



Mississippi River exploration

from the Esri GeolInquiries™ collection for Upper Elementary

Target audience – Upper elementary

Time required – 15 minutes

Activity	This activity interactively explores the Mississippi navigations of Marquette, Jolliet, and La Salle.
Standards	<p>C3:D2.His.3.3-5. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities.</p> <p>C3:D2.Geo.2.3-5. Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their environmental characteristics.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to distinguish the accomplishments of the different Mississippi exploration groups using a map. • Students will be able to use map tools to develop evidence for historical events.

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/fourGeolInquiry11>

Engage

Can you get to the Pacific?

- Click the map URL link above to open the map.
- On June 17, 1673, King Louis XIV of France sent Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet to find the Northwest Passage, a water route that would stretch from the St. Lawrence River all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Marquette and Jolliet caught their first glimpse of the Mississippi and thought that it could be the Northwest Passage. They began rowing along the Mississippi.
- From the black marker in the northern part of the map, follow the red line.
- ? Which direction did Marquette and Jolliet row? [*South*]
- ? What direction would they need to row to get to the Pacific Ocean? [*West*]

Explore

How far did they go?

- Click the button, Measure. Select the Distance button.
- Hint: See the Use the Measure tool tip at bottom of page two.
- Measure the distance from the black marker along the red line to the farthest point south where Marquette and Jolliet rowed.
- ? How far did they row? [*Approximately 1,000 miles*]
- ? Where does the red line end? [*South of Memphis, Tennessee, at the Arkansas River*]
- Marquette and Jolliet feared that they would run into the Spanish south of them, so they turned back.

Explain

How do the different explorations compare?

- In the winter of 1681, French explorer La Salle and his group started dragging canoes on sleds from New France along the Great Lakes until they reached the Mississippi in February. From there, they canoed south along the Mississippi and reached the mouth in April 1682.
- ? Measuring the distance that La Salle’s group traveled to the mouth, starting at the red marker, how far did they travel? [*Approximately 2,600 miles*]
- ? What was the difference in distance between La Salle’s trip and Marquette and Jolliet’s trip? [*La Salle’s trip was approximately 1,600 miles longer.*]

Elaborate

What did La Salle do when he got there?

- La Salle declared the entire Mississippi River Valley for France, as well as all of its tributaries.
- ? What is a tributary? [*A stream or creek that flows into a bigger river and not into the ocean.*]
- ? Looking at the map, do you think that the Mississippi tributaries covered a big or small area? [*Students should look at the map and hypothesize by what they see.*]
- In the Details pane, click the button, Show Contents Of Map.
- Click the checkboxes left of the two layer names, Mississippi Tributaries and Mississippi River Valley.
- In the map, click the Zoom Out button until you can see the entire Mississippi River Valley layer.
- Measure the area around the Mississippi River Valley.
- ? How large was the approximate area of the land that La Salle claimed for France? [*1,400,000 square miles*]
- ? Do you think that La Salle knew how large of an area he was claiming for France? [*Students may guess that he probably did not know.*]

MEASURE TOOL

- Click the button, Measure. Select the Distance or Area button. Choose a unit of measurement.
- On the map, click once to start the measurement, click again to change direction, and double-click to stop measuring.
- Hint: Position the area of interest on the map so that it is not obscured by the Measure window.

TURN A MAP LAYER ON AND OFF

- Make sure that the Details pane is visible. Click the button, Show Contents Of Map.
- To show individual map layers, click the check boxes to the left of the layer names. Hint: If a map layer name is light gray, zoom in or out on the map until the layer name is black. The layer can now be turned on.

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://www.esri.com/schools>.

THEN TRY THIS...

- Using a free ArcGIS Online organization subscription for schools, have students modify the map used in this activity, save it to their accounts, and share it with classmates.
- Also have students create Drive-Time distance along the Mississippi River to verify travel distance.



TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these texts

- *The United States: Making a New Nation* by Harcourt — Chapter 4
- *Building a Nation* by Scott Foresman — Chapter 7