

Lesson 1: Settlers and Trailblazers, 1821-1848

Focus Questions

Where did people settle in California during the early 1800s?

What routes did people travel to get to California during the early to mid-1800s?

Standard 4.3 Students explain the economic, social, and political life in California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War...

4.3.1 Identify the locations of Mexican settlements in California and those of other settlements, including Fort Ross and Sutter's Fort

4.3.2 Compare how and why people traveled to California and the routes they traveled (e.g., James Beckwourth, Jedediah Smith, John C. Fremont)

Activity # 1 Early Settlements in California

Materials Needed for students: For each student, a blank *Outline Map of California* (Handout # 1.1) *List of Early Settlements* (Handout #1.2), map of California (textbook or atlas).

Procedure:

On a document camera or the board, display a list of the early 1800 settlements begun in California.

Sonoma (Mexican)

San Francisco (Yerba Buena) (Mexican)

San Jose (Mexican)

Monterey (Mexican)

Santa Barbara (Mexican)

Los Angeles (Mexican)

San Diego (Mexican)

Fort Ross (Russian)

Sutter's Fort (Swiss)

Using a California map, have students identify the locations of the early Mexican settlements in California and those of other settlements, including Fort Ross and Sutter's Fort.

On a blank **Outline Map of California** (*Handout #1.1*), plot and label each settlement using the *List of Settlements* (*Handout #1.2*)

Harcourt Reflections: Refer to page 157 for a map of Mexican Settlements in California, page 160 for information on Fort Ross, and page 199 for Sutter's Fort.

Have the students classify the settlements into two groups – one group for Mexican settlements and the second group for “other” settlements. This can be done in a T-chart format. Discuss how these settlements started – some came from presidios, forts, trading posts, harbors. On a corner of the map, create a symbol key for each type of settlement. Add the symbols to the map.

Activity # 2 Trailblazers to California

Materials needed for the teacher: photo of a beaver; large version of the *Trailblazer Retrieval Chart* (Handout # 1.2) either on a document camera, transparency or chart paper

Materials needed for each student: Copy of the *Trailblazer Retrieval Chart* (Handout #1.3); textbook; relief map of California or the United States; and, reference materials.

Harcourt Reflections Unit 3, Lesson 1 “Americans Move West,” pages 190 – 195.



Show the students a picture of a beaver and ask them to predict what it has to do with people coming to California. Explain that clothing, especially hats, made from beaver fur was very popular. Because of this, trappers headed west looking for new places to trap beaver. The trappers became the first people from the United States to find



overland routes into California. These trappers were referred to as “trailblazers.”

On a relief map of California or the United States, have students identify the natural barriers that made land travel into California difficult. Ask them to predict which routes the trappers and the others who came after them might have taken.

Have the 7 students who are portraying the furtrapper, James Beckwourth, James Ohio Pattie, Jedediah Strong Smith, Joseph Reddeford Walker, Ewing Young and Governor Jose Maria Echeandia present their *Living History Oral Presentation* to the class.

On a copy of the *Trailblazers Retrieval Chart* (Handout # 1.3), have the students list the dates for each trailblazer and write one or two facts about their trip to California during the early 1800s and the routes they traveled. Students may use textbooks, biographies, encyclopedias, and the internet to complete the chart.

Trailblazer Retrieval Chart

Who Came	Date	What Was the Result of His Trip
Jedediah Strong Smith	1826-1827	He was ordered to leave because Echeandia, the Mexican governor thought he was a spy. Smith and his men were the first from the U.S. to cross the Sierra Nevada from the west.
James & Sylvester Pattie	1827	Put in jail for entering California without permission.
Ewing Young	1830s	Helped develop the Old Spanish Trail from Santa Fe to Southern California.
Joseph Walker	1834	First American to pass the Sierra Nevada from the east. Walker Pass is named after him.
James Beckworth	1851	Found a new pass through the northern Sierra Nevada. Beckworth Pass is named after him.

As an alternative to the retrieval chart, have students create a “Little Book” to record the names of the trailblazers, dates, and information about each trailblazer’s trip.

Directions to Make a Little Book

1. Fold a sheet of blank paper in half horizontally.
2. Fold it in half again in the same direction.
3. Fold this long narrow strip in half in the opposite direction.
4. Open the paper up to the Step 2 position. Cut halfway down the vertical fold.
5. Open the paper up and turn it horizontally. There will be a slit in the center of the paper where you made the cut

6. Fold the paper in half lengthwise.
7. Push the ends of the paper until the center panels meet.
8. Fold the four pages into a book and crease the edge.

Activity # 3 Americans Move West

Materials needed: 5 sets of *Trailblazer Name Cards* (Handout #1.4), including James Beckwourth, James Ohio Pattie, Jedediah Strong Smith, Joseph Reddeford Walker, and Ewing Young.

Procedure:

Divide the class into 5 groups. Give each group a set of *Trailblazer Name Cards* (Handout #1.3). As you read the paragraphs below, each group must decide which trailblazer might have given each description and upon a signal from the teacher, raise the name card of the correct trailblazer.

1. In 1826, I led 17 men on a trapping expedition. Our expedition left from the Great Salt Lake area. We headed southwest and eventually reached the Colorado River. Then we made our way across the Mojave Desert. **Jedediah Strong Smith**
2. My father and I began an expedition in 1827. We were not welcome in California. We were put in jail. I was later freed, but my father died in jail. **James Ohio Pattie**
3. My travels in the 1830s helped develop the Old Spanish Trail. It ran from Santa Fe, New Mexico, to southern California. **Ewing Young**
4. I was the first American to cross the Sierra Nevada from the east. I found a pass through the mountains. The pass was later named after me. **Joseph Reddeford Walker**
5. In 1850, I found a new pass through the northern Sierra Nevada. The pass was later named after me. **James Beckwourth**

Source: Harcourt *Reflections* Homework and Practice Book, page 47.

Activity # 4 Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s

Materials needed: textbook, reference materials, a copy for each student of *Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s* (Handout #1.5)
Harcourt *Reflections* Unit 3, Lesson 2 “Trails to California,” pages 198 – 203

In this activity, students list early settlers who traveled to California during the early 1800s, the dates, from where they came, their destination, and the effects of their expedition.

Procedure:

Have the 8 students who are portraying early settlers Abel Sterns, John Augustus Sutter, John Marsh, John Bartleson, John Bidwell, John C. Fremont, George Donner, and Virginia Reed present their *Living History Oral Presentation* to the class.

Distribute a copy of *Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s* (Handout #1.4), to each student. They may work independently or together in pairs to complete the retrieval chart using their textbook, biographies, encyclopedias, and the internet.

Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s

Who Came? Date?	From where? How?	Destination?	What Were the Effects of the Expedition?
Abel Stearns 1829	Massachusetts Mexico	Los Angeles	Became the largest landowner in southern California
John Augustus Sutter 1839	Switzerland ship	Sacramento Valley New Helvetia	Established Sutter's Fort Provided food, supplies and sometimes jobs for overland travelers.
Bartleson- Bidwell Expedition 1841	Missouri Wagon train	Central Valley	One of the first overland groups. Their trail later became the California Trail
John C. Fremont 1842, 1844	United States Army Expedition	Explored and mapped Oregon Trail. Explored San Joaquin Valley	Wrote a book about travel to California. Became a national hero.
The Donner Party 1846	Missouri Wagon train	Sutter's Fort	For 3 months, they were trapped in the Sierra Nevada by heavy snow. Almost half of the party died.

Assessment

The major assessment for this lesson is for the students who portray an historic person for the class and at the *Living History Museum*. Refer to ***The Road to Statehood Living History Museum (pages 1-5)*** for a description of the requirements. The prompt and rubric are shown on page 4.

Additional assessment of this lesson is integrated with the instruction and occurs throughout the lesson. The focus questions provide a framework for the evaluation of the lesson. If desired, assemble student's work into a unit portfolio.

- On a blank ***Outline Map of California*** (Handout #1.1), plot and label the locations of the early Mexican settlements in California and those of other settlements, including Fort Ross and Sutter's Fort. Create a symbol key for the map.
- On a copy of the ***Trailblazers Retrieval Chart*** (Handout # 1.3) or a "Little Book," list the dates for each trailblazer and write one or two facts about their trip to California during the early 1800s and the routes they traveled.
- On a copy of ***Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s*** (Handout #5), list the dates, from where they came, their destination, and the effects of their expedition.

Outline Map of California



List of the Settlements begun in California
during the early 1800s

Sonoma

San Francisco (Yerba Buena)

San Jose

Monterey

Santa Barbara

Los Angeles

San Diego

Fort Ross

Sutter's Fort

Trailblazer Retrieval Chart

Who Came	Date/s	What Was the Result of His Trip
Jedediah Strong Smith		
James & Sylvester Pattie		
Ewing Young		
Joseph Walker		
James Beckworth		

Name _____ Date _____

Trailblazer Name Cards

James Beckwourth

James Ohio Pattie

Jedediah Strong Smith

Joseph Reddeford
Walker

Ewing Young

Trails to California - Early Settlers of the 1820s and 1830s

Who Came? Date?	From where? How?	Destination?	What Were the Effects of the Expedition?
Abel Stearns			
John Augustus Sutter			
Bartleson- Bidwell Expedition			
John C. Fremont			
The Donner Party			

Name _____ Date _____