

Lesson 2: Regions of California

Focus Question: What are the physical characteristics (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) that define the regions of California?

History-Social Science Standards

4.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.

- Describe the various regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environments (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) affect human activity.
- Identify the locations of the Pacific Ocean, rivers, valleys, and mountain passes and explain their effects on the growth of towns.
- Use maps, charts, and pictures to describe how regions [communities] in California vary in land use, vegetation, wildlife, climate...

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills: Chronological and Spatial Thinking

- Students use map and globe skills to determine the absolute locations of places and interpret information available through a map's or globe's legend, scale, and symbolic representations.
- Students judge the significance of the relative location of a place...

Activity #1 The Regions of California

Materials needed: Map of the Regions of California.

Harcourt Reflections refer to textbook page 20 and California Transparency 3

Houghton Mifflin California refer to page 22

Materials needed for each student:

Copy of **Handout #2.1 Regions of California**, textbook, crayons or colored pencils

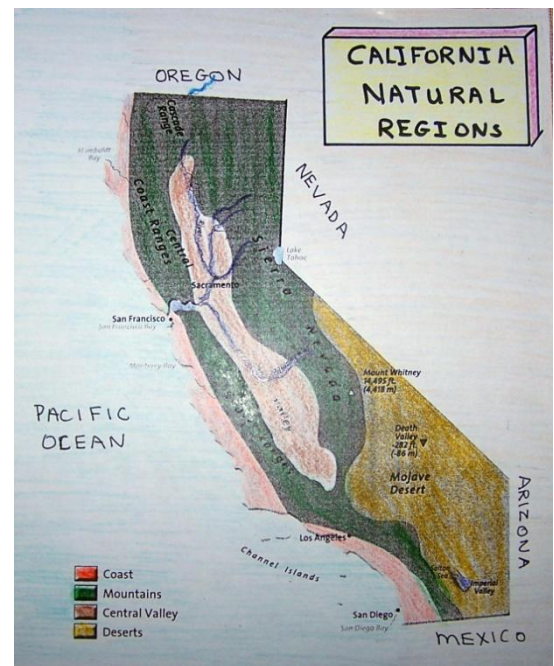
Procedure:

Using the *Regions of California* map in the student's textbook and/or a transparency of the regions, introduce the regions of California.

Ask students to examine the map. Use the information

contained in the map as a starting point for a discussion about the regions of California. Ask students to write one fact learned from the map.

Using **Handout #2.1 Regions of California**, crayons or colored pencils, and their textbook, have students color in the regions of California.



Activity #2 Preview the Organization of the Lesson

When students analyze the structure or organization of the lesson they are about to read, they develop positive self-efficacy – a “can-do” attitude – for the assignment and become engaged in the reading. Previewing the lesson helps the reader organize his or her schema about the topic prior to the actual reading. This allows the reader to feel confident that he or she now knows some of the information to be presented in the text. Once students know how to use it, the page layout in informational text serves a special comprehension function. It allows readers to move about the text, selecting pages that will provide the most assistance at accessing information with efficiency and comprehension.

Materials needed for each student:

Copy of *Lesson Structure: Previewing the Organization of a Lesson* (Handout #2.2)

Optional: As an alternative, try the *Scavenger Hunt* (Handout # 2.3)

Harcourt Reflections refer to textbook Unit 1, Lessons 2-5, pages 18 to 45

Houghton Mifflin California refer to textbook Unit 1, Lessons 3 & 4, pages 20 to 35

Model for students how to preview the lesson as students record information on their copy of Handout #2.2 or Handout #2.3.

(Optional) Scan and Write a Fact: Have students scan the lesson to find specific information such as the names of the regions of California. Students write the name of each region and one fact about it.

Activity 3 Retrieval Chart for the Regions of California

Materials needed for the teacher: transparency of each page of *Handout #2.4 Retrieval Chart Regions of California* or large sheets of poster board or butcher paper to construct a large version of the retrieval chart

Materials needed for each student: 4 copies of *Handout #2.4 Retrieval Chart Regions of California*, one for each region

Harcourt Reflections refer to textbook Unit 1, Lessons 2-5, pages 18 to 45

Houghton Mifflin California refer to textbook Unit 1, Lessons 3 & 4, pages 20 to 35

Procedure:

Distribute to students 4 copies of *Handout #2.4 Retrieval Chart Regions of California*.

Read the Lesson: It is recommended that once you have previewed the lesson, you read it together with the students. Model how to identify the main idea and the details.

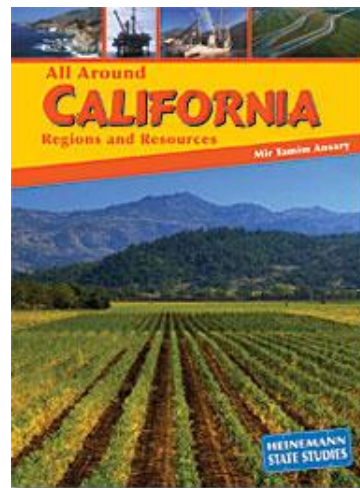
Record Information on the Retrieval Chart: Scan the text for information to be recorded onto the retrieval chart and then write notes on the chart, not complete sentences. It is recommended that as the students complete their retrieval chart, the teacher records the same information on a copy of each page of the retrieval chart or constructs a large version of the retrieval chart on poster board or on an overhead transparency.

It will take 1-2 days to read each lesson in the textbook and to record the appropriate information on the retrieval charts. All lessons need to be read before the charts will be complete as each lesson covers only part of the information needed for each retrieval chart.

Use a Variety of Resources:

In addition to the textbook, encourage students to use a variety of other resources to complete the retrieval charts for the regions of California.

All Around California – Regions and Resources by Mir Tamim Ansary contains all kinds of fun and fascinating facts about the regions of California and their valuable resources. You'll find colorful maps that help you locate California's regions and understand their features. You will learn about the many natural and man-made resources of the state and how they affect its economy.



Internet Resources for the Regions of California:

http://ceres.ca.gov/geo_area/bioregion_index.html This website is recommended to help students complete the retrieval charts for each region. Called *California Bioregions*, environmental information is listed by geographic area including location, cities and people; tourist attractions, industries; climate and geography; and, plants and wildlife.

<http://www.learncalifornia.org/doc.asp?id=88> This website contains *A California Regions Online Lesson*. Students work in groups to research and then make a presentation telling the class what their region has to offer as a site for a movie or television series. Student directions and a Student Research Form are included.

Note: Once the retrieval charts have been completed, it is important for students to have a purpose for utilizing the information. Information recorded on the retrieval charts will be useful for constructing a mural or diorama in the next unit on the American Indians of California.

Options for using the retrieval charts for writing activities are detailed in the Extended Activities section of this lesson. These options include writing an essay on the four regions of California or on just one of the regions; writing a summary; and/or planning a trip to a region and writing a postcard from the region.

Activity #4 Daily Geography – Three in a Row

For this game, a three-by-three square grid (like tic-tac-toe) should be drawn on the chalkboard or whiteboard. A bank of 20 to 30 questions should be prepared about major topics in the unit. Refer to *Handout # 2.5 Daily Geography* for a sample list of questions.

Remind students that CA is the postal abbreviation for California. To play the game, divide the class into two groups – the “C” group and the “A” group. Each group should assign a spokesperson to answer questions.

Begin by asking a question to the “C” group. The group should be given one minute to confer before giving their answer. If the answer is correct the “C” group earns the chance to put a “C” in one of the squares in the grid on the board. If the answer is incorrect the “A” group gets a chance to steal the answer and put an “A” in one of the squares.

The goal of the game is to get three letters in a row on the board. If no group is able to get three in a row then the group with the most letters on the board wins.

To maximize student participation in this game, have each student number a sheet of notebook paper from 1 to 20. As questions are asked each student writes down his/her answer before the team “huddles” together to discuss the answer. As the correct answer is revealed, students may cross out any incorrect answers and write the correct answer on their sheet.

The teacher may wish to only ask a few questions each day. If so, keep the grid on the board and have students keep their answer sheets in their desk until all questions have been covered.

As a variation, play **California Trivia**. Divide the class into two groups. Give each student in each group a number. Then call up the number ones from each group. Ask each student a question. For each correct answer, give the team one point. If a student answers incorrectly, no points are gained or lost. Continue until everyone has had a turn to attempt to answer a question. At the end of the game, tally up the points; the team with the most points wins. To maximize participation, have all students keep an answer sheet and write down the answer to each question before the student contestant answers.

As students get more proficient in California geography and history, allot the groups 5-10 minutes to formulate questions. After the questions have been written, collect the questions from both groups. Ask each student a question written by the opposing group.

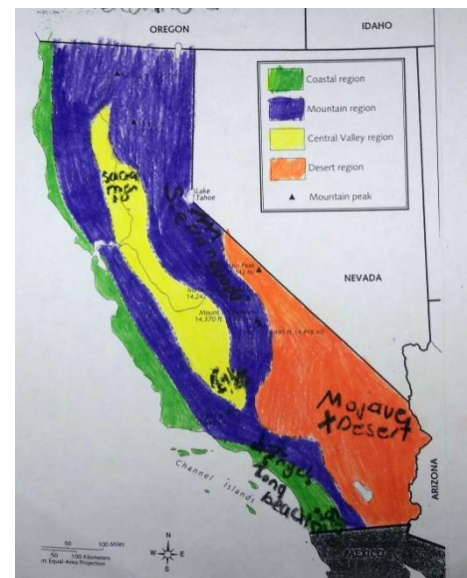
ASSESSMENT

The major assessment for Lesson 1 includes the Regions of California map (*Handout # 2.1*).

Additional assessment of the standard includes student’s progress on the *Retrieval Charts - Regions of California*

Refer to the Extended Activities section for additional activities:

- Daily sentence writing
- California Region essay
- Summary Paragraph
- Let’s Take a Trip with Postcard
- Climate and Weather – Daily Weather Log



Good website for the geography of California:

http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/ca_geography.htm

Regions of California



Lesson Structure: Previewing the Organization of a Lesson

Textbook Feature:	Information:
Lesson # and Title Page #'s	
What to Know	
Objectives – What I have to be able to do.	
Vocabulary	
Boldface Subheadings (List)	
Illustrations and their captions, including photographs, drawings, cartoons, paintings, maps, documents, other...	
Summary	
Review	
Reading Skill	

Based on the information gathered above, what will the lesson be about?

Scavenger Hunt

Subject:	Chapter:	Lesson:	Pages:
Titles, subtitles	_____		

What to Know	_____		

Vocabulary	_____		

Visual aids (charts, maps, photos, graphs pictures)	_____		

Reading Check pg.		Skill:	
Question:		_____	
Answer:		_____	
_____		_____	
Reading Check pg.		Skill:	
Question:		_____	
Answer:		_____	
_____		_____	
Reading Check pg.		Skill:	
Question:		_____	
Answer:		_____	
_____		_____	

Retrieval Chart: _____ **Region of California**

Location	
Climate	
Natural Features	
Natural Resources	
Industry	
Recreation	
Other	

Daily Geography

1. On which continent is California located? (North America)
2. In which two hemispheres is California located? (Western Hemisphere and Northern Hemisphere)
3. Which three states border California? (Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona)
4. Geographers often divide California into four natural regions. What are the names of the four regions? (Coastal, Mountain, Central Valley, and Desert Regions)
5. Where are the two largest natural harbors in California? (San Francisco Bay and San Diego Bay)
6. Which mountain ranges follow California's coastline? (Coast Ranges)
7. What is the name of California's highest mountain peak? (Mount Whitney)
8. What are the names of the two rivers that flow through the Central Valley of California? (San Joaquin River and Sacramento River)
9. What is the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere? (Death Valley)
10. The world's tallest trees are found in California. What are these trees called? (California redwoods)
11. In what two natural regions have most of California citizens settled? (Coastal and Central Valley Regions)
12. Which natural region of California is home to about three-fifths of the state's farmland? (Central Valley Region)
13. What country forms a border with California? (Mexico)
14. What degree is the latitude of the equator? (0 degrees latitude)
15. At what degree longitude is the prime meridian? (0 degrees longitude)
16. Which continent is located in all four hemispheres? (Africa)
17. What is California's largest mountain range? (Sierra Nevada)
18. What are the names of two of California's valleys located in the desert region near the Mexican border? (Imperial Valley and Coachella Valley)
19. What are the names of the Earth's northernmost point and its southernmost point? (North Pole and the South Pole)
20. In what directions do the lines of latitude go? (latitude lines run east and west – they measure degrees north and south of the equator)

Adapted from *Social Studies in Action – Resources in the Classroom*, Harcourt School Publishers