

JEDEDIAH SMITH



BIOGRAPHY

JEDEDIAH SMITH

Jedediah Smith was born in New York on January 6, 1799. As a young hunter and animal trapper in the east of America, Smith read about the expeditions of pioneers and explorers like Lewis and Clark on the western frontier.

In 1822, Smith saw an advertisement for men to explore and trade along the Missouri River. Smith applied and was hired for the expedition. His hunting skills were vital to providing food during the trip, which reached the Rocky Mountains.

In 1824, Smith reached the South Pass, which went to the northwest of the country through what is now Wyoming. During a later expedition, Smith crossed Utah and reached the Colorado River. The river led him south to the edge of the Mojave Desert, which he then crossed. Smith eventually reached California, making him one of the first to reach the area by that route.

Smith then explored the Sierra Nevada, before crossing what is now Nevada state to reach the Great Salt Lake. That made him one of the first people to return east from California by an overland route rather than by sea.

But when Smith returned to California in 1827, he was attacked by Native Americans, and he lost ten men. Those who survived were then captured by Mexican soldiers, although they were later released. Smith then traveled north along the coast to reach Oregon.

Despite all this, Smith continued to trade and explore in the west of America. In May 1831, Smith was traveling to Santa Fe when he was attacked and killed by Native Americans near the Cimarron River.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'overland'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'overland' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'overland'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'overland'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'overland' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

| Key word | Synonym (similar word) |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Example: vital | crucial |
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Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Smith crossed the Mojave Desert to reach California

In 1824, Smith reached the South Pass through Wyoming.

Jedediah Smith was born in New York in 1799.

In Smith's later expeditions, he faced attacks from Native Americans.

Then he joined an expedition on the Missouri River, which reached the Rocky Mountains.

Later, Smith returned from California over land rather than by sea.

Smith was a hunter and animal trapper in the east of America.

Get to the facts

1 Where was Jedediah Smith born?

2 Which pass did Smith reach in 1824?

3 Which desert did Smith cross?

4 Which lake did Smith see?

5 Where was Smith traveling to when he was killed?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Join our expedition!

You are planning an expedition. Write an advertisement inviting people to join your expedition.

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'overland'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'overland' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'overland'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'overland'.
- e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'overland' means.

Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – vital Synonym – crucial

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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In 1824, Smith reached the South Pass through Wyoming.

Jedediah Smith was born in New York in 1799.

In Smith's later expeditions, he faced attacks from Native Americans.

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Get to the facts:

- 1 Where was Jedediah Smith born?
- 2 Which pass did Smith reach in 1824?
- 3 Which desert did Smith cross?
- 4 Which lake did Smith see?
- 5 Where was Smith traveling to when he was killed?

Make a story...

Join our expedition!

You are planning an expedition. Write an advertisement inviting people to join your expedition... (now complete the story)

Jedediah Smith

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