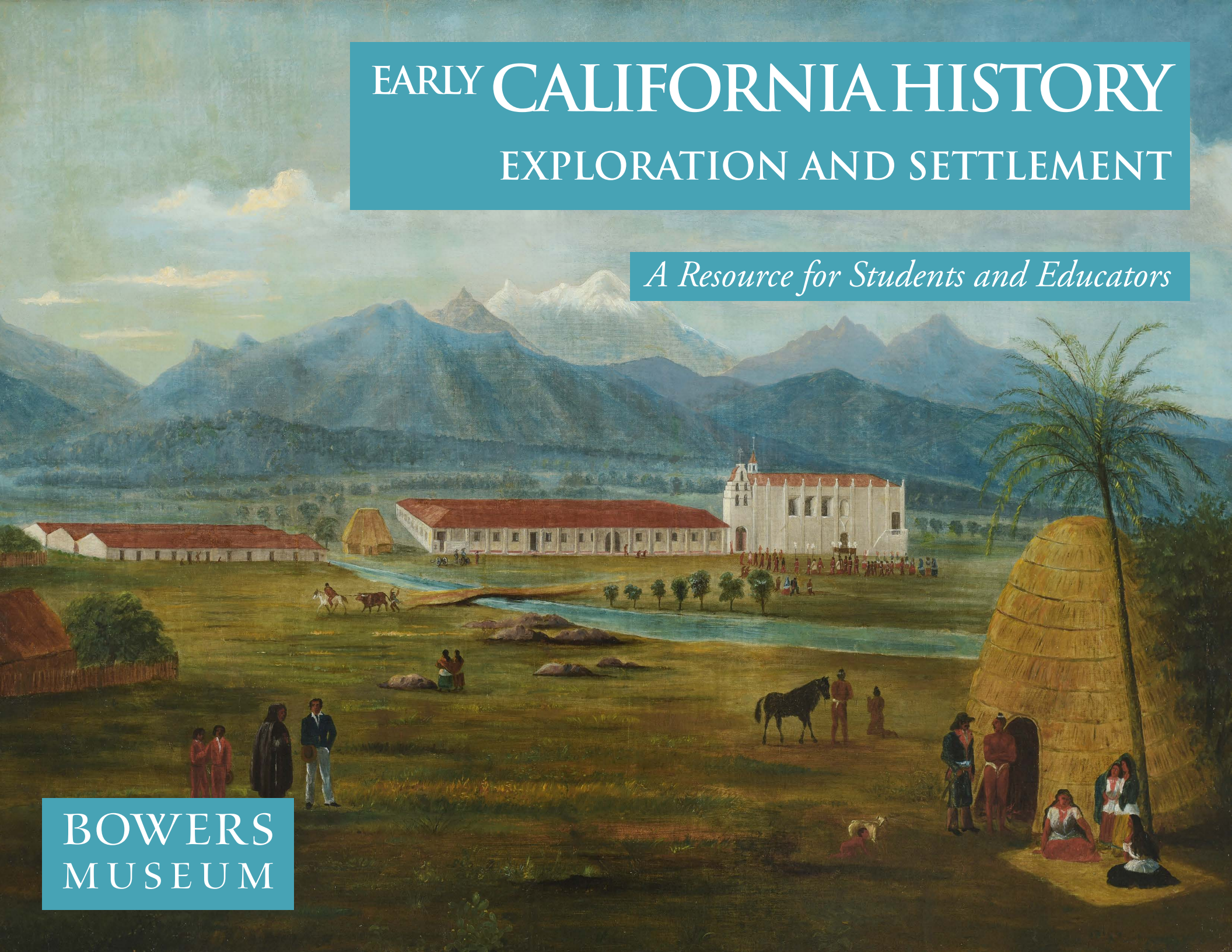
EARLY CALIFORNIA HISTORY
EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

A Resource for Students and Educators



BOWERS MUSEUM

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EARLY CALIFORNIA HISTORY

EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with great pleasure that the Bowers Museum presents this Resource Guide for Students and Educators with our goal to provide worldwide virtual access to the themes and artifacts that are found in the museum's eight permanent exhibitions.

There are a number of people deserving of special thanks who contributed to this extraordinary project. First, and most importantly, I would like to thank Victoria Gerard, Bowers' Vice President of Programs and Collections, for her amazing leadership; and, the entire education and collections team, particularly Laura Belani, Mark Bustamante, Sasha Deming, Carmen Hernandez and Diane Navarro, for their important collaboration. Thank you to Pamela M. Pease, Ph.D., the Content Editor and Designer, for her vision in creating this guide. I am also grateful to the Bowers Museum Board of Governors and Staff for their continued hard work and support of our mission to enrich lives through the world's finest arts and cultures.

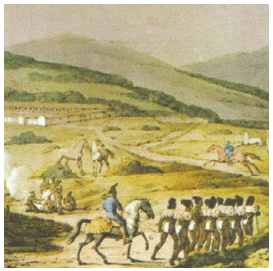
Please enjoy this interesting and enriching compendium with our compliments.

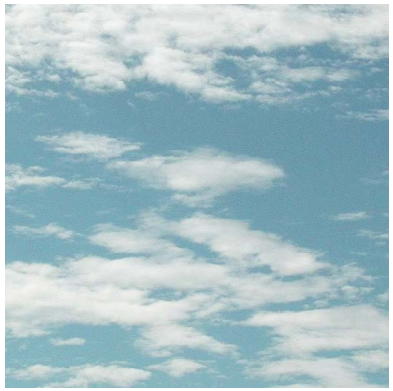
Peter C. Keller, Ph.D.
President
Bowers Museum

COVER ART

San Gabriel Mission, c. 1832
Ferdinand Deppe (1794-1861)
Oil on canvas; 27 x 37 in.
Laguna Art Musuem Collection 1994.083
Gift of Nancy Dustin Wall Moure

EARLY CALIFORNIA HISTORY
EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT





The Spirit of Exploration

Why do humans explore?

Since the beginning of time, humans have had a desire to learn about what lies beyond the world we know. As infants, we enter a universe of endless fascination. We explore our home, our neighborhood, then our community. As we come to understand our immediate surroundings, we wonder: What lies beyond?

Throughout history, people have shared the desire to answer that question. Humans have discovered new lands, navigated the seas, traveled the skies and ventured into outer space. We have explored what lies deep inside the human body. What begins as a distant dream becomes reality with each new discovery. The advance of civilization has been led by explorers.

Exploring the Earth

In 1492, the European Age of Exploration began when the king and queen of Spain sponsored a voyage by Christopher Columbus. His **expedition** sailed west from Europe in search of a quicker trading route to Asia. Although Columbus actually landed in the West Indies, his willingness to **venture** into the unknown resulted in Europeans' introduction to what they called the **New World**. The Age of Exploration—from the 15th century through the 17th century, had begun. Although Europeans' voyages across the vast and endless sea caused them to encounter parts of the globe they did not know existed, in reality many of the lands they "discovered" had been occupied by Indigenous cultures for thousands of years.

The first Europeans to settle in North America were English Pilgrims who established a colony in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Having braved a dangerous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean aboard the Mayflower in 1620, the pioneers arrived seeking the freedom to begin a new life. In 1725, Russian Emperor Peter the Great ordered Vitus Bering to explore the Pacific Northwest to establish fur trade there. And although Spanish explorers laid claim to California in 1542, it was not until the Spanish King began to worry about competition from Russia that he began the colonization of California in 1769. Whatever their motivation, the life of an explorer involves great risk and requires great **courage**.

Exploring the Skies

Almost 200 years later, exploration continued as brave men and women ventured into the "wild frontier." In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson commissioned a select group of U.S. Army volunteers under the command of Captain Meriwether Lewis and 2nd Lieutenant William Clark to cross what is now the western portion of the nation. Beginning near St. Louis on the Mississippi River, they made their way westward through the continental divide to the Pacific coast and returned to their starting point in September 1806. The Lewis and Clark expedition established an American presence in previously unexplored territory.

By the turn of the 20th century, much of the Earth had been explored. Adventurers' thoughts turned upward to the skies. Two brothers from Dayton, Ohio who had studied how birds soared freely through the air, dreamed the impossible dream of human flight. Using the keen observation skills they had learned as bicycle mechanics, and with much trial and error, Orville and Wilbur Wright designed and flew the world's first successful "heavier-than-air" flight in December 1903. On their first attempt, the airplane flew for only twelve seconds from a sand dune in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. But as humans' understanding and technology improved, a new age of exploration began. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh completed the first non-stop transatlantic flight at the age of 25. In 1937, Amelia Earhart became the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

Conquest of Outer Space

By the late 1940s, a team of rocket scientists and engineers began to imagine exploring beyond the skies into the edges of space, believing that landing a rocket on Mars was an achievable goal. The history of exploration took its next step—venturing into outer space. On Oct. 3, 1957, scientists and engineers in the Soviet Union launched the world's first satellite, Sputnik 1. The United States orbited its first satellite, on Jan. 31, 1958. It was appropriately named "Explorer 1."

In 1962, President John Kennedy challenged Americans to land a spaceship on the moon within ten years. He said, "We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained . . . and used for the progress of all people." The challenge was met on July 20, 1969, when Apollo astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed safely on the surface of the moon.

MODULE ONE: INTRO / FOCUS QUESTIONS

For many adventurers, from Christopher Columbus to the Spanish conquistadors to the Wright Brothers to today's explorers of inner and outer space, it is not only about the **destination**. For the explorer in all of us, it is about the journey and what you discover about the world—and about yourself—along the way.

Focus Questions:

- **Why do people explore the unknown? Where would you like to explore?**
- **Who were the early explorers of California?**
- **What technological developments made sea exploration possible?**
- **What were the goals of the early explorers?**
- **What obstacles did they encounter, and how did they overcome them?**
- **What were the relationships between explorers, missionaries, settlers, rancheros and the Indigenous peoples of California?**
- **When and why did your family or ancestors settle in America? What is their story?**

"We are the Explorers. . .

We have a need to find what is out there. It is a drive inside each and every one of us.

The drive to Wonder, to push boundaries, to explore. . ."

—NASA

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

MODULE ONE TIMELINE: THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

The time period from the 15th through the 17th centuries has been called the Age of Exploration. There were many reasons why people chose to set out for lands unknown during this time. The dawn of the Renaissance in the 15th century was a time of religious intolerance. People were seeking the freedom to live by their own spiritual and political beliefs. They wished to realize their own dreams and aspirations for equality and self-determination rather than be subject to the wishes of powerful leaders who may or may not have the best interests of the common people at heart.

*In 1492, Christopher **Columbus** sailed to find a new trade route to India. Instead, he ended up in the West Indies.*

*In 1542, **Cabrillo** claimed Alta California for Spain. Thirty-seven years later, Sir Francis Drake claimed it for England.*

*Development of **navigational technology** —such as the astrolabe, hourglass and nautical charts — helped to support the Age of Exploration.*

*In 1602, Sebastian Vizcaino mapped the California coast. He named **Monterey Bay** for his expedition's sponsor, and exaggerated its value as a safe-harbor.*

*Based on a fictional story, Spaniards believed California was an **island** ruled an Amazon Queen named Calafia. This false belief influenced how 17th-century maps were drawn.*

*300,000 **Indigenous** people lived in present-day California when Europeans first arrived. Their lives soon **changed** dramatically.*

***Father Serra** established the first of twenty-one **Missions** in San Diego in 1769. From 1769-1797 four **Presidios** and three **Pueblos** were established in Alta California.*

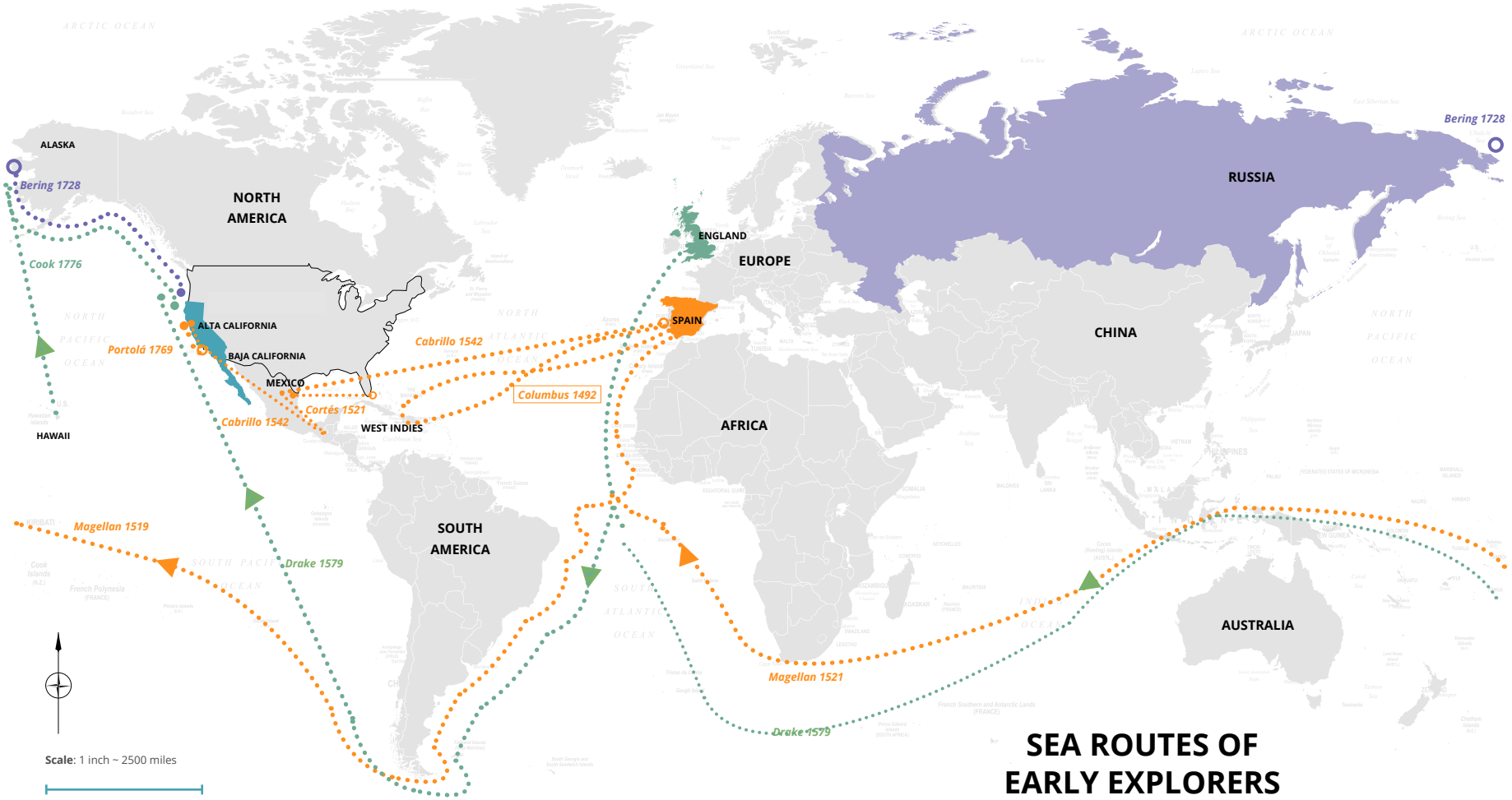
*Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821. **Alta California** became a **Mexican province.** In 1833, Mexico began to close the missions, granting the land to **rancheros.***

*The **Mexican-American War** ended in 1848. California became part of the United States. That same year, **gold** was discovered in Northern California.*

*Great Seal of the State of California, which became the **31st state** in the **United States of America** in 1850.*

1450-1499	1500-1549	1550-1599	1600-1649	1650-1699	1700-1749	1750-1799	1800-1849	1850-1899
15th century		16th century		17th century		18th century		19th century

MODULE ONE MAP: SEA ROUTES OF EARLY EXPLORERS



SPAIN	DATE	ORIGIN	VIA	LAND
Christopher Columbus	*1492*	*Spain*	*Atlantic Ocean*	*West Indies*
Ferdinand Magellan	*1519-21*	*Spain*	*Atlantic & Pacific Oceans*	*Spain (circumnavigation)*
Hernán Cortés	*1521*	*Spain*	*West Indies*	*Baja California*
Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo	*1542*	*Spain*	*Mexico*	*Baja & Alta California*
Gaspar de Portolá	*1769*	*Baja California*	*Land & Pacific Ocean*	*Monterey Bay, California*

ENGLAND	DATE	BEGIN	Via	LAND
Sir Francis Drake	*1579*	*England*	*Atlantic & Pacific Oceans*	*Northern California*
James Cook	*1776*	*England*	*Hawaii and Bering Strait*	*Northern California*

RUSSIA				
Vitus Bering	*1728*	*Russia*	*Bering Strait*	*Northern California*

MODULE ONE ACTIVITY: CONSTRUCT A TIMELINE

A timeline is a graph that visually shows the passage of time.

In this activity, you will create a timeline. **Events** on a timeline are arranged in **chronological** order, beginning with the earliest to the most recent. The date and a description and/or an image of the event are positioned on a line in the order in which they occurred.

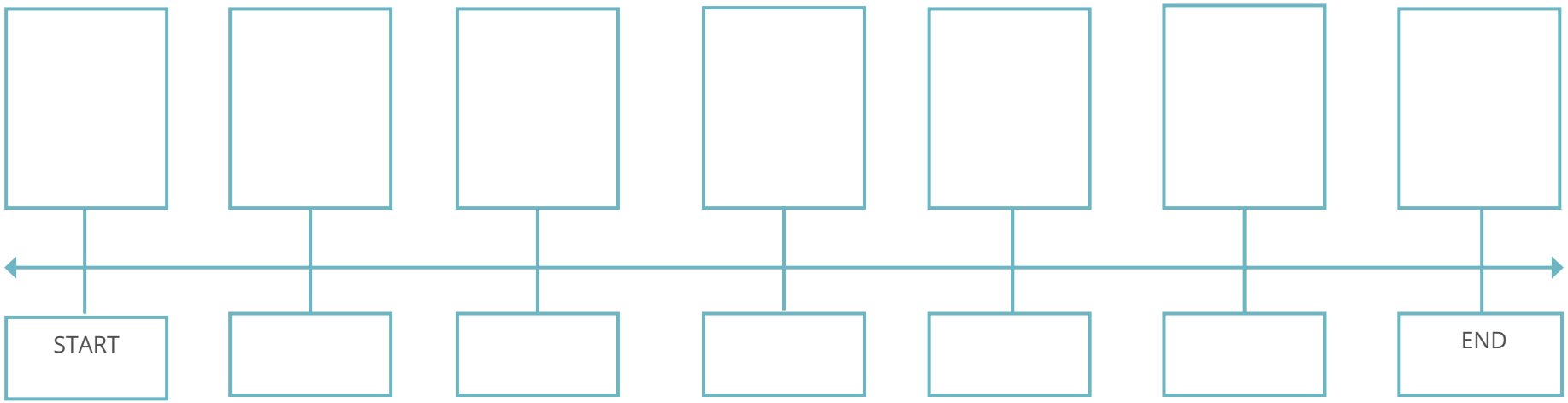
You can make timelines about many different topics—for example, a history of the milestones in your life so far, your favorite inventions of the 21st century, or the adventures of one of the Early Explorers. To begin, draw a horizontal, vertical or curved base line, then divide the line into **intervals**. Your timeline events may have intervals of one day, one week, one month, or several years or decades depending on the topic you choose. There can be any number of events, but somewhere between 5 and 10 is a good number to work with.

Next, begin to fill in the boxes with important **milestones** in the order they occurred. Enter a date related to each event. You can add a description, an image or an icon depicting that event in the larger boxes. Timelines can begin or end at any time. You can even imagine a future timeline of things you hope to do or accomplish. Its design is up to you, but make sure it communicates the passage of time.

To create your timeline, give it a title, and consider these five steps:

1. What type of EVENTS will you choose for your timeline?
2. Will your BASELINE be horizontal, vertical or curved?
3. What TIME PERIOD will it cover? (can begin or end at any time)
4. What INTERVALS will you use?
5. What LABELS and IMAGES will you use for each milestone?

MY TIMELINE



MODULE TWO:

EXPLORATION

Detail, *Spanish Galleon Firing its Cannon,* c. 1618-1620
[from *A Naval Encounter between Dutch and Spanish Warships*]
Cornelis Verbeeck (c.1590-1637)
National Gallery of Art 1995.21.1.2 Washington, DC
Oil on panel; 18.75 x 21.25 in. from 18.75 x 55.75 in.

Voyages into the Unknown

Before European explorers arrived, more than one hundred Indigenous cultural groups—approximately 300,000 people, speaking more than 90 different languages—made their home in the rich environment of the land we know today as California. They established villages and settled along the coast, in the desert, in grasslands, and in the mountains.

Early Explorers

The 1500s saw the arrival of Spanish explorers who claimed large areas of North and South America for Spain. Christopher Columbus sailed to the New World in 1492. Although his destination was the East Indies, he landed in what became known as the West Indies, a group of islands in the Caribbean Sea.

Explorers who sailed to distant lands seeking **conquest**, land, riches and glory were known as **conquistadors**. One of the most famous, **Hernán Cortés**, led 500 soldiers from the West Indies into Tenochtitlan (present-day Mexico City) to conquer the Aztec Empire in 1521. He declared the city to be the capital of New Spain and brought large areas of what is now mainland Mexico under the rule of the King.

Soon after, the King of Spain commissioned Cortés to search for a passageway through North America called the Strait of Anián. Although Cortés' search was not successful, he did travel north to **Baja** (Lower) **California** and claimed the land for the Spanish **Crown**. Although he is credited with giving California its name, Cortés never journeyed as far north as **Alta** (Upper) **California**.

Around the same time (1519-1521), **Ferdinand Magellan** sailed west from Spain, and led an expedition to **circumnavigate** the Earth for the first time in history. On his travels, he saw a body of water that he named the "peaceful sea," known today as the Pacific Ocean.

The Spanish exploration of California was part of a larger pattern of exploration which followed the conquest of Aztec Mexico in 1521. In 1542, an expedition sailed northward from Mexico under the command of **Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo**. The expedition landed at a port they called San Miguel (later renamed San Diego).

By 1543, Spanish ships had surveyed the Pacific coast as far north as Oregon, laying claim to discovered territories in the name of the Spanish King. The purpose of these and other explorations was to gather information that Spain could use for future colonization of these lands.

The English Crown was interested in exploring the New World. In 1577, sea captain **Francis Drake** left Plymouth, England in search of a sea route through the Arctic Circle. He stopped north of San Francisco for 36 days to make repairs and replenish supplies.

FEATURED EXPLORER

JUAN RODRÍGUEZ CABRILLO

Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo (1497-1543) was a Spanish navigator and shipbuilder of Portuguese ancestry. He led the first European expedition to explore what is now the west coast of the United States.

On June 27, 1542, Cabrillo set sail from the port of Navidad (near Acapulco in present-day Mexico) with three vessels. Three months later, he anchored in a bay that he christened San Miguel (later renamed San Diego by the explorer Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602).

USA Stamp, 1992
Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo
Photo: Lefteris Papaulakis

Cabrillo's descriptions of the California coast provided a rough guide for future mariners. His reports described California as a remote wilderness, not the fabled paradise Spanish officials hoped he would find. Although his records are now gone, a log credited to a public official survived. It summarized Cabrillo's journey, including the food, clothing, architecture and technology of the people he encountered and their reaction to what was believed to be the first contact between Europeans and the Indigenous peoples of coastal California.

MODULE TWO: EXPLORATION

Conquistador Helmet, c. 1600
Spain
Steel; 12.25 x 12.5 x 8 in.
Bowers Museum 92.35.1

Spanish who came to settle the New World were soldiers, adventurers and mercenaries seeking their fortune. The Indigenous communities they encountered were attacked and enslaved. Treasures of gold and silver were taken.

There were two sorts of Spanish conquistadors: **cavalry** (horsemen) and **infantry** (foot soldiers). The horsemen used two types of weapons: lances and swords. Lances were long wooden spears with iron or steel points on the ends. In close combat, they used swords that were about three feet long and sharp on both sides. Dirks, or daggers, were shorter and used for hand-to-hand combat.

Spanish armor was among the finest in the world. The helmet most commonly associated with the conquistadors was the **morion**, made of heavy steel with a crest on top and pointed sides. In the heat and rough terrain in Mexico and the Southwest, metal armor was unusable. Leather-padded garments were more practical and also provided protection from arrows and spears.

The conquest of the Americas proved the advantage of advanced weaponry. A conquistador could slay dozens of foes without receiving a serious wound. Horses were another advantage in conflict that was not yet available at that time to the Indigenous peoples living in present-day California.

Dirk, early 18th Century
Unknown Maker; Catalonia, Spain
Steel, wood, brass and silver; 1 1/2 x 11 1/4 in.
Bowers Museum F80.65.3
Bowers Museum Foundation
Acquisition Fund Purchase

Dirk, 18th Century
Unknown Maker; Catalonia, Spain
Steel, wood, leather and brass; 15 1/4 in.
Bowers Museum F80.65.4
Bowers Museum Foundation
Acquisition Fund Purchase

Although the location of Drake's landing is not known, a bay near Point Reyes is considered the most likely spot, and was given the name Drake's Bay. Before he sailed west to return home, Drake claimed California for England, but his claim was never maintained. Drake was the second explorer to circumnavigate the globe.

Queen Elizabeth I had instructed Drake to attack any **Spanish galleons** he encountered on his voyage and attempt to capture their treasures. His **controversial** adventures made Drake a **pirate** in the eyes of the Spanish but a hero to the English. His dominance of the seas helped made England a global empire. Queen Elizabeth I declared Sir Francis Drake a **knight** in 1581.

Early European explorers had heard stories about a body of water connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean. Many early explorers had searched for this shortcut (called the Strait of Anián by the Spanish or the **Northwest Passage** by the English). Why were explorers so interested in discovering this shortcut? The potential benefits of finding such a passageway were significant. Instead of sailing around the southern tip of South America or Africa, the voyage to Asia could be up to 2500 miles shorter, making it much faster to bring back treasures from far eastern lands to Europe.

Actually, the passageway that explorers were seeking did not exist. The area was covered year-round with thick ice, making it impossible to sail through. It was not until several hundred years later, in 1914, that a passageway opened between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Known as the Panama Canal, its man-made locks were constructed on a narrow strip of land between North and South America.

The existence of a Northwest Passage was not the only point of confusion for early explorers. Mapmakers had trouble identifying the size and shape of California. Based on a fictional Spanish story, *Las Sergas de Esplandián* (Montalvo, c. 1500), explorers believed California was an island ruled by the mythical Amazon **Queen Califia**.

Detail, Queen Califia mural, 1926
Mark Hopkins Hotel
San Francisco, California
Painted by Maynard Dixon (1875-1946) and Frank Van Sloun (1876-1938)

Map of California as an Island, c.1650
Cartography by Johannes Vingboons (1616-1670)
Ink and watercolor
Library of Congress

Without the benefit of the advanced technology we use today, early explorers were operating with incomplete information. They were literally voyaging into the unknown.

Life at Sea

What was it like to be part of the crew on a voyage that crossed the ocean in the 15th to 18th centuries? The **swashbuckling** life may seem glamorous when it is portrayed in books and movies**.** But in reality, it was brutal.

Challenges Encountered

Early explorers encountered many **obstacles** as they ventured into uncharted waters. Adverse weather conditions and strong wind currents threatened to drive ships onto the coastal rocks and sand. Conditions at sea also made it challenging for **cartographers** to accurately chart the coastline. In Northern California, dense fog reduced visibility to the extent that explorers missed key locations, including the San Francisco Bay.

When not battling winds and storms, ships faced opposite conditions. With little or no wind in their sails, a ship could be stranded at sea for days. In these dangerous conditions, the crew never knew when they would be able to go ashore to get water and supplies.

Food on board the ship was scarce. Without fresh fruit and vegetables, sailors suffered from scurvy, a disease caused by too little Vitamin C. With no refrigeration, meals included salted meat or fish, beans, cheese, biscuits, onions, garlic, oil, vinegar and a jug of ale.

Averaging only 100 miles per day, journeys could take years. The crew, some as young as 7 or 8, worked hard for low wages.

Plagued by hunger, illness, back-breaking work and the hardship of sailing in uncharted seas, the threat of **mutiny** was always present.

Miquelet Pistol, c. 1750
Unknown Maker; Ripoll, Catalonia, Spain
Wood, engraved brass, iron and steel
2 x 10.75 x 5 in.
Bowers Museum F80.65.2
Bowers Museum Foundation Acquisition

Cannon and Replica Carriage, mid 18th to early 19th Century
Probably Spanish; found near Dana Point shoreline
Cast iron and wood; 22.5 x 35.75 x 22.5 in.
Bowers Museum 82.2.1
Bowers Museum Purchase

Battles at Sea

Spanish Galleons were multi-decked sailing ships developed in the 16th century. A typical ship was 120 feet long, 36 feet wide and could handle a load of 200 to 400 tons. Built to withstand long ocean voyages, many European countries used galleons as **merchant** ships in times of peace. Spanish brought gold from the New World back across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe.

Early explorers set sail in fleets of two or three ships, carrying as many as 250 soldiers, sailors, gunners, officers, crew, and paying passengers. Galleons could easily convert to war ships. They had ports for firing cannons, allowing them to engage in fierce battles at sea.

Spanish Influence in the New World

Despite challenges, Spanish explorers accomplished many of their goals:

- They learned about navigation through trial and error as they embarked on treacherous journeys across the ocean.
- They advanced understanding of Earth's size and geographic features by making maps that served as rough guides for future mariners.
- Their experiences at sea led to the design and development of seafaring vessels and navigational technologies better suited to long voyages in challenging conditions.
- Early explorers saw lands that they didn't even know existed, and encountered cultures and environments very different from their own.
- Expeditions opened new trade routes. Explorers exchanged goods from Spain for riches from cultures living in what to them was a "New World."
- The change to a farming and ranching economy introduced crops that positioned California as a leading agricultural center.

Another way the Spanish influenced the New World was through their currency. Because it was widely used in Europe, the Americas, and the Far East, the Spanish dollar became the first world currency by the late 18th century. These silver coins measured approximately 1.5 inches in diameter, and were worth eight *reales*, a unit of currency in Spain. To make change, people would cut their coins into eight pieces, or "bits." Hence, the British called Spanish dollars "Pieces of Eight" (a coin consisting of eight pieces, or bits). Something valued at "two bits" cost a quarter of a dollar.

Even though the U.S. silver dollar was patterned after the Spanish model, today cutting or altering coins or paper money is not permitted.

Pieces of Eight, 1761-62
Spanish Royal Mint; Mexico City, Mexico
Silver; 1.5 in.
Bowers Museum 4719
Gifts of William McPherson, Thomas Workman Temple III and Mrs. F.E. Coulter

Although we can appreciate explorers' accomplishments, we cannot ignore some of the negative consequences that resulted from Europe's exploration and colonization of the New World:

- Europeans' interactions with Indigenous peoples in the New World were one-sided, benefitting only the Europeans. Conflict and disease brought by Europeans decimated Indigenous populations.
- Europeans stole land, thinking nothing of settling places that other cultures had occupied for hundreds or thousands of years.
- Europeans often did not respect other cultures' autonomy or traditions, forcing Indigenous peoples to conform to their ways of life.
- Europeans made promises to Native Americans for grants of land that they never honored.
- Europeans seemed to believe that land, natural resources and people existed for them to use without considering how their actions would affect present and future generations.

Mariner's Astrolabe, c. 1600
Bronze
Museum of the History of Science,
Oxford, England
Accession #54253

Construct an Astrolabe

Technological developments made sea exploration possible. Throughout the voyages of the early explorers, latitudes, compass directions and distances were determined and included in a ship's log.

Latitude—the distance north and south of the equator—was established using an **astrolabe** or "star-taker." This instrument required the user to align its sights with the horizon and the North Star (Polaris). Polaris is the brightest star in the constellation of Ursa Minor, also known as the Little Dipper, located very close to the North Pole. The angle between the horizon and the North Star was read off a scale that measured degrees on the instrument.

There is evidence that the astrolabe was used in the 2nd century CE by the Greek mathematician and astronomer Claudius Ptolemy. But its value extended beyond astronomy. An astrolabe would have been among the tools Christopher Columbus used to determine latitude on land or calm seas when exploring the New World. Many of the astrolabes recovered today are found in shipwrecks from Spanish and Portuguese mariners.

Some astrolabes were extremely fancy, and performed a variety of other functions in addition to wayfinding, such as telling the time. Many more were simple and did the job of helping sailors navigate the open seas. Because it was difficult to get a precise reading when the ship was in rough waters, the astrolabe was replaced in the 18th century by a newer technology, the **sextant**.

In the science activity that follows, you will make your own astrolabe. Follow the instructions; then, on a clear night, align your sight with the North Star Polaris by looking through the drinking straw. The position of the weighted string will reveal your current latitude.

MODULE TWO ACTIVITY: THE SCIENCE OF NAVIGATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

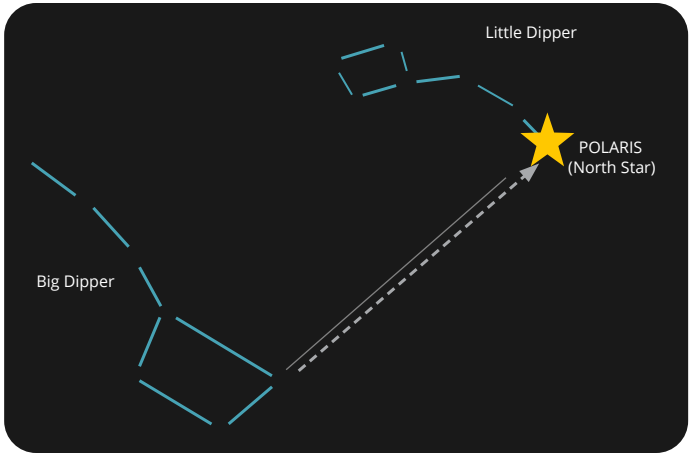
STEP 1: CUT A SEMICIRCLE out of cardboard, 8" wide and 4" tall using the **TEMPLATE** on the last page of this guide. A link to the template can also be found in the list of tools below.

STEP 2: Using a pencil, **MARK DEGREES from 0° to 180°** on the curved edge of the semi-circle as shown on the TEMPLATE. Then set the cardboard template aside.

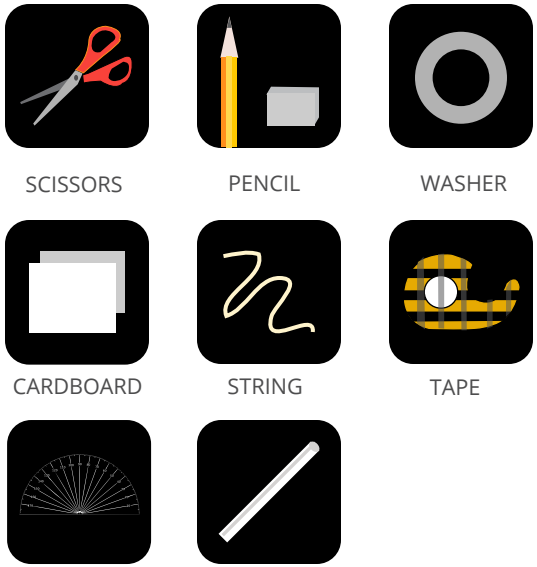
STEP 3: Cut a **12" piece of STRING** and tie it around the middle of a **DRINKING STRAW**.

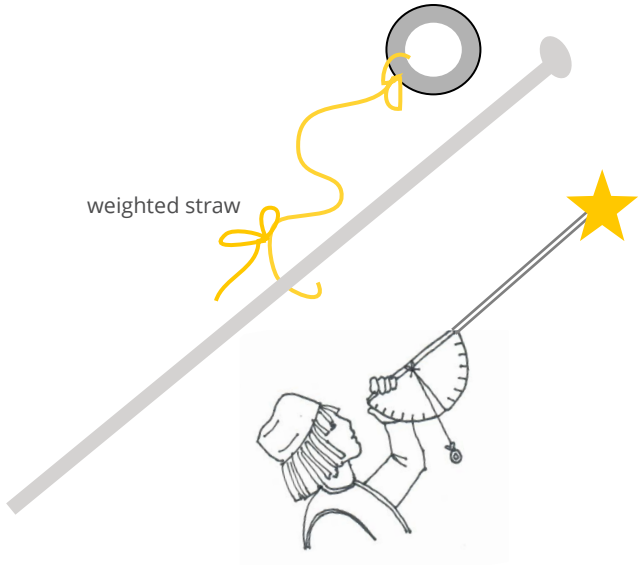
STEP 4: Tie a knot to **ATTACH a METAL WASHER** to the other end of the string to act as a weight.

STEP 5: TAPE the STRAW to the straight edge of your cardboard SEMICIRCLE.



MAP OF THE NIGHT SKY SHOWING POLARIS (NORTH STAR)





You now have constructed your own **ASTROLABE**.

On a clear dark night, try to find the **North Star (Polaris)** by using the diagram above to help you recognize its position at the end of the handle of the constellation known as the **Little Dipper.** It is usually the brightest light you will see in the night sky.

Then hold your **ASTROLABE** up to one eye and try to locate the North Star again. The angle of the weighted string will reveal your current latitude.

MODULE THREE:

SPANISH MISSIONS

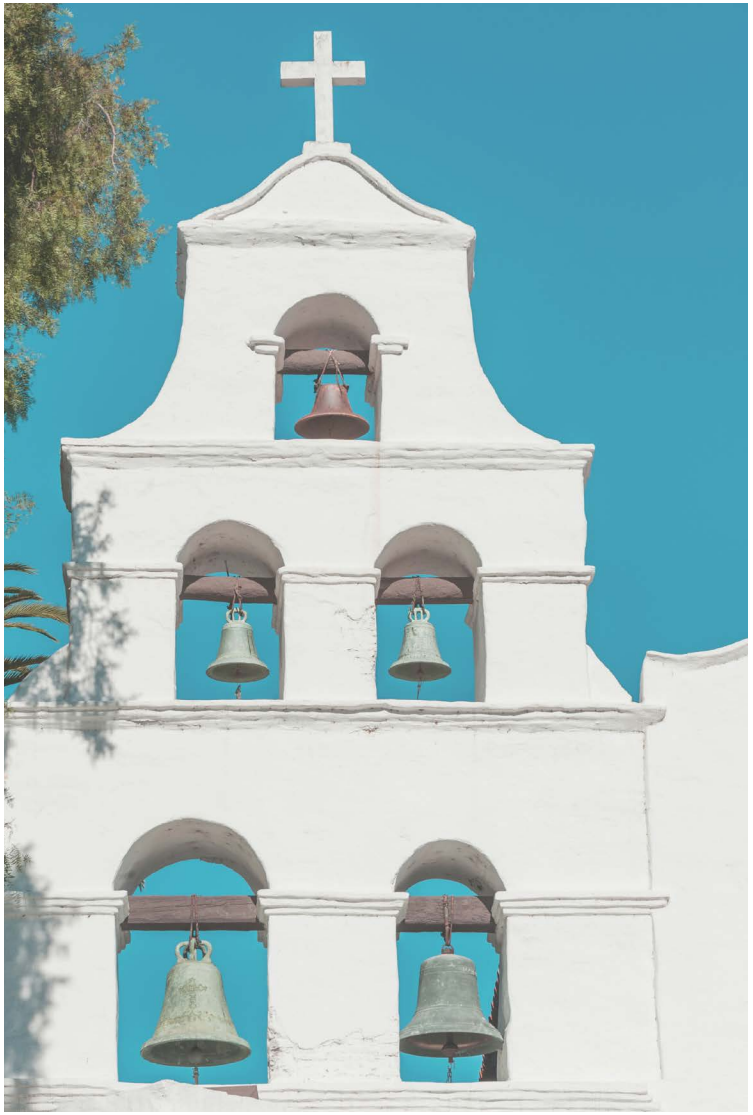
Spanish Settlements in Alta California

In 1768, the King of Spain ordered Father Junipero Serra, a Franciscan missionary, to establish a system of **missions** in an area of the New World that had been visited by early explorers and was currently inhabited by cultural groups who were indigenous to the area.

Missions are religious settlements that were formed by Catholic priests with the intent of establishing a colony in Alta California. They wanted to teach Christian beliefs to Indigenous people in the area who would then serve as a local labor force. On May 15, 1769, Gaspar de Portolá and Father Serra set out across the rugged, arid land of Baja California with ten soldiers, two servants and forty-four Native Americans who lived in one of the Baja (Lower) California missions.

The colonization of Alta (Upper) California by the Spanish was motivated by several factors: the need for additional seaports, the wish to consolidate colonial holdings against encroachment by other European powers, and a concern about the growing threat of Russian colonization of the Northern Pacific coast of North America.

The Portolá expedition of 1769 was part of a "Sacred Expedition" designed to address these concerns. The first of the new settlements, Mission San Diego de Alcalá, was established on July 16, 1769 in an area long inhabited by the Kumeyaay people. Much is known about the original inhabitants due to the efforts of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, who explored the coast in the service of Spain. Cabrillo recorded his observations of life in the Southern California villages he encountered on his journeys along the coast in October 1542.



Detail, Mission San Diego de Alcalá
Photograph by Natalia Bratslavsky

Colonizing Southern California

Spanish officials believed that the best way to colonize California was to establish a system of missions that would not only convert Indigenous people to Christianity, but also introduce them to European languages, work habits, and ways of life. An ideal mission had fertile soil for crops, a plentiful water supply and was located near existing Indigenous communities. People came to the missions for a variety of reasons. Some were curious. Others came out of necessity.

Spanish diseases had begun to ravage their communities. Invasive plants and cattle brought by the Spanish changed the environmental ecosystem they relied upon. When food became scarce, working in the missions provided a way to feed their families in a time of great uncertainty.

First Californians received religious instruction and were expected to perform labor such as farming and construction to help maintain the mission community. Once baptized, they had to follow rules that the padres and military officials deemed acceptable. Aspects of Indigenous culture were banned. **Neophytes** (new converts) were not allowed to leave without permission. Those who disobeyed were punished.

Not all Indigenous people moved to the missions, nor did everyone experience mission life in the same way. Some fought back against injustice. Others, despite hardships, made the best lives they could. They married, had children, and tried to pass down their knowledge and cultural traditions to the next generation.

Bell, 1810
Mexico
Bronze; 9 × 12.5 in.
Bowers Museum 19736
Gift of Herman F. Locke and Rosita Yorba Locke

FEATURED EXPLORER

GASPAR DE PORTOLÁ

Portrait of Gaspar de Portolá
18th Century
Artist unknown
Photograph by Cristiano Tomás

Gaspar de Portolá (1716-1786) was a Spanish military officer serving New Spain, now known as Mexico. Portolá set out from San Diego in 1769, with the goal of finding the much-praised Monterey Bay. Instead Portolá 's expedition were the first Europeans to see and record what we now call the San Francisco Bay.

On the journey, Portolá experienced a scarcity of both water and pasture land for the animals as well as numerous earthquakes. Indigenous people they met welcomed them with gifts and food.

The following year, Portolá and Serra decided on a joint expedition by land and sea to search again for Monterey Bay. This time they were successful in recognizing that the round harbor where they had previously planted a cross was the same described by earlier explorers. They founded Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo and the Presidio of Monterey. Portolá 's legacy was that he expanded Las Californias far to the north from its beginnings on the Baja California peninsula.

Colonizing Northern California

Overland exploration of Alta California had become feasible with the 1702 discovery by a Jesuit official exploring the Colorado River that California—contrary to maps at that time—was not an island.

Spanish explorers had been seeking a route through the Southwest Desert for more than two centuries. Settlers and their animals faced fierce desert storms, rushing rivers and rugged mountains. With the establishment of many missions in Alta California, Spain was eager to find an easier way to deliver new settlers and supplies. Juan Bautista de Anza was the first to establish a route from Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.

Juan Bautista de Anza's traveled from a small **presidio,** or military fort, in northern Mexico toward Mission San Gabriel in Alta California on the eastern edge of present-day Los Angeles. After a round trip of more than 2,000 miles, Anza was authorized to plan an expedition to colonize the San Francisco Bay area. On this journey, he led a large caravan across miles of wilderness toward Monterey. The caravan included all the resources he would need to begin a new colony: 240 settlers, 140 saddle horses, 65 cattle and enough mules to carry thirty-five loads of provisions.

The colonists remained in Monterey while Anza and a squad of soldiers explored the San Francisco Bay area, where he designated the site for the San Francisco Presidio and for Mission Dolores.

Junipero Serra and El Camino Real

El Camino Real (Spanish for "The Royal Road") connected a total of 21 Franciscan missions. The missions were built approximately 30 miles apart—about a day's journey by horseback—covering a total of 650 miles.

Religious Medals, 18th to 19th Century.
Photographs courtesy of Dr. Peter Keller

From San Diego in the south to Sonoma in the north, the interconnected system of missions, small farms, pueblos and presidios was part of Spain's master plan to colonize Alta California.

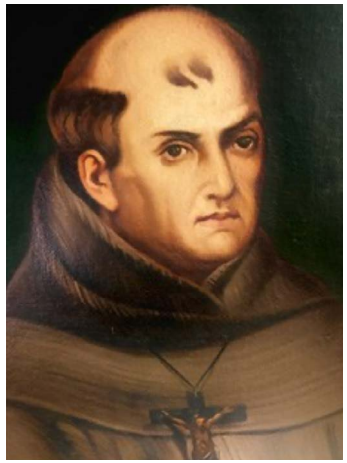
The mission system would forever change the lives of First Californians, destroying traditions and languages that had existed for centuries. It changed the economy of California from a hunter-gatherer economy to an agricultural economy, and integrated Indigenous peoples into a way of life that would blend the local inhabitants, religious missionaries and Spanish settlers into a new California culture.

SPANISH MISSIONARY

JUNIPERO SERRA

Father Junipero Serra (1713-1784) was a Franciscan priest and brilliant scholar. He was born in Spain, attended school at a friary, then joined the religious order at seventeen. At thirty-five, he was sent to the Americas to become a missionary. He is remembered for founding nine Alta California missions between 1769 and 1784: San Diego (1769), San Carlos Borromeo (1770), San Antonio (1771), San Gabriel (1771), San Luis Obispo (1772), San Francisco (1776), San Juan Capistrano (1776), Santa Clara (1777), and San Buenaventura (1782).

Serra served as father-president of the Mission system from its headquarters at San Carlos Borromeo in Carmel. He believed his purpose in life was to save the souls of Indigenous Americans, and was responsible for converting thousands of First Californians. His stance toward them was patriarchal, often treating them as children who needed both discipline and protection.



Father Junipero Serra, c. 1910
José Mosqueda
Oil on canvas; 21.875 x 17.875 x 1.375 in.
Bowers Museum 17259
Gift of Father Joseph Thompson, O.F.M.

TYPICAL DAY AT A SPANISH MISSION

The lives of Indigenous Californians responded to seasonal rhythms. Changing to a daily regimen of prayer and hard labor was totally disruptive to their culture.

5:00 am	Wake up
5:30 am	Church services and breakfast of corn or grain
6:00 am	Work
12:00 pm	Eat Lunch: *Pozole* soup made of grain, vegetables and a little meat, served in earthen jars
1:00 pm	Siesta (rest/nap)
2:00 pm	Work
5:00 pm	Eat Supper: *Atole* soup made from cornmeal
6:00 pm	Language or religion lessons
9:00 pm	Bedtime

Daily Life at the Missions

At the time of the first European contact, Indigenous communities in present-day California included the Chumash, Kumeyaay, Nisenan, Maidu, Miwok, Modoc, Mohave, Ohlone, Pomo, Serrano, Shasta, Tongva, Yurok and Yokut.

The natural resources of their environment were so abundant that even densely populated villages did not need to develop an agricultural economy. They lived by hunting and gathering what they needed from the local ecosystem, and worked to preserve it for future generations. The land and natural resources around them determined the types of homes they built, the food they ate and the clothing they wore. Plant fiber was used in making their homes, clothing and a wide variety of baskets. Much of their food was obtained from the ocean and their villages were built along rivers and streams to have access to fresh water. Their daily lives were about to change forever.

Life at a Spanish mission followed a much more structured pace. There were specific times for work and prayer. Neophytes living at the mission were required to work to raise food and perform other tasks to maintain the community. They brought with them knowledge about sustainable land and natural resource management, along with a variety of skills such as basket weaving and carving, honed from generations of making the things they needed using resources from the local natural environment. At the missions, they gradually began to adopt a Mexican style of clothing, and added crosses and European glass beads into their jewelry.

San Gabriel Mission, c. 1832; Ferdinand Deppe (1794-1861). Oil on canvas; 27 x 37 in. Laguna Art Musuem Collection 1994.083. Gift of Nancy Dustin Wall Moure

Daily Life at the Missions

The missions in Alta California expanded to become much more than centers of religious instruction. They developed into large estates that included farms, ranchos, and workshops for carpentry, ironwork, winemaking, tanning and leatherwork. At its peak, the average mission covered 1000 acres of land and could hold about 1000 men, women and children. Missions were administered by two Franciscan priests with support from a small group of soldiers and their families.

Missions were self-sufficient complexes. A mission might be devoted exclusively to production of a single class of livestock, crops, or other products. First Californians brought with them knowledge of local plant life and advanced skills in basketmaking. At the missions, the neophytes were taught carpentry and leatherwork by accomplished artisans from Mexico and Europe. Each resident had his or her **vocation**. Each department had an official who supervised the work.

Dispatch Pouch, c.1780-1820
Native American; Southern California
Fiber, leather and fur; 17.375 x 25 in.
Bowers Museum 97.20.1
Gift of Deborah L. Anderson

Men were trained to be carpenters, brickmakers, stonemasons, blacksmiths, saddlers and shoemakers. Some served as runners to carry messages from one mission station to another.

Others cultivated acres of land that produced grains and fruits. Many learned to be skilled vaqueros who worked with thousands of head of cattle, horses, sheep and goats.

Coiled Basket with Eagle Motifs,
c. Late 19th-Early 20th Century.
Southern California
Juncus coiled over grass.
Bowers Museum 20285
Gift of Mary J. Newland

Women were trained to sew and weave blankets and **serapes**. When they joined the mission community, they gave up many traditional art forms. Women adapted basketmaking techniques to produce "mission baskets." Ceramics, candles, cast iron bells and leather products were manufactured by the missions for trading with foreign merchants. Other items and tools used in everyday life were produced by both artisans and neophyte apprentices, but very few of these items have survived.

Brandy Still, c. 1776-1831
Southern California
Copper; 53 x 36 in.
Bowers Museum 2810
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Forster

MODULE THREE: SPANISH MISSIONS

The mission system changed daily life dramatically for the First Californians.
Which six activities below are part of an economy based on farming and raising animals?
Which six activities below are part of a hunting and gathering economy?

Used plant fiber to make homes, clothing and a wide variety of basket forms.

Walked as the main means of transportation, although some used rafts and canoes.

Rode horses and ox-driven wagons as the main means of transportation.

Gathered a variety of acorns, roots, nuts and berries.

Cultivated fields of barley, wheat, beans, corn, melons and squash.

Used a furnace to shape metal to make wagons, wheels, branding irons, locks and keys.

Made mortars and pestles from rock to grind grains into meal.

Planted and tended orchards of fruits and nuts.

Obtained what they needed from the surrounding natural environment.

Raised livestock: cattle, sheep, goats and horses. Tanned the skins to turn them into leather.

Made adobe bricks and used them to construct buildings.

Carved soapstone into cups, bowls, animal effigies, pipes and beads used for currency.

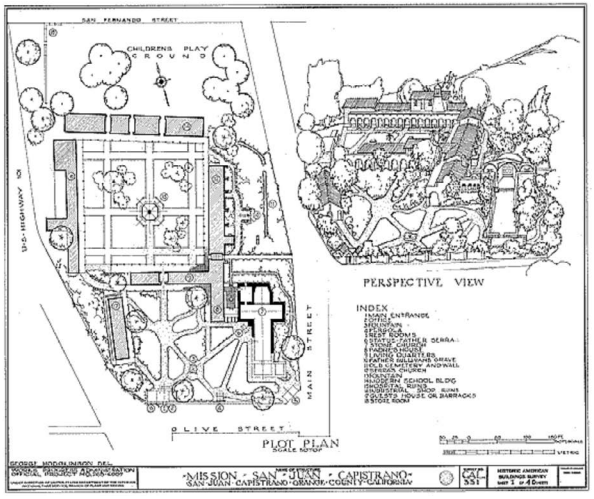
FEATURED MISSION

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

In November 1776, Junipero Serra established San Juan Capistrano, the mission located closest to the Bowers Museum. It was named in honor of Saint Giovanni of Capistrano, a 14th century Italian scholar.

Missions were built by Indigenous Californians under the direction of master builders. Isidro Aguilar from Mexico City designed San Juan Capistrano and its famous church which took nine years to complete. Its architecture became known as "California Mission" style. Bowers Museum is constructed in this style.

Like most missions, San Juan Capistrano was built in the shape of a four-sided quadrangle. Tall adobe walls with many arches surrounded a central courtyard, providing shaded walkways. Other buildings included living quarters for padres, a kiln to fire adobe bricks and roof tiles, a tannery for making leather, and workrooms for making woven goods, baskets and other items which the mission sold or traded.



The typical **façade** of a mission church had three major components: the entryway, a frame that surrounded it, and a *campanario* or bell wall that created a focal point for the design.

Outdoor areas often contained a fountain, a cemetery and gardens for the cultivation of citrus fruits, olive trees and other food to sustain the community.

Keystone, Old Stone Church, c. 1806
Sandstone
Bowers Museum 3367
Gift of Mission San Juan Capistrano

Using local stone and adobe clay bricks made building the missions possible, but they did not hold up well in earthquakes. Many mission structures have been destroyed over the years, including the magnificent Old Stone Church of San Juan Capistrano.

(above)
Campanario of Mission San Juan Capistrano
Photograph by Randy Hines

(below)
Mission San Juan Capistrano Site Plan
Historic American Buildings Survey
Sheet 1 of 40
A project of the National Park Service

The first mission began with building a simple *palisade* or fence with wood or iron stakes fixed in the ground, forming an enclosure for defense. These walls were covered with reeds, then whitewashed to resemble adobe buildings. As a mission grew, early structures were replaced with ones of adobe and stone with red roof tiles laid over the reeds and wood framing.

The center of the community, the *casco*, typically included a closed quadrangle of four long adobe sides, one of which was the church, the center of a mission's spiritual life.

The priests lived in the *convento*, which typically flanked the church and provided the only public access to the closed quadrangle behind. *Conventos* contained a reception hall, office, library, kitchen, dining room, pantry, priests' quarters, guest rooms for visitors, storerooms and a private chapel. Some had a winery or granary.

The other two sides of the mission quadrangle, connecting the church and convento wings, contained workshops, storage areas, and rooms where unmarried neophyte women lived. The enclosed interior patio was secured from the outside by the absence of exterior windows and doors and a single gate access for carts and animals.

The inner space was busy with the activity of cooks, weavers, leather and metal workers and candlemakers. The quadrangle included industries as well as orchards and gardens. Water was brought from miles away through elaborate systems of irrigation. Potters made ceramic kitchen ware. Tiles were fired in large kilns and wool was carded, spun and woven into cloth.

Tanneries saw the processing of hides and soap and candles were made from animal fats. The church fronted a *lavanderia* for washing clothes, with a fountain for drawing water.

Soldiers quarters were a row of dwellings on one side of the plaza. Married neophytes' dwellings were located on the other side. First Californians lived in thatched huts of various shapes grouped randomly over a large area of ground. Each hut held a family. At its peak a population, a mission might accommodate 500 to 2000 persons. Later, rows of single or double-rooms were built for neophyte families that had distinguished themselves by service to the missionaries and the community.

Neighborhood Walk

Missions occupy a central place in California's cultural identity. The mission period greatly influenced architecture in California.

Natural materials, such as stone, timber, mud brick, adobe and tile were used to build mission structures. California's mission era ended in 1834, but you can still see the architectural legacy lives on in the state's red tile roofs, arched walkways, and bell towers.

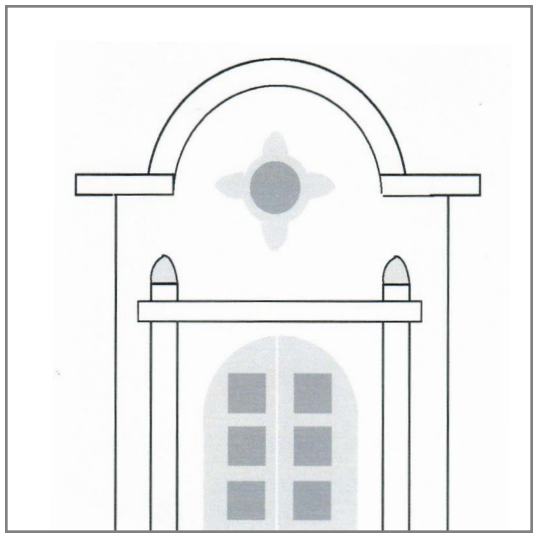
The buildings of this period are sometimes labeled as "Mission style" to describe their design and craftsmanship. Many of the buildings, houses and churches inspired by California Mission style still exist today. Architectural elements from the early missions have been used on schools, public buildings, homes, restaurants and stores. Take a walk around your neighborhood with a parent or teacher and a sketchbook or camera. How many of the architectural features on the following page can you identify?

- WHITE ADOBE WALLS
- TERRACOTTA RED TILE ROOFS
- CURVED GABLES
- ARCHED WALKWAYS
- BELL TOWERS
- CARVED DOORS
- SMALL ROUND, SQUARE OR STAR-SHAPED WINDOWS
- DECORATIVE SPANISH TILES

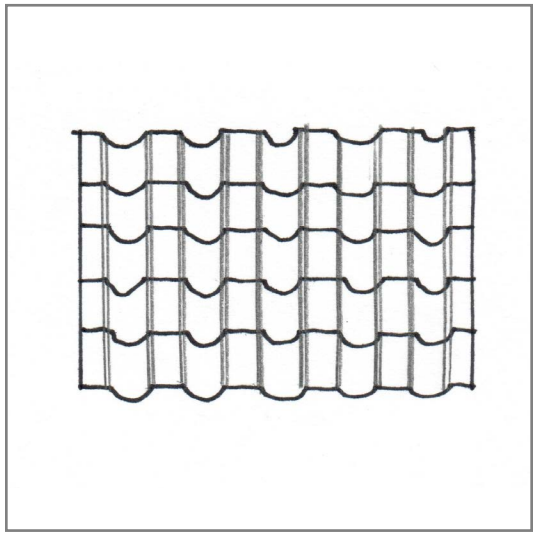
California Mission style architectural elements are used in many different ways. Rarely are two buildings alike. Make sketches of what *you* discover as you explore your neighborhood.

Bell Tower at Sunset
Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, CA
Photograph by Eric Stoner

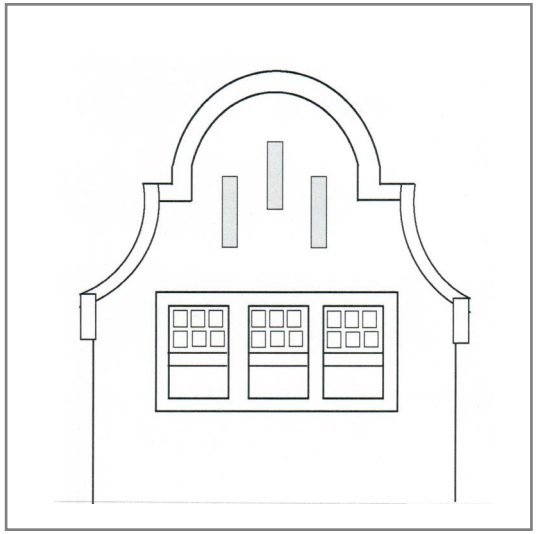
MODULE THREE ACTIVITY: CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTURE



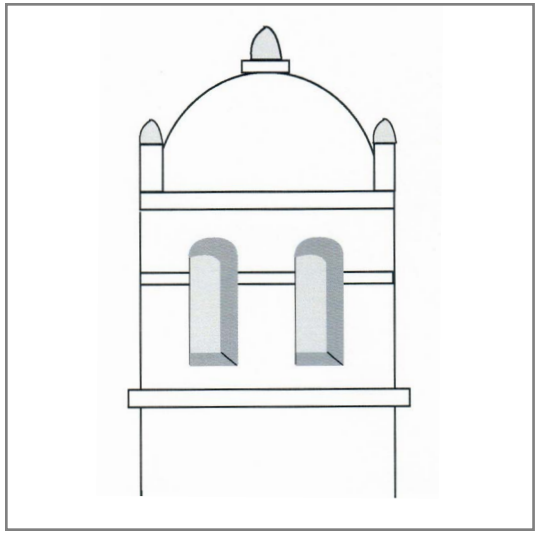
CARVED WOOD DOORS



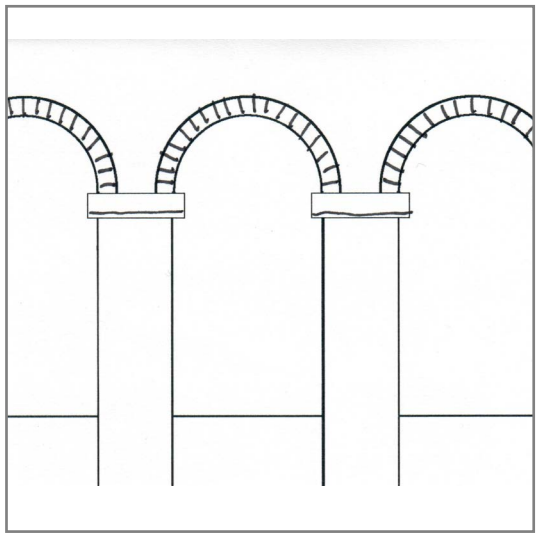
TERRACOTTA TILE ROOFS



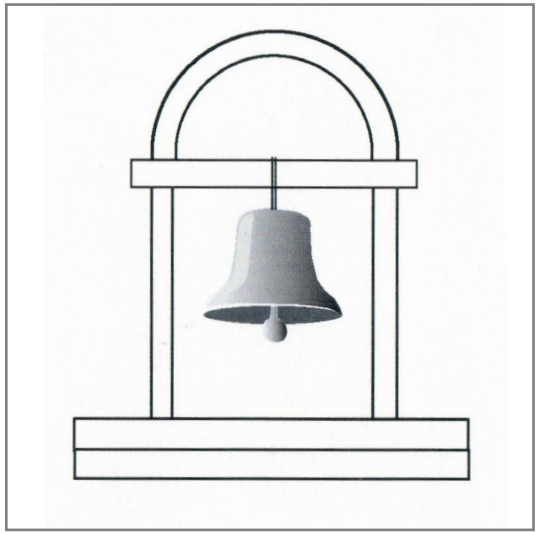
CURVED GABLES



DOMED TOWERS



ARCHED WALKWAYS



CAST IRON BELLS

MODULE FOUR:

PUEBLOS AND PRESIDIOS

Presidio de San Francisco, c. 1817
Ludwig (Louis) Choris (1795-1828)

Changing Ways of Life

Spanish colonization of California consisted of three types of settlements:

- **Missions**: under the control of the Church who was responsible for converting and educating the Indigenous people of the region
- **Pueblos**: towns settled primarily by civilians from present-day Mexico interested in economic growth
- **Presidios**: military forts under the control of soldiers who were charged with keeping peace, guarding against foreign incursions, and controlling local populations

Building Community

Pueblos

One of the biggest challenges in the early days of Spanish California was maintaining a sufficient food supply for the soldiers who guarded the settlements. Government officials attempted to solve this problem by founding civilian towns, or pueblos, in Northern and Southern California. A **pueblo** was a town or farming village built close to the missions. Each was laid out around a plaza, or square park. The pueblos attracted private settlers and business people who wanted to develop business opportunities in Alta California. The most important person in the village was the *alcalde* who served as a mayor and judge.

The first pueblo to be established in Alta California was San José, founded in 1777 near the southern end of San Francisco Bay. The second pueblo in Alta California was established in 1781. The settlers (**los Pobladores)** traveled from Sonora Mexico under the direction of Captain Fernando Rivera y Moncada to build an agricultural settlement. It was named El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles del Río de Porciúncula. Today it is known as Los Angeles.

The pueblos were different from other Spanish settlements because neither priests nor soldiers ran them. To attract settlers to the new towns, the government provided free land, livestock, farming equipment, and an annual allowance for the purchase of clothing and other supplies. In addition, the settlers were exempt from all taxes for five years. In return for this aid, the settlers were required to sell their surplus agricultural products to the presidios.

The **Pueblo de Los Ángeles** was located near the Los Angeles River, about nine miles southwest of Mission San Gabriel. The sight had no harbor and no navigable river, but these features were deemed unnecessary for the success of a small, agricultural community.

Los Pobladores, founders of the Pueblo of Los Angeles, were settlers of diverse backgrounds. The founding families were primarily of Mexican as well as African descent. Los Pobladores built adobe homes, raised animals and farmed the land. Captain Rivera offered the families $400, supplies, tools, animals, clothing, a limited period of no taxation, and access to land. The settlers received title to the land after 5 years of residence if three criteria were met: good behavior, completion of an adobe home, and progress in farming and raising livestock.

Presidios

A **presidio** was a military fort where Spanish soldiers and their families lived. The purpose of a presidio was the protection of the missions and the pueblos. Indigenous people whose ancestors had occupied the region for thousands of years built both the missions and the presidios.

Four presidios were established along the California coast: San Diego (1769), Monterey (1770), Santa Barbara (1782), and San Francisco (1776). Spanish colonial officials chose these locations carefully. Like the missions, the military forts were placed as near to ports as possible and where fresh water was accessible. Presidios were also charged with defending harbors against attack from foreign ships.

Protecting Settlements

The first Alta Californian presidio, built in San Diego in 1769, was soon followed by others, evenly distributed among the coastal missions at San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Barbara. Within a strong defense wall, each presidio contained officer residences, housing for soldiers and their families, storerooms for provisions and arms, and a chapel. Each presidio had about 70 soldiers. They were stationed at various missions in their district.

The Presidio at San Diego was responsible for defending Missions San Diego, San Luis Rey, San Juan Capistrano and San Gabriel. The Presidio at Santa Barbara was assigned to defend Missions San Fernando, San Buenaventura, Santa Barbara, Santa Inés and La Purísima, along with El Pueblo de Los Ángeles. The Presidio at Monterey was responsible for defending Missions San Luis Obispo, San Miguel, San Antonio, Soledad, San Carlos and San Juan Bautista, along with Villa Branciforte, the last of three pueblos founded by the Spanish colonial government of Alta California. The Presidio at San Francisco defended Missions Santa Cruz, San José, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Rafael and Solano, along with El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe. With seventy soldiers at each presidio, that would mean there were about ten soldiers assigned to each location they were responsible for protecting.

When Spanish explorers claimed possession of land, a ceremony was held around an altar, with singing and gun salutes aboard nearby ships. The Spanish flag was raised, followed by a feast. Following tradition, gifts were exchanged with the local population.

PUEBLOS

- *a* Pueblo of Los Angeles (1781)
- *b* Pueblo of San José (1777)
- *c* Villa de Branciforte (1797)

PRESIDIOS

- A Presidio of San Diego (1769)
- B Presidio of Monterey (1770)
- C Presidio of San Francisco (1776)
- D Presidio of Santa Barbara (1782)

MODULE FIVE:

MEXICAN RANCHOS

Equestrian Portrait of Don José Andres Sepulveda, c. 1856
Henri Joseph Penelon (1827-1885)
Oil on canvas; 43 x 35 in.
Bowers Museum 2429
Gift of Judge Thomas D. Mott II

Mexican California 1821-1848

The Growth of Ranchos

California experienced many changes after Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821. Under Spanish rule, land had been held mostly by the missions, with only 30 land grants recorded. These grants were actually "concessions," a form of reward for an individual's service to the Crown, whiich allowed an individual to have grazing rights for cattle. All lands remained under the ownership of the Spanish monarch. In order to retain a concession the recipient must build a stone house on the land, stock the rancho with at least 2,000 head of cattle, and have enough vaqueros to keep the cattle from straying.

Under Mexican rule (1821-1848), the newly appointed governors of California awarded hundreds of land grants, beginning what is called the **Rancho** Period in California history. While Mexican rule improved land grant distribution, the Rancho period was also a time where close-knit families accumulated great wealth, and devoted themselves to leisure time and an almost aristocratic lifestyle, marked by huge fiestas and sports such as bull fighting. The title of Don was used before a man's name to show that he was a Spanish gentleman. The title used for a Spanish woman was Doña.

By far the largest ranch was the 25-mile long Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana, owned by the Yorba family. Other large ranchos in Southern California included those owned by the Sepulvedas, Forsters, and Picos.

A typical rancho had over 100 employees including tanners, soap makers, blacksmiths, wool combers and other tradespersons. Many of the local laborers were well-trained **vaqueros** (cowboys).

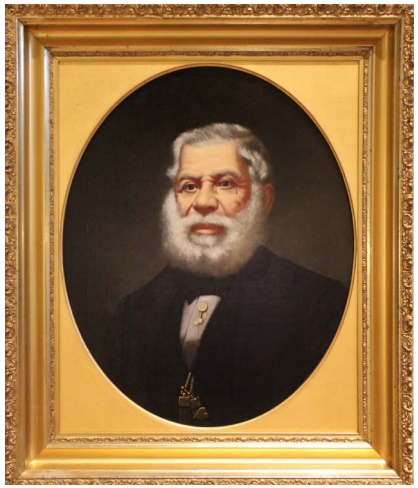
Although Mexican government land grants began in 1821 when independence was achieved from Spain, it was not until after the **Secularization Act** of 1833 that new opportunities for land ownership really took hold. When the Mexican government confiscated mission properties and converted them into ordinary parish churches, the Church no longer had any influence. Anyone who was a native or naturalized Mexican citizen—and/or a Catholic who had good moral character—could petition the Mexican governor for a land grant, including a property description and a *diseño*, or map. Individual ranchos ranged in size from less than 4,000 acres to nearly 50,000 acres.

This historic transition resulted in freedom for First Californians who had worked in the missions. Together, secularization and **emancipation** enabled the rise of a large network of private ranchos which eventually covered much of Southern California.

The Californios, who were Mexican-Californians, prospered greatly by taking over enormous amounts of former mission lands and assets. Their new wealth and power placed them at the top of a new hierarchical society. Although First Californians had been promised a quarter of the available land, that promise was not fulfilled. Those who had toiled at the missions now became laborers at the newly formed ranchos.

MEXICAN RANCHERO

DON PIO PICO



Portrait of Don Pio Pico, 1868
Henry J. Frey
Oil on canvas; 24 x 20 in.
Bowers Museum 3513
Gift of Mrs. John Forster

Don Pio Pico (1801-1894) was the last Mexican Governor of California, serving from February 1845 to August 1846.

Pico was a colorful figure who liked to gamble. He was a first generation **Californio**, born at Mission San Gabriel Arcángel to parents who emigrated from the part of New Spain that is now Mexico. His family was among the first settlers of the town that today is the large city of Los Angeles.

Pio Pico and his brother organized a defense against American invaders, but their efforts to keep California part of Mexico were not successful. In 1847, General Pico surrendered California to the Americans at the Treaty of Cahuenga in Los Angeles before fleeing to Baja California.

Years later, he returned to live in Los Angeles.

Waistcoat, c. 1823
California
Chamois skin
Bowers Museum 2728
Gift of Mrs. John Forster

Fan of Doña Ysidora Pico Forster, c. 1845
China
Ivory, cerise silk, maribou feather and sequins
Bowers Museum 3504
Gift of Mrs. John Forster

Saddle, mid 19th Century
Unknown Maker; California
Rawhide, leather, wood and metal
17 x 23 x 14 in.
Bowers Museum 2946
Gift of Mrs. Fred T. Preble

Spurs, c. 1840
Mexico
Leather, metal, fabric, steel and silver
Bowers Museum 2929A,B
Gift of Mrs. John Forster

Daily Life on a Mexican Rancho

The Rancho era was a colorful period in California history for those who enjoyed new prosperity. Fiestas, barbecues, rodeos and dances were frequent events. Picnics were also popular. The ranchero rode his horse and women and children arrived in a two-wheeled cart pulled by oxen. The picnics featured foods such as enchiladas, tamales and tortillas. This lifestyle lasted from the 1830s through the 1850s.

Fine clothing for both men and women was always in demand on the ranchos. Goods from the rancho were traded for Items such as velvet jackets, shoes, silk stockings, lace mantillas fans and tortoise-shell combs.

Family was very important to **Los Californios**. Families were large, with 6 to 15 children being common. Grandparents, in-laws, and other relatives often lived together with the family on the rancho. In addition to the large family, there were often guests at the rancho. Hospitality was very important. Even strangers who came by the rancho were invited to stay and were treated as family.

There were almost no schools in California, so many children did not learn to read and write. Emphasis was placed instead on practical and social skills.

Spanish ships sailed from Acapulco to China by way of Manila. Their return route brought them down the coast of California. Many items used by rancheros were of Asian manufacture.

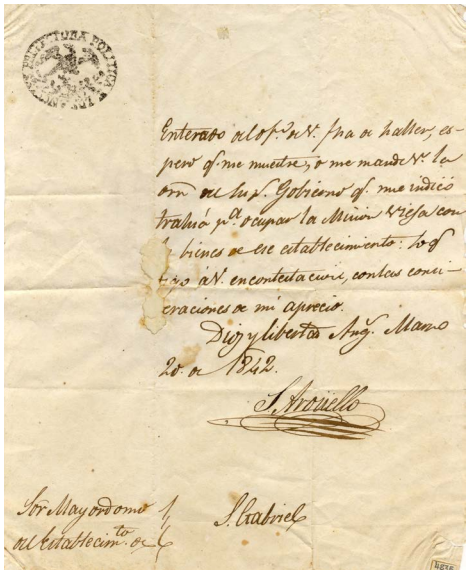
Embroidered Silk Shawl, c. 1850 - 1860
China
Bowers Museum 80.18.6
Gift of Mrs. Paul Stein

Portable Writing Desk; c.1857
Gift to Don José Antonio Yorba
by his father when he left for college.
Mexico
Mahogany and brass; 4 x 9.5 x 14 in.
Bowers Museum 8210
Loan Courtesy of
Mrs. Lorenzo Pelanconi

From 1834 to 1846, ranchos defined life in California. By the end of Mexican rule in California in 1846, the ranchos covered 10 million acres, extending from San Diego in the south to Shasta County in the north.

Gold Rush

Following the end of the Mexican-American war in 1848, California became part of the United States with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
That same year, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill near San Francisco in northern California, ushering in a new era of change.



Historic Letter by Don Santiago Arguello, 1842
Los Angeles, California
Ink on paper; 10.125 x 8.25 in.
Bowers Museum 4835
Gift of Mr. William MacPherson

Horse-Drawn Carriages

From the 1830s to the 1850s, ranchos defined the California lifestyle. The Dons and Doñas who were granted Southern California ranchos enjoyed lives of ease and elegance. In addition to their interest in fine clothing and entertainment, traveling in horse-drawn carriages was another sign of their high social status. These vehicles carried both passengers and their belongings.

Two-wheeled vehicles were pulled by a one or two horses. They had a pole which was attached between the wheels. The ride was balanced by the distribution of weight of the driver, passengers, and goods over the axle, and then held level by the animal—requiring the shafts to be fixed to the body of the vehicle.

Four-wheeled carriages remain level on their own, and so the poles are hinged vertically, enabling them to rise and fall with the movement of the horses. They were steered by shafts attached to a front axle that swivels on a turntable or "fifth wheel" beneath the carriage. In addition to horses, carriages were also pulled by donkeys and oxen.

With the introduction and mass production of the Ford Model T in the early 20th century, automobiles began to replace the horse and carriages on the city streets and country roads of California.

Pio Pico's Carriage, 19th Century
California
Metal and wood; 57.75 x 57.5 x 132 in.
Bowers Museum 3945
Gift of Mrs. Thomas L. McFadden

Santa Margarita Rancho, 1880
Alexander Harmer (1856-1925)
Pastel on paper; 13 x 11 in.
Bowers Museum 7533
Gift of Maria Ygnacia Melitas Forster

Don Juan Forster is shown standing in the left foreground.

Many ranchos were hundreds of acres in size, as cattle required sufficient land to provide enough grass to eat. On such ranchos, the ranchero might hire as many as one hundred workers.

Ranchos were nearly self-sufficient. They made almost everything needed by the people living on them. With the nearest pueblo often more than a day's ride away, people had to grow their own food, raise their own cattle and sheep, and weave their own wool into cloth.

G & Y Brands of Mary A. R. Yorba, 1891
San Diego County, California
Leather and paper; 4 x 6.5 in.
Bowers Museum 4716B
Gift of Mr. John Davidson

Cattle were the mainstay of the rancho economy. Unlike the missionaries whose land was used to cultivate grapes, figs, citrus fruit and olives, the rancheros used the land for cattle. Under Mexican law all rancheros needed a brand, or identifying mark, for their cattle and horses. Because the cattle roamed freely across the land, the brand helped everyone know which animals belonged to which ranch.

CALIFORNIA RANCHO BRANDS

California *rancheros* in the 1800s identified their cattle using a symbol or brand—often based on their first and/or last initials or the name of their ranch. These forms become unique by adding a graphic element such as lines and circles.

Try designing a brand using your initials. If your name begins with an A, for instance, your designs might look like the examples below. Keep in mind that the shape of the real brand would be forged in metal, so simplicity is important! Today, many cattle owners identify their livestock without causing discomfort to the animal by using ear tags or chips. But brand designs are still used for purposes of identity to mark leather saddles or wooden surfaces such as the entrance gate to a ranch.

LAZY A
turn your initial on its side

ROCKING A
your initial rests on a quarter circle

TUMBLING A
your initial is slanted

FLYING A
your initial has wings

CRAZY A
your initial is backwards or upside down

CIRCLE A
your initial is enclosed in a shape

MODULE FIVE ACTIVITY: BRANDED COWHIDE

During the 1800s, missions raised cattle for the purpose of trade. Cattle were sources of meat, skin (hides) and fat (tallow). Hides were traded for other goods like iron, rope, clothing and chocolate. Once trade expanded with the English, cow hides were in demand. To ensure high quality, a specific method was used. First, hides were washed and soaked in a water and lime solution for three days. Then, hair was scraped off the hide with a knife. The hide was soaked once more in a tanning solution and left to change color and texture. After several months, they would wash the tanning solution off the hide, then stretch and beat the hide with grease to soften it. Finally, the hide was left to dry one last time. They learned this method from Native Americans and used it to create leather goods like saddles, furniture, shoes and more. Present-day science gives us options to create vegan-friendly synthetic leather to produce shoes and other goods.

1. Add 1 tablespoon of instant coffee to a bowl or cup.

2. Add a small amount of water with the spoon and put that aside for later.

3. Now grab your paper bag and scissors. Start by cutting the seams and bottom of the bag. If you're having trouble start by opening it.

4. Take a pencil and draw out an outline of a cowhide, you are welcomed to take inspiration from our sample image or create your own shape.

5. Once the outline is done, cut it out with scissors and set it aside.

6. Now take a napkin and dip it into the coffee solution you set aside. Once the napkin has been soaked, twist the napkin to remove any excess solution into the cup.

7. Take your napkin and rub it on the paper hide, this will begin to stain the paper. Repeat the process, making sure to leave some areas blank for a more unique look.

8. Leave the "hide" to dry.

9. Once dry, grab a marker add your initials as a brand. Then crumble the paper, this will give it a rough texture.

MODULE SIX:

REFLECTION

Synthesis

The Franciscans came to California not merely to convert Indigenous Californians to Christianity but also to train them for life in a European colonial society. Conversion was seldom an entirely voluntary process, and converts (neophytes) were not allowed to return to their old ways. Instead, they were required to live in the walled mission enclosure or on *rancherías*, separate settlements sponsored by missions that were located some distance from the mission itself. There they were taught Spanish as well as the beliefs and traditions of their new religion and were trained in skills that would equip them for their new lives, such as brickmaking and construction, raising cattle and horses, blacksmithing, weaving, and tanning hides.

In theory, the neophytes were to live at the missions only until this process of education was complete, and then they would establish homes in the nearby pueblos. As the Indigenous people of one region were Christianized and educated, the missionaries were to move on, leaving the old missions behind to become parish churches as new missions were built in more distant locations.

In fact, neither the Spanish government nor the Franciscans ever judged any of the neophytes ready for "secularization" or life outside of the mission system. Their descendants remained at the missions until the system was abolished in 1834.

The Canyon of the Little Christians, c. 1922
Artist unknown
Pen and Ink illustration of the first recorded baptism in Alta California
From *San Juan Capistrano Mission* by Zephyrin Engelhardt (1922), p. 285

The image depicts the first recorded baptisms in Alta California which were performed on July 22, 1769 in what is today southern Orange County.

Clashing Cultures

When the first explorers touched down in the 16th century on the land that is present-day California, they were greeted peacefully by the Indigenous peoples who had inhabited the area for thousands of years. Food and other gifts were exchanged upon meeting as is customary in many cultures.

Things were relatively quiet for almost 200 years, as the Spanish were occupied with other concerns in Europe and did not invest in further exploration of lands that had been described by early explorers as remote with difficult living conditions. California did not appear to be the paradise that the Spanish monarchy had hoped to discover in the New World.

Relationships between Explorers and Indigenous Cultural Groups

When explorers returned in the 1700s, however, it was with the competitive desire to colonize these lands. Russia had begun to pursue trading posts in the area that became Northern California, and the English had asserted claims over some of the territories previously "discovered" by Spain.

MODULE SIX: REFLECTION

Spain devised a **strategy** to settle California that would not require the commitment of having hundreds of Spanish people migrate there. They planned three types of settlements that would reinforce each other and operate as a self-sufficient society: 1) a series of missions from San Diego to Monterey to convert Indigenous people and educate them in European ways, developing a source of free labor; 2) pueblos that would attract Mexican citizens to establishing homes and businesses in Alta California; and 3) Presidios or forts charged with keeping the peace, defending settlements from foreign incursion and from attacks by Indigenous populations living in the region.

Relationships of Missionaries and Explorers
Although Franciscan missionaries and early Spanish explorers had different reasons for traveling to Alta California, their goals were often compatible. The missionaries were motivated to spread their faith throughout the world. The explorers were motivated by the glory and riches of discovering new lands. Developing outposts in the New World and securing the cooperation of Indigenous peoples served both of their purposes.

Relationship of Missionaries to Indigenous Cultural Groups
European and native cultures intermingled in mission life. Relationships between missionaries and Indigenous cultural groups were complex. Some First Californians actively resisted the mission system; others were curious about the padres' beliefs and ceremonies and were lured to the missions by promises of a better life. They converted to Christianity and had their children baptized into the Catholic faith. Once they converted, however, they were considered the property of the mission, and were forced to work long hours cultivating crops, constructing mission buildings and learning skills that enabled the mission to produce goods needed to sustain the settlements. Spanish missionaries often treated Indigenous people as children rather than respecting their **autonomy**. In addition, they regarded Indigenous traditions as superstitious, and therefore banned those traditions from mission life.

Relationships between Indigenous Cultural Groups
Indigenous people of different regions were often linked by trading networks and political alliances. However, some diverse cultural groups who were forced to live in close proximity to each other may not have spoken the same language, and might even have been enemies.
For First Californians living as neophytes, mission life blended Spanish and Indigenous cultures. They continued to live in brush dwellings, and harvested local foods that they cooked over simple fire rings with stone tools., They tried to pass down traditions and ceremonial dances to the next generation and for a time maintained social and political networks from their home villages. But many of those who originally chose to remain on ancestral lands reached a tipping point where doing so became unsustainable.

Relationships of Missionaries and Presidios
Relationships between missions and presidios were strained throughout the mission period. Missionaries worried that the soldiers were not a positive influence on Indigenous Californians, and preferred that they not interact.

The mission system had a profound effect on life in California, and meant different things to different people.

Migration
Photograph by Andrey Popov

Migration Stories

What does it mean to migrate from one place to another?

Migration is part of the human condition. It occurs in peoples' lives for many reasons: seeking a better life, new opportunities, to be with family, to escape poverty and hunger or to satisfy the desire to explore new horizons. Immigration is a term used when someone is going to another country. Emigration is a term used when someone is leaving their home country for a new life. Our country was founded on welcoming immigrants to our shores and helping them thrive as contributing to the fabric of American life.

People feel many emotions when they leave what is familiar to venture into a place that is unknown to them. Chances are they are excited about the new things they will see and people they will meet. But they may also feel scared to leave the security of home to try something new.
Have you ever left a familiar place to live somewhere else or changed schools and had to meet new friends?

MODULE SIX CAPSTONE PROJECT: MIGRATION STORIES INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

NAME OF STUDENT INTERVIEWER: _____

NAME OF PERSON BEING INTERVIEWED: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE OF THE INTERVIEW: _____

❶ **When did your family (or ancestors) first settle in America or in the state where you currently live?**

_____

❷ **From where did your family migrate?**

_____

❸ **Why did your family choose to settle in America?**

_____

_____

❹ **What stories can you share about your family's migration? Was the experience of moving happy or sad?**

_____

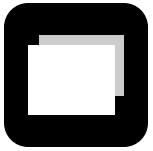
_____

_____

MODULE SIX CAPSTONE PROJECT: MIGRATION STORIES ART

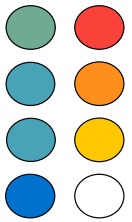
Create a work of art related to your family's migration story that captures something about the experience and how it felt. It can be a drawing, painting, story, poem or collage of words and images.

Create a Work of Art



PAPER, CANVAS, OR CARDBOARD

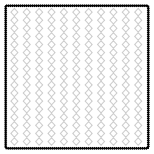
PENCIL AND ERASER



PAINTS, CRAYONS OR COLOR MARKERS

IF USING PAINT, BIG AND SMALL BRUSHES

CUP OF WATER TO USE WITH PAINTS



PAPER TOWELS

GLOSSARY

Adobe: Clay bricks that are dried in the sun, then used for building.

Agriculture: Cultivating the soil, growing crops and raising livestock.

Alta California: Upper California; Spanish and Mexican province including most of the present-day state. Other parts of Alta California became all or part of the later states of Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming

Astrolabe: In navigation, an instrument used to measure latitude.

Baja California: Lower California. A peninsula in the northwestern part of present-day Mexico that lies between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of California, claimed by Spanish explorers during the colonial era.

Cartographer: Someone who makes or draws maps.

Chronological: A record of events that starts with the earliest and follows in the order in which they occurred.

Circumnavigate: To sail or travel all the way around the world.

Colonization: Settling among and establishing control over the Indigenous people of an area.

Conquistador: The explorers of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires. who sailed beyond Europe to the Americas, Oceania, Africa, and Asia, conquering territory and opening trade routes

Controversial: Something about which people have different opinions.

Convento: A residence for Catholic priests or nuns.

Courage: Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand fear.

Crown: The head of the government under a king or queen.

Destination: The place to which a person or package is journeying.

El Camino Real: A 650-mile "Royal Road" that connected the 21 coastal missions of Alta California.

Emancipation: Being set free or liberated from legal, social, or political restrictions.

Events: Things that happen.

Expedition: A journey undertaken by a group of people with a defined purpose—usually to find or explore a certain place.

Explorer: An adventurer who travels to places where no one has ever been in order to find out what is there.

Indigenous: Native to, or originating naturally in a particular place.

Interval: The length of time in between two events.

Knight: A person granted an honorary title of knighthood by a head of state for service to the monarch or the country.

Land grant: A gift public land to an institution, organization, or to particular groups of people.

Los Californios: Early Hispanic settlers of Alta California or their descendants.

Los Pobladores: Founders of the Pueblo de los Ángeles.

Migration: The movement by people over long distances from one place to another, particularly different countries, with the intention of settling temporarily or permanently in the new location.

Milestones: A significant point in development or history.

Module: Any of a number of interrelated units that can be used independently or combined to construct a more complex structure.

GLOSSARY

Morion: A type of open helmet originally from the Kingdom of Castile, used from the beginning 16th to early 17th centuries, during exploration of the Americas. It has a flat brim and a crest from front to back.

Mutiny: An uprising at sea, or the refusal to obey authority.

Neophytes: Generally, a person new to a subject, skill or belief. In the context of the California mission system, a "neophyte" is a person recently converted to Christianity by the missionaries.

New World: Lands that Europeans "discovered" when traveling by sea to the western hemisphere, especially North and South America.

Northwest Passage: A theoretical shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans along the north coast of North America.

Pirate: A person who attacks ships at sea, seeking to steal the treasures it carries.

Preservation: A movement to maintain works of art and architecture that are considered important in a particular culture.

Presidio: Military fort that houses equipment, arms, soldiers and their families and a chapel.

Protractor: A tool for measuring angles of circular forms in degrees. A full circle is 360 degrees; a half-circle is 180 degrees.

Pueblo: In the context of this guide, a civilian town or settlement. The Spanish word "pueblo" can refer to a) a small town or village, b) to people of a Native American cultural group that settled in the Southwest and c) to a type of shared multi-story adobe dwelling.

Sextant: An instrument whose primary use is to measure the angle between an object in space and the horizon for the purposes of celestial navigation. It replaced the Astrolabe.

Queen Califia: A mythical Amazon queen and possible origin of the name California. The character and the characterization of the landform of California as an island was introduced by the 16th-century poet Montalvo in a book of fiction that influenced the beliefs of mapmakers and explorers.

Ranchero: The Spanish language term for a person who owns or works on a ranch, especially in the southwestern United States and Mexico.

Rancho: Ranch; a place, usually in the American Southwest or Mexico, where livestock such as cattle and sheep are raised.

Secularization Act: Between 1834 and 1836, the Mexican government took control of California mission properties and exiled the Franciscan friars. Mission property was sold or given away to private citizens. The Secularization Act promised to distribute land to Indigenous peoples, but once again, that did not happen.

Spanish Galleon: A large sailing ship used by merchants and explorers in the 15th to early 18th centuries.

Swashbuckling: Engaging in daring adventures, often associated with sword-carrying pirates.

Symbol: A visible sign that stands for the meaning of an idea.

Synthesis: Combining two or more ideas to form a new idea or understanding.

Technology: The application of science and engineering to create tools that help solve problems.

Vaquero / Vaquera: Cowboy / Cowgirl.

Venture: A journey or undertaking where the outcome is uncertain.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

LINK TO CONTENT STANDARDS ON BOWERS MUSEUM WEBSITE

CONTENT STANDARDS

The projects and activities in this teacher and student resource guide address California Content Standards for the Arts, English Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Science and Technology.

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1EC_Spur_Left_Bowers Museum 2729a
1EC_Spur_Right_Bowers Museum 2729b
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RESOURCES

Books and Articles

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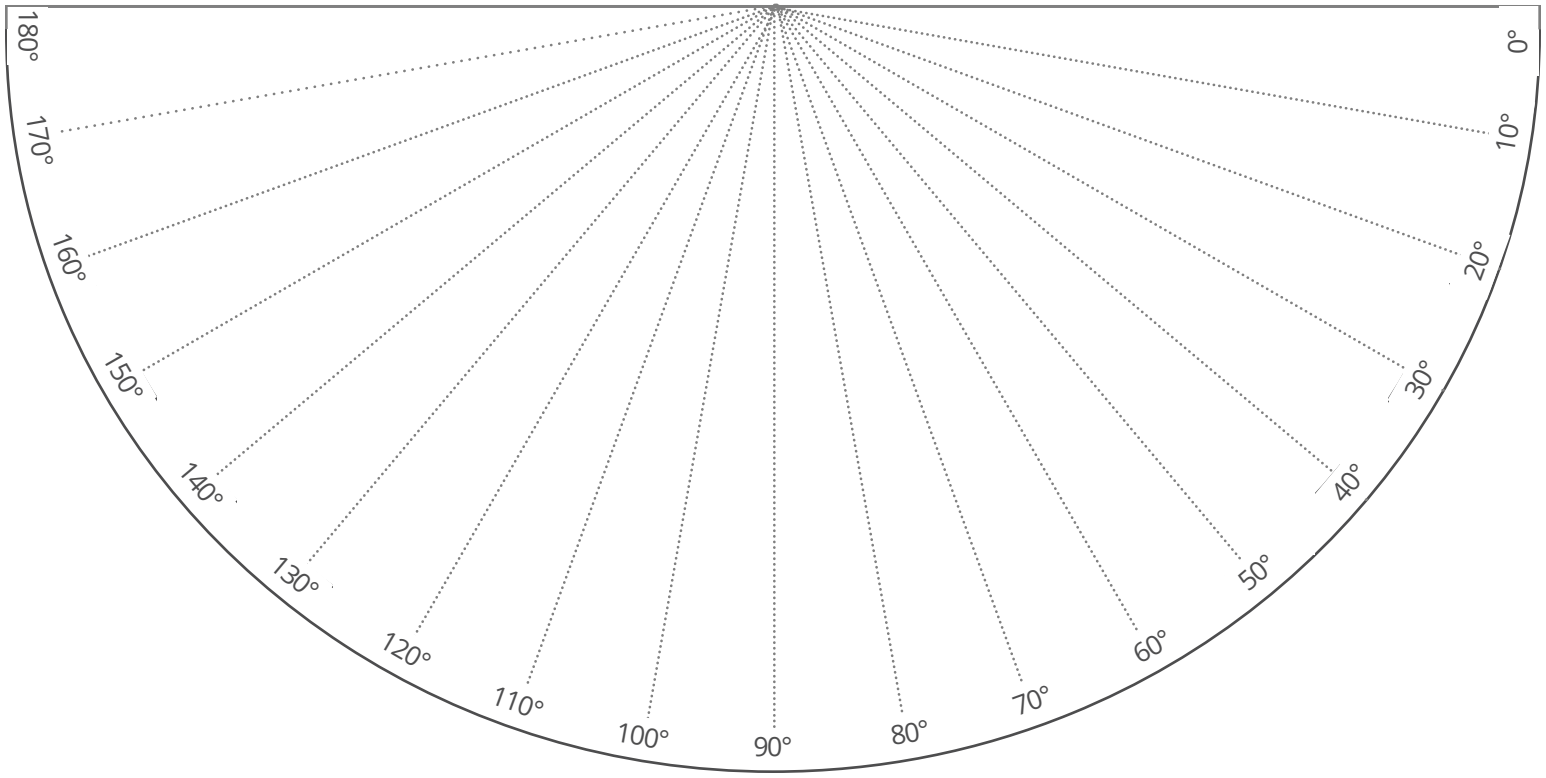
APPENDIX: ASTROLABE TEMPLATE



Tape this Astrolabe Template to a piece of cardboard to use as a guide, then cut along the solid line. Dotted lines indicate the angles of a semi-circle expressed in degrees from 0° to 180° (a full circle has 360°). Then follow the instructions in the Module Two Activity to construct a model of the Astrolabe, a tool used for navigation by early explorers.