

Family Newsletter for Unit 2

Exploration and Colonization

Learn About It

In this unit, your child will learn:

- about the exploration of California and the factors that led to its colonization
- how Mexico gained its independence from Spain and how American pioneers crossed the country to settle in California

Here are some ways that you can help your child learn:

Talk About It

Chapter 3: Spanish California

Conquistadors Discuss the early California explorers and how they changed the culture and ways of life of California Indians. Talk about how these early Spanish settlements were located in what are now major cities in California, and how these cities have changed since then.

Chapter 4: Mexican California

Independence and Growth Many changes came about in California after Mexico won its freedom from Spanish rule. Discuss how some of the changes, such as ranchos and pueblos, created a thriving economy in California and led to more American settlers moving into the area.

Make It

Letter Work with your child to write a letter that an early California settler might have written to family members living back east. Have the letter tell about trading opportunities at the coastal pueblos in California.

Read to Learn More About It

The California Missions (First Books—Examining the Past), by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk. An informational book about the founding, functions, and people of the early California missions.

Rachel's Journey: The Story of a Pioneer Girl, by Marissa Moss. The story of a ten-year-old girl who leaves her home in Illinois and travels with her family across the country in a covered wagon.

When the Mission Padre Came to the Rancho: The Early California Adventures of Rosalinda and Simon Delgado (I Am American), by Gare Thompson. A story that follows the life of a California missionary and his wife during the time of ranchos and California missions in the early 1800s.



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