

# CALIFORNIA MUSEUM

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## CALIFORNIA MISSIONS ACTIVITY

A free [Online Learning](#) activity aligned with  
Common Core & State Content standards for 3rd-5th grades

**OVERVIEW:**

In this activity, learners will analyze maps, graphs, and images to learn more about the California Missions and their impact on Native Californian communities. Many of these resources come from the [California Missions: A Journey Along El Camino Royal](#) exhibit at the California Museum.

**APPROPRIATE FOR:**

3rd-5th grades

**OBJECTIVES:**

In this activity, learners will:

- Interpret a map and graph about the Mission period in California
- Learn about the impact of Missions on the lives of Native Californians
- Analyze artistic representations of figures from the Mission period in California.

**DIRECTIONS:**

View the map, graph, and photograph and answer the questions provided.

**TIME:**

30 minutes

**MATERIALS:**

- Map, graph, and photograph on pages 3, 5, and 6, respectively.

**STANDARDS:****Common Core**

*Reading informational Text, Integration of Knowledge and ideas*

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|-----|--|
| 3-5 | Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g. in charts, graphs, diagrams, etc) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. |
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**History-Social Science California State Content Standards**

*Chronological and Spatial Thinking*

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|-----|---|
| 3-5 | 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.   |
| 3-5 | Students judge the significance of the relative location of a place (e.g., proximity to a harbor, on trade routes) and analyze how relative advantages or disadvantages can change over time. |

*Historical Interpretation*

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|-----|---|
| 3-5 | Students identify and interpret the multiple causes and effects of historical events. |
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*Grade Level Content Area Connections**Standard*

- 3.2.4 Discuss the interaction of new settlers with the already established Indians of the region.
- 3.4.6 Describe the lives of American heroes who took risks to secure our freedoms
- 4.2.4 Describe the mapping of, geographic basis of, and economic factors in the placement and function of the Spanish missions; and understand how the mission system expanded the influence of Spain and Catholicism throughout New Spain and Latin America.
- 4.2.5 Describe the daily lives of the people, native and nonnative, who occupied the presidios, missions, ranchos, and pueblos.

Thank you for downloading this Online Learning resource! We hope you and your students enjoy using it. For additional downloadable resources in our free program, visit the [Online Learning](#) page on our website. For help or questions, contact the education department at [reservations@californiamuseum.org](mailto:reservations@californiamuseum.org).

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## PART 1: MAP SKILLS

### Background Information

The California missions were established along the coast of what is now California between 1769 and 1833 by Catholic missionaries, under the order of King Carlos III of Spain. Spain had already claimed the west coast of North America, but in 1769 they began their project of building permanent missions to help hold the land for Spain, and begin the work of converting the Native American communities who were already there to Christianity.

### DIRECTIONS:

Use the map on page 4, from the *California Missions: A Journey Along El Camino Royal* exhibit, to answer the following questions.

### Questions

1. Write the name of the mission farthest north:
  
  
2. Write the name of the mission farthest south:
  
  
3. If it takes one day of travel by horse between each mission, how many days would it take to travel from:
  - a. San Luis Obispo to Soledad?
  
  
  - b. San Fernando to Santa Inez?
  
  
4. Why do you think the Spanish chose to build the 21 missions along the coast?



## PART 2: GRAPHING SKILLS

### DIRECTIONS:

Read “Native Peoples and the Missions.” Look at the graph on page 6 to answer the following questions.

#### **Native Peoples and the Missions**

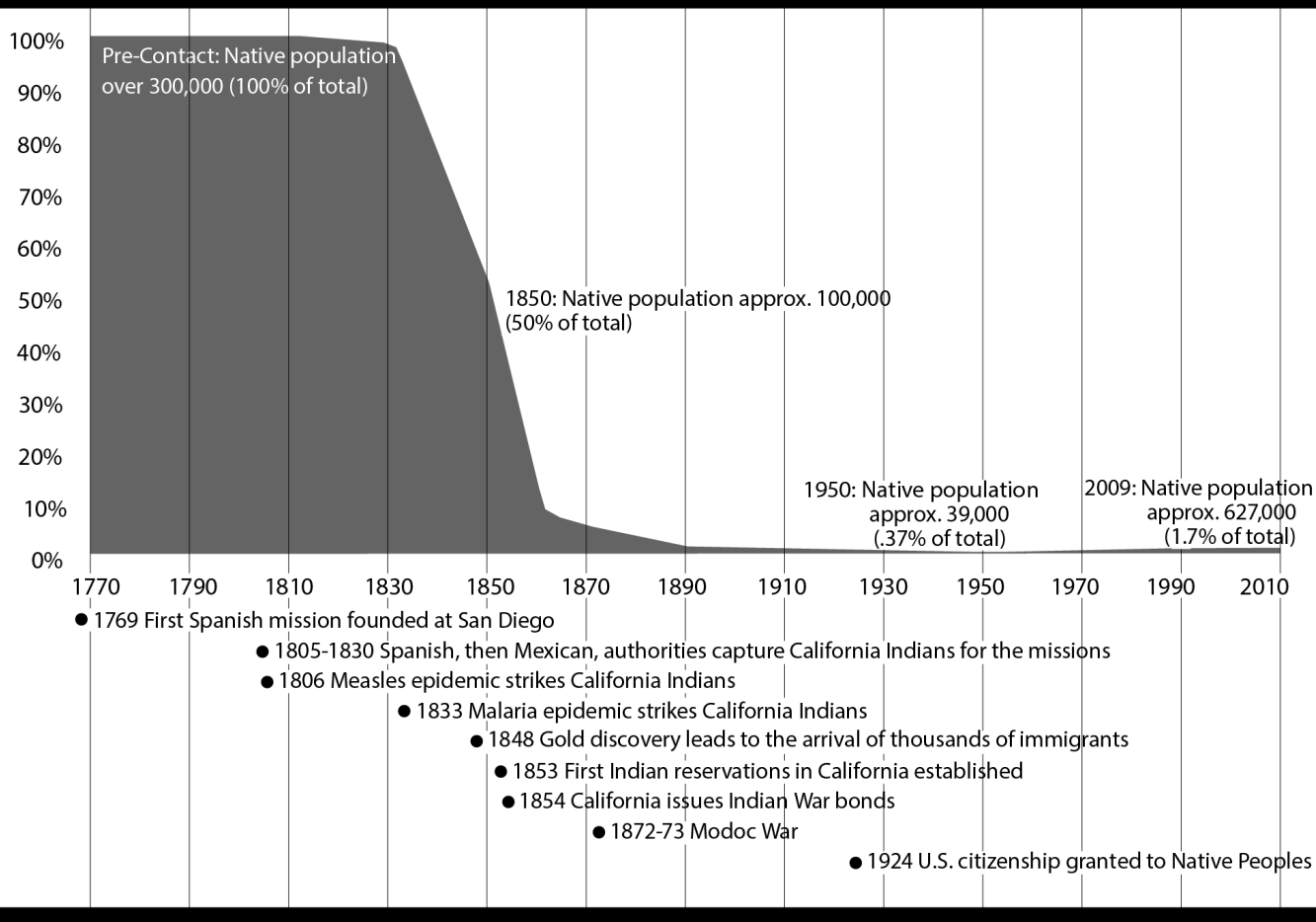
Many California Indians came to the missions out of curiosity, converted to Christianity, and stayed to work and be educated. Contact with this completely new culture was generally hard on them, and the unintentional introduction of foreign diseases, to which they had little resistance, was devastating. Disruption of traditional ways of life, breakup of families, and hunger forced many more Indians to join the missions. There, they lived in crowded conditions and worked long hours. Many Indians ran away, but then were homeless because traditional village life had been disrupted by the missions. Relationships between tribes shifted with the introduction of new plants and animals like cattle and horses, and new trade goods such as glass, metal, and guns.

#### **Native Peoples and the Missions, continued**

Not all California Indians were directly impacted by the missions, however, and not all went into mission service peacefully. There were several major revolts. In 1775, Kumeyaay Indians rebelled at San Diego, killing the padre. Toyupurina (1760-1799), a female Tongva tribal leader, led an unsuccessful revolt against Mission San Gabriel.

## POPULATION TIMELINE

### California Indians as a percentage of California's total population



### Questions:

1. How many Native Californians lived in California in 1770?
2. How many Native Californians lived in California in 1850?
3. Did the Native population of California increase or decrease between the years 1770 and 1950?

4. What are some reasons why the population increased or decreased?

## PART 3: ART ANALYSIS

### DIRECTIONS:

View and read about the mural and analyze it using the following questions.



*Conoce Tus Raices* by Raul González, Ricardo Estrada, and Joséph "Nuke" Montalvo

### About the Mural

This mural is located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood in East Los Angeles. It features Toypurina, a woman of the Tongva tribe who helped organize a revolt at the San Gabriel Mission in 1785. Toypurina organized with Native Californians living in the San Gabriel Mission, called *neophytes*, and across eight villages in the areas around the Mission. They were fighting against the brutal conditions of forced labor that neophytes had to do to build and maintain the Mission, tend the land the missionaries took for the mission and to raise cattle, and against the way missionaries were preventing Native Californians from maintaining their own cultural traditions and religious practices.

