

Literacy Activity for Inquiry Sets 4.2a, 4.2b, and 4.2c

Teacher Directions: The three California missions inquiry sets focus on life before and during the mission system with an emphasis on helping build student understanding for how native peoples in California responded to the changes in their work, their environment, and the introduction of a new belief system - sometimes adapting to, sometimes resisting, and always helping shape how these changes unfolded. Students have the opportunity to investigate the perspectives of those involved in the missions, from indigenous groups to the Spanish missionaries and soldiers engaged in a colonizing venture. Through careful analysis of the individual primary and secondary sources, students can begin to understand how the lives of Native Californians changed during the mission era.

In total, there are 18 different sources in this three-part inquiry set. Analyzing just one of the three sets will take considerable time, especially given the fact that this set is designed for students in the fourth grade. However, given the importance of this subject, both in our state and national history, we believe that providing students with sufficient time and support to understand this period both acknowledges the importance of this topic and sets the necessary foundation for further historical study. It is vitally important that California students understand the impact of the Spanish mission system on Native Californians, the natural environment, and the state's development.

To facilitate your students' analysis of these sources, we've developed a three-part strategy to guide their investigation, which simulates the work of teams of investigative reporters: 1) students analyze the raw data, 2) students organize the data into categories, to develop their interpretation(s), and 3) students share their findings with their classmates, teachers, and parents.

Special note: this project is a group assignment that requires students to work collaboratively with close monitoring, feedback, and if necessary, redirection from the teacher. It is not a take home assignment and should be completed in class.

On the following pages, you'll find a step-by-step process designed to take students through each of these three parts. We think there are two ways to conduct this investigation:

- **Full Investigation.** In the full investigation, each group analyzes sources from each of the three sets. The group uses this larger investigation to develop their answer to the question: *How did the Spanish mission system impact California people and its environment?* After analyzing the sources and organizing their research, all groups present publicly.
- **Short-version Investigation.** In the short-version investigation, each group analyzes sources from one of the three sets. After analyzing the sources and organizing their research, all groups present publicly. Each group conducts a more narrow investigation to develop their answer to **one** of the following questions:
 - Traditions, Beliefs, and Health (set 4.2a): *How did the missions impact California Indian traditions and beliefs?* The sources in this set give clues to the impact of the missions on native traditions and beliefs.
 - Environment and the Economy (set 4.2b): *How did the missions change the environment and the economy in California, and what did this mean for California Indians?* The sources in this set give clues to the impact of the missions on the natural environment and the economy.
 - Perspectives (set 4.2c): *How did the various people living in California experience the missions?* The sources in this set illustrated the differing perspectives of Spanish missionaries, the Spanish military, and native peoples in California.

Whether you choose to have your students conduct a full or short-version investigation, the strategy is the same:

1. Students are put into groups of 3-4.
2. Tell students that each group represents an investigative reporting team, whose task is to develop a report that tells the real story of the California missions. Optional: have students develop a fictional name and logo for their television station or media website.
 - a. If you have students complete a full investigation: tell students their job is to answer the following question: *How did the Spanish mission system impact California people and its environment?*
 - b. If you have students complete a short-version investigation: have 1/3 of the groups answer one question, 1/3 answer the second question, and 1/3 answer the third:
 - i. Traditions, Beliefs, and Health (set 4.2a): *How did the missions impact California Indian traditions and beliefs?*
 - ii. Environment and the Economy (set 4.2b): *How did the missions change the environment and the economy in California, and what did this mean for California Indians?*
 - iii. Perspectives (set 4.2c): *How did the various people living in California experience the missions?*
3. Pass out one set of sources / group.
4. Pass out multiple copies of *Student Handout 1: The Reporters' Notebook*. Before students begin their analysis, demonstrate how to complete the collection sheet as a full class.
 - a. Have each group complete one *Reporters' Notebook* sheet for each source.
 - b. Post *Student Handout 2: Definitions* on the wall (or project on the screen). Go over these terms with students to make sure they understand what they need to focus on as they analyze the set's sources.
 - c. Circulate during their analysis of the primary sources to make sure students are able to connect the source with the investigative question at hand.
5. Provide each group with a large piece of butcher paper.* Using *Student Handout 3: Source Organization* template, help students classify or organize their sources into topics / ideas / or themes. Should students need assistance, you may want to consider guiding their discussions around the following categories:
 - a. Traditions, Beliefs, and Health (set 4.2a): *How did the missions impact California Indian traditions and beliefs?* The sources in this set give clues to the impact of the missions on native traditions and beliefs.
 - b. Environment and the Economy (set 4.2b): *How did the missions change the environment and the economy in California, and what did this mean for California Indians?* The sources in this set give clues to the impact of the missions on the natural environment and the economy.
 - c. Perspectives (set 4.2c): *How did the various people living in California experience the missions?* The sources in this set illustrated the differing perspectives of Spanish missionaries, the Spanish military, and indigenous peoples.
6. Before students move onto the development of their reports, each group will need to meet with the teacher, or "their Editor." Ask each group to explain their butcher paper organization / categories. If needed, correct misunderstandings or assumptions, and make sure that they can connect their "thesis" to evidence from their assigned sources.
7. Students use *Student Handout 4: Preparing your Report*, to conceptualize, prepare, and present their findings to their editor (you), their peers (their classmates), and the public (parents and other educators).

*Note: This poster activity has been adapted from a pre-writing strategy developed by Daniel Diaz and Cindy Mata at the UCLA History-Geography Project, <https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/history-geography/curriculum-resources/>.