



St. Mel's Catholic School

HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS

Grade Four

California: A Changing State

Students learn the story of their home state, unique in American history in terms of its vast and varied geography, its many waves of immigration beginning with pre-Columbian societies, its continuous diversity, economic energy, and rapid growth. In addition to the specific treatment of milestones in California history, students examine the state in the context of the rest of the nation, with an emphasis on the U.S. Constitution and the relationship between state and federal government.

4.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographical features that define places and regions in California by:

1. Explaining and using the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine absolute locations of places in California and on Earth.
2. Distinguishing between the two poles; the equator and the prime meridian; the tropics; and the hemispheres using coordinates to plot locations.
3. Identifying the state capital and describing the basic regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environment affect human activity (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate).
4. Identifying the location of and explaining the reasons of the growth of towns in relation to the Pacific Ocean, rivers, valleys, and mountain passes.
5. Using maps, charts, and pictures to describe how communities in California vary in land use, vegetation, wildlife, climate, population density, architecture, services, and transportation.

4.2 Students describe the major social and political interactions among the people of California from the pre-Columbian societies to the Spanish mission and Mexican rancho periods, in terms of:

1. The major nations of California Indians, their geographic distribution, economic activities, legends, and religious beliefs; and how they depended upon, adapted to and modified the physical environment by cultivation of land and sea resources.
2. The early routes (by ship and land) to, and European settlements in, California with a focus on the exploration of the North Pacific, noting the physical barriers of mountains, deserts, ocean currents, and wind patterns (e.g., Captain Cook, Valdez, Vitus Bering, Juan Cabrillo).
3. The Spanish exploration and colonization of California, including the relationships among soldiers, missionaries, and Indians (e.g., biographies of Juan Crespi, Junipero Serra, Gaspar de Portola).
4. The mapping, geographic basis of, and economic factors in the placement and function of the Spanish missions; how the mission system expanded the influence of Spain and Catholicism throughout New Spain and Latin America.



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5. The daily lives of the people, native, and non-native, who occupied the presidios, missions, ranchos, and pueblos.
6. The role of the Franciscan on the change of California from a hunter-gatherer economy to an agricultural economy.
7. The effects of the Mexican War for Independence on Alta California, including the territorial boundaries of North America.
8. Discuss the period of Mexican rule in California and its attributes, including land grants, secularization of the missions, and the rise of the rancho economy.

4.3 Students explain the economic, social, and political life of California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican American War, the Gold Rush, and California statehood, in terms of:

1. The location of Mexican settlements in California and other settlements including Ft. Ross and Sutter's Fort.
2. Comparisons of how and why people traveled to California and the routes they traveled (e.g., biographies and legends of James Beckwourth, Jedediah Smith, John C. Fremont, Juan Carbrillo).
3. The effect of the Gold Rush on settlements, daily life, politics, and the physical environment (e.g., biographies of John Sutter, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Phoebe Apperson Hearst).
4. The lives of frontier women (e.g., biographies of Bernarda Ruiz, Biddy Mason).
5. How California became a state and how its new government differed from those during the Spanish and Mexican periods.
6. The immigration and migration to California between 1850 and 1900; its diverse composition, the countries of origin and their relative locations, and the conflicts and accords among diverse groups (e.g., the 1882 Exclusion Act).

4.4 Students explain how California became an industrial power by tracing the transformation of the California economy and its political and cultural development since 1850's, in terms of:

1. The story and lasting influence of the Pony Express, Overland Mail Service, Western Union, and the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.
2. How the Gold Rush transformed the economy of California, including the type of products produced and consumed, changes in towns (e.g., Sacramento, San Francisco) and economic conflicts between diverse groups of people.
3. Rapid American immigration, settlement, and the growth of towns and cities.
4. The effects of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl on California.
5. The development and location of new industries since the turn of the century, such as aerospace, electronics, large scale commercial agriculture and irrigation projects, the oil and automobile industries, communications and defense, and important trade links with the Pacific Basin.
6. California's water system and how it evolved over time into a network of dams, aqueducts and reservoirs.



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7. The history and development of California's public education system, including universities and community colleges.

8. The impact of 20th century Californians on the nation's artistic, cultural and development, including the rise of the entertainment industry (e.g., biographies of John Steinbeck, Dorothea Lange, Ansel Adams, Walt Disney).

4.5 Students understand the structure, functions, and powers of the United States local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution, in terms of:

1. What the U.S. Constitution is and why it is important (i.e., a written document that defines the structure and purpose of the U.S. government; describes the shared powers of federal, state, and local governments).

2. The purpose of the state constitution, its key principles, and its relationship to the U.S.

Constitution (with emphasis on California's constitution).

3. The similarities (e.g., written documents, rule of law, consent of the governed, three separate branches) and differences (e.g., scope of jurisdiction, limits on government powers, use of military) among federal, state and local governments.

4. The structure and function of state governments, including the roles and responsibilities of their elected officials.

5. The components of California's governance structure (i.e., cities and towns, Indian Rancherias and reservations, counties, school districts).