

In Search of the Grand Canyon
Theme 2
4th Grade Challenge Reading

Name _____

Date _____

Before Reading

This non-fiction book is about John Wesley Powell, one of the first explorers to map and write about the Grand Canyon. Preview the book In Search of the Grand Canyon. Discuss the following questions with your group.

1. Is the book divided into chapters? What are the titles of the chapters? Make predictions about Powell's trip based on the chapter titles.
2. If you were about to explore a deep canyon with a rushing river at the bottom, what preparations would you make? What kind of people would you want with you on the journey?
3. Take a picture walk through the book. Did this activity cause you to change or revise your answers to question #2?



Vocabulary:

Survey: to find out the area, boundaries, or elevation of land by measuring angles and distances.

Conquistadors: Spanish conquerors of Mexico, Central America, and Peru in the 16th Century.

Speculators: people involved in buying and selling things in hopes of making a profit.

Portage: carrying boats and supplies between waterways.

Buttes: steep sided hills with flat tops.

Provisions: food and other supplies necessary for the expedition

Gorge: a steep sided ravine or canyon

Inhabitants: people who lived in the area

Erosion: the wearing away of rock and soil by the forces of wind and especially water.

Insight: understanding of the implications of an event or discovery

Using these words write at least three sentences that you think might appear in this book.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



During Reading

Find at least 4 places in the book where the expedition faced danger. Keep a chart describing the dangerous condition. Record specific language used to describe the conditions.

The Danger	Language used to describe the danger
Page 13 – Powell stood on the deck guiding the oarsmen between jagged rocks and the overhanging ledges.	Faster and faster the wooden vessels leaped over the rolling waves like deer over fallen timber.

Use specific language from the book to create an acrostic using the letters of GRAND CANYON. Use the examples given to get started, or find others.

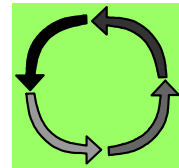
G	Gorgeous gorge
R	
A	
N	
D	
C	Colorado River runs through it
A	
N	
Y	
O	
N	

Would you have liked being a crew member on this expedition? What parts would you have found frightening and what parts would have been exciting?



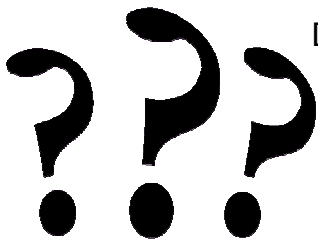
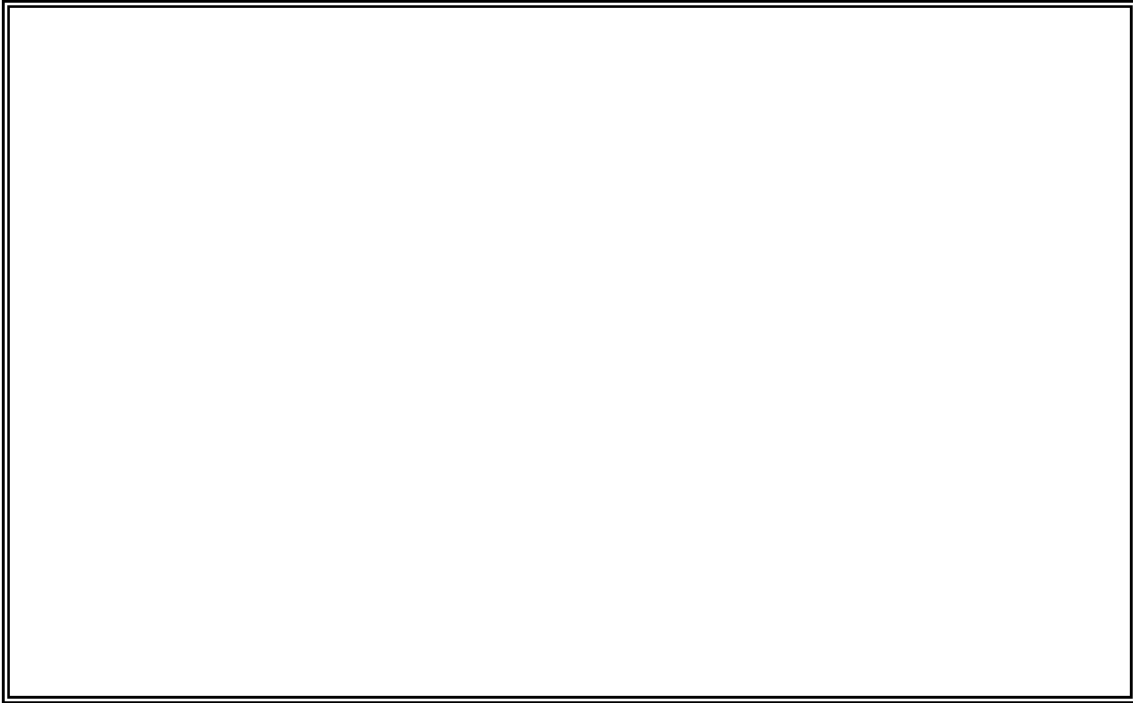
After Reading

Think about the significance of Powell's journey. Why was it important? Reread pages 60 to 62. Suppose you were the author of a history book today. What would you say now about why this was an important expedition?



John Wesley Powell's exploration of the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon was important for several reasons. _____

Return to the questions you asked your group before reading. What qualities do you think John Wesley Powell wanted in his crew? Remember that the men on this trip were looking for adventure, excitement, and gold. Work with a partner or alone to create an advertisement Powell might have used in recruiting explorers to accompany him on this journey.



Discuss with your group:

Would the men have signed on if they had know the dangerous conditions they would face?