

Expedition's Benefit And Cost Answer Key

Student responses will vary, but these ideas should appear in a supported argument.

Benefits often cited

- Increased geographic knowledge and mapping of the West
- Scientific discoveries about plants, animals, and ecosystems
- Stronger claims of United States territorial control
- Expansion of trade routes and economic opportunities

Costs that must be acknowledged

- Displacement, disease, and long-term loss of land for Native nations
- Cultural disruption and increased U.S. presence in Native territories
- Hunting pressure on wildlife and environmental degradation over time
- Power imbalance growing between the United States and Indigenous groups

A strong response uses **text-based reasoning**, not just opinion, and recognizes the complexity of historical impact.

Teacher's Guide

- Review the difference between a **claim** and **evidence** before students begin.
- Encourage students to cite specific tribes or regions when possible.
- Provide short primary-source excerpts (treaties, journals) for reference if available.

Engagement and Extension Ideas

- Structured class debate: half argue "benefits," half argue "costs," then reflect.
- Connect to civics: Discuss how modern policies consider Indigenous rights and environmental protection.
- Mapping activity: Identify lands inhabited by specific Native nations impacted after the expedition.