its fur was used to make popular waterproof hats in the 1800s.

Cache: A hole dug into the ground in which furs and goods are stored. The cache is covered with leaves to hide it so no one steals your stuff.

Caravan: A group of people traveling together with horses and mules, and sometimes wagons. Usually they carry lots of supplies.

Choice: The act of making up one's mind.

Competition: The act or process of trying to get something (such as beaver furs) that someone else is also trying to get.

Financial incentive: Something that makes people work harder or do something so they can make money.

Fur company: A company which sold animal furs to make money. Often, the fur company also made money selling supplies to fur trappers.

Fur trapper: A person who hunted animals for their furs.

Mountain man: A non-native who lived in the mountains trapping beaver.

Opportunity cost: The cost or value of what you give up when you choose one thing over another.

Plews: Beaver skins.

Rendezvous: A summer meeting at which trappers traded furs for supplies.

Reward: Money or another kind of payment that is given to someone for doing something.

Risk: The chance that something bad might happen.
Dear Amy,

We leave for the Rocky Mountains tomorrow. I hear it takes around 70 days for the supply caravan to reach the rendezvous site. After the rendezvous, we will spread out into the mountains to begin our lives as fur trappers. I can't wait!

I know you’re having a hard time understanding my choice to become a fur trapper. “I have a great liking to tread upon unfrequented ground, and mingle amongst scenes at once novel and romantic. Love of adventure, then, was the great prompter, while an enfeebled state of health sensibly admonished me to seek in other parts that invigorating air and climate denied by the diseased atmosphere of a populous country. I also wished to acquaint myself with the geography of these comparatively unexplored regions…”

The other day, I met famous Mountain Man Jedediah Smith, and he told me, “This was the way to live, free and easy, with time all a man’s own and none to say no to him. A body got so’s he felt everything was kin to him, the earth and sky and buffalo and beaver and the yellow moon at night. It was better than being walled in by a house, better than breathing spoiled air and feeling caged like a varmint.”

It all sounds wonderful to me.

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1 Rufus Sage, p. 29, Rocky Mountain Life
2 thefurtrapper.com
I know you have concerns for me. I am no fool. I am aware it is a hard life. You don’t need to remind me that the “life of a Trapper in four years makes a sound man look sixty. The cold water they are wading in two thirds of the day, added to the cold and often sleeping without fire and wet to the skin conduces to ruin their constitutions. Well do they earn their 10 shillings [$2.50] per Beaver. A convict is a Gent living at his ease compared to them.”

“Still they are happy and amidst all their sufferings and privations if they take Beaver all is well. A roving life pleases them and with nearly all it would be viewed more as punishment than as a favor to send them [back to civilization].”

I can’t wait to experience my grand adventure. I am sure that a mere few years will bring in enough money from plews for us to marry.

I will think of you often, my dear, and send word next summer when I once again meet up with the supply caravan at the rendezvous.

Until then, be well my dear, and I remain -

Yours,
Joe

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1 Peter Skene Ogden, quoted in Hanson p. 153
Primary Sources: Mountain Man Experiences

1. "This [Pierre's Hole] was the favorite rendezvous for trappers West of the Rocky Mts. and had been the center of a rich beaver country. At this time, however, it was well nigh trapped out." George Nidever, Gowans p. 71

2. "[...] the majority of them finally agreed to make a hunt on the Platte River, but having found the country filled with Indians and lost one of their men by them, they turned back." IBID

3. "These two men rode forth alone to meet the enemy, as if to hold a "talk" with the principal chief, who advanced to meet them, bearing the pipe of peace. When the chief extended his hand, Antonio Godin, the half-breed, took it, but at the same moment he ordered the Flathead to fire, and the chief fell dead. The two trappers galloped back to camp, Antoine bearing for a trophy the scarlet blanket of his enemy." Joe Meek, Gowans p. 72

4. Gowans p. 79

5. "I extracted an arrow point from the back of James Bridger, one of the partners of the company which had been shot in by the Blackfeet Indians near three years previous; and one from another man which had been shot in by the same Indians about a year before. These Indians and whites or trappers often fight and both seem mutually to exult in each others destruction." Dr Whitman, in Gowans p. 122

"While we continued in this place, Doct. Whitman was called to perform some very important surgical operations. He extracted an iron arrow, three inches long, from the back of Capt. Bridger, which was received in a skirmish three years before, with the Blackfeet Indians. It was a difficult operation the arrow was hooked at the point by striking a large bone, and a cartilaginous substance had grown around it. The doctor pursued the operation with great self possession and perseverance; and his patient manifested equal firmness. The Indians looked on meanwhile, with countenances indicating wonder, and in their own peculiar manner expressed great astonishment when it was extracted. The Doctor also extracted another arrow from the shoulder of one of the hunters, which had been there two years and a half." Parker, in Gowans p. 122

6. "One evening, the fuel being damp, we were unable to kindle a fire. In this predicament, I called Jacques to give me a little powder, a customary thing in such cases; but in place of handing me a little powder, or taking a little out of his hand, wise Jacques, uncorking his horn, began to pour it out on the heated coal. It instantly exploded, and blew up all before it, sending Jacques himself sprawling six feet from where he stood, and myself nearly as far, both for some time stunned and senseless, while the fire was completely extinguished. "We, however received no injury beyond the fright, though Jacques held the horn in his hand when it was blown to atoms." Alexander Ross, in Moore p. 29

7. "[...] we ended our fast of five successive days and nights with feasting and glad hearts. I have always regarded this event as a special Providence, and ever revert to it with no ordinary feelings or gratitude. Had the ball, thus accidentally discharged, missed the animal, or had it only wounded him, in all human probability, becoming alarmed at the presence of danger, and prompted by the instinct common to the species, he would soon have been beyond the reach of pursuit, leaving me to the direr resort of slaughtering my horse or perishing among the snows and chill blasts of the prairie. Enfeebled as we were from continued toil and suffering, we could have scarcely held out a day longer, and even the partial relief afforded by a poor supply of horse flesh, left, as we would have been, to travel on foot and carry our beds, guns, and
provisions, must have served only to prolong our miseries a brief space, finally to meet the inevitable fate that threatened us! as this solitary buffalo was the only living creature that met our view during the entire journey." Rufus Sage, p 303

8. "This gentleman afterwards accompanied us to the Rocky Mountains, where he distinguished himself for speed of foot in running from a grizzly bear; he having no gun with him at the time." Alfred Miller, Gowans p. 150

James Clyman sews Jedediah Smith’s scalp back on after grizzly bear attack: "I put my needle sticking it through and through and over and over laying the lacerated parts together as nice as I could with my hands." http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/HNS/Mtmen/jedsmith.html

“Before Glass could shoot or retreat, the animal had seized him and bitten out a large chunk of his flesh, which she dropped to her younglings. Glass screamed for his fellows but before they could kill the bear he had been mangled from head to foot.” “Slipping away they took with them all his belongings—his gun, knife, flint and other essentials of wilderness life. These they gave to Henry and asserted that Glass had died.” Federal Writer's Project, p. 63

9. Lavender p. 88-91

10. "The next day he was so ill that we were compelled to lie by a day for rest. [We] camped in a beautiful grove of cottonwoods at the foot of the mountains, where he had a good "shake," and being without a doctor or medicine, the prospect of a rapid journey was rather discouraging. We cut two poles and prepared a litter by tying a rope to the small ends and hanging it across the saddle and letting the other ends [of the poles] drag; and weaving lariats across behind the mules and spreading blankets over for a bed, thus forming a very easy and comfortable litter." Josiah Webb, Moore p. 155

11. “The Americans are in three different places starving, no Buffalo in that quarter This year, and were reduced to eat their Horses and dogs.” Peter Skene Ogden, quoted in Lavendar p. 93

12. Gowans p. 42
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2015 Fur Trade Symposium: Bent’s Old Fort and the Southern Fur Trade
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Hi, I’m Beth, a teacher, writer, and (fabulous) simulation-game designer. In creating these Time Travel Field Trips, I’ve combined my love of history with my love of teaching, and spiced both up with a touch of drama and adventure. I graduated from Vassar College with a degree in history, and went on to get a Master’s in Teaching from Lewis and Clark. I’ve been a teacher since 1995, with a special emphasis on gifted students for 7 of those years, including 5 years as a GT teacher in Cherry Creek. In addition to my current Colorado teaching license, I’ve earned my gifted endorsement.

I know first-hand how overwhelmed teachers are these days. I am dedicated to creating fun, easy, and colorful history lessons to help teachers and inspire students. My perfect customer is an elementary school classroom teacher who loves interactive, playful, and imaginative history lessons, but who doesn't have time to research or create them.

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I live in Centennial with my husband, two kids, two and a half cats (not an industrial accident – ask me sometime!), and a King Charles spaniel.
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