



CANOE SONG: A VOYAGER'S TALE

Travels with the French Explorers

Retell the story of the Piasa as if you saw it yourself! To read an online version of the Piasa visit www.piasanet.com/piasalegnd.htm

Imagine paddling your canoe more than 2000 miles from your home to the Gulf of Mexico and back again in one summer!

First, how would you get there? Use the map below to trace your route. If you traveled 60 miles per day downstream and 30 miles per day upstream how many days would it take? Write a fictional journal about what you saw and did each day! Rewrite and rehearse these stories and tell them to your class.

This performance is about just such a journey made by Etienne Renault and Pere Zenoble Membre in 1690. They were following in the wake of Pere Marquette and Louis Joliet; under orders from Henri DeTonti they were looking for Rene Robert Cavalier Sieur de LaSalle. Much of the text of this performance is taken from their journals. To learn more about these intrepid explorers go to the library and read biographies of these great men!

In 1674 Pere Marquette and Joliet were the first Europeans to paddle a canoe through what is now Illinois. They left Green Bay, Wisconsin in the spring, paddled up the Fox River and down the Wisconsin. They traveled down the Mississippi to the Arkansas River before turning around and coming back up stream. The Indians told them of a short cut, up the Illinois River to Lake Michigan. Using a second color, trace Pere Marquette's route on the map.

LaSalle and Detonti were the first to paddle all the way down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. LaSalle also walked from Peoria, Illinois to Fort Frontenac on the north coast of Lake Ontario. He explored the Ohio River and built the first sailing ship to sail through all five great lakes. He later sailed from France to New Orleans, but missed his mark by 200 miles and died in the deserts of Texas. Using a third color retrace LaSalle's journeys.

LaSalle's goal was to build a fur trading empire. He brought beads and axes, muskets and other metal tools to trade for beaver pelts. These pelts were then made into felt hats. Abraham Lincoln and King Louis wore beaver felt hats.

What are some of the things you like to trade? Write a story about a time when you had to barter or trade for something important. Who did you trade with? Did you get a good deal? How did you convince them to give you what you wanted? What did you have to give them?



Send your stories to www.foxtalesint.com