

Sample Unit Overview: California 1850-1950

Grade	4
Unit Title (unifying topic)	California Becomes Golden: Farming & Industry Grows from 1850-1950
Enduring Understanding (for the teacher)	California became an industrial and agricultural power starting the mid-nineteenth century as many diverse peoples migrated to the state for a myriad of reasons and events.
Essential Question(s) (for the students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did California become an agricultural and industrial power between 1850 and 1950? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did gold “fever” make California grow and change so quickly? ■ What attracted so many different immigrants to California during the early 1900s? ■ What effects did the Dust Bowl migration have on California? ■ What made California so important for defending the country during World War II?
Culminating Project (Text Type)	<p>@ 8 weeks - Students will produce a documentary showcasing either:</p> <p>(1) how the arrival and/or contributions of an immigrant group influenced California, OR</p> <p>(2) how the state transformed itself to become an agricultural or industrial power</p> <p>@ 6 weeks - Performance task: Write an opinion piece on whether or not people are coming to California today for the same reasons as during the Dust Bowl.</p>
Unit Standards: History / SS	<p>4.4 <i>Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power, tracing the transformation of the California economy and its political and cultural development since the 1850s.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the story and lasting influence of the Pony Express, Overland Mail Service, Western Union, and the building of the transcontinental railroad, including the contributions of Chinese workers to its construction. 2. Explain how the Gold Rush transformed the economy of California, including the types of products produced and consumed, changes in towns (e.g., Sacramento, San Francisco), and economic conflicts between diverse groups of people.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Discuss immigration and migration to California between 1850 and 1900, including the diverse composition of those who came; the countries of origin and their relative locations; and conflicts and accords among the diverse groups (e.g., the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act). 4. Describe rapid American immigration, internal migration, settlement, and the growth of towns and cities (e.g., Los Angeles). 5. Discuss the effects of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and World War II on California. 6. Describe the development and locations of new industries since the turn of the century, such as the aerospace industry, electronics industry, large-scale commercial agriculture and irrigation projects, the oil and automobile industries, communications and defense industries, and important trade links with the Pacific Basin. 7. Trace the evolution of California’s water system into a network of dams, aqueducts, and reservoirs. 8. Describe the history and development of California’s public education system, including universities and community colleges. 9. Analyze the impact of twentieth-century Californians on the nation’s artistic and cultural development, including the rise of the entertainment industry (e.g., Louis B.Meyer, Walt Disney, John Steinbeck, Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, John Wayne).
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UNIT TIME FRAME	TIMELINE	HISTORICAL TOPICS	RELEVANT POPULATIONS
10 days	1850-1899	Gold Rush , Railroad, Pony Express, Statehood	Chinese
10 days	1900-1929	Migration , Immigrants, Agricultural, Film Industry, Stock Market Crash, Education System	Mexican Western European Far East Asian
10 days	1930-1939	Dust Bowl , Great Depression, Irrigation	MidWesterner, esp. Oklahoma
10 days	1940-1950	Defense Industry , World War II	Japanese African American

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WEEKS 5-6 DETAILS	
Common Core Grade Level ELA/ELD Standards	See other document entitled “Full Unit Notes”
Related Content Standards	<p>4.4 <i>Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power, tracing the transformation of the California economy and its political and cultural development since the 1850s.</i></p> <p>4.4.5 Discuss the effects of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and World War II on California.</p>
Motivating Introduction	<p>Students will be engaged by:</p> <p>(1) watching a documentary about the times</p> <p>(2) using technology to create a documentary</p>
Anchor Texts	<p>...Children of the Dust Days - Karen Mueller Coombs</p> <p>Rose’s Journal, ...</p>