

## Introduction

Exploring the United States: Timelines, Critical Thinking, and Map Work Volume 4 explores the states of California, Minnesota, Oregon, Kansas, West Virginia, Nevada, Nebraska, Colorado, North Dakota, and South Dakota. It's ideal for 9th-12th grade. A short introduction to each state is provided along with 20 facts that the students must arrange in a timeline. Five critical thinking questions are also included for each state, challenging the students to do independent research and form their own conclusions regarding important issues and events in the state's past as well as current events.

Each state's map work includes an outline of the state on which students can draw the location of major cities, bodies of water, mountains, and bordering states or bodies of water. The location of these places does not need to be exact; the exercise is meant to help students become familiar with the approximate location of the places and their relation to each other.

Each book concludes with 10 additional state chronology projects that combine timeline information for all 10 states covered in the unit.

Get ready for a deeper look at the history of ten of our United States!

## September 9, 1850 California Becomes a State

The area that is now the state of California was first colonized by the Spanish. The Spanish started the first military fort at present-day San Diego. Even Russia established a fort on the northern coast of California. The state became a province of Mexico after Mexico became independent from Spain. Although the United States wanted to buy the land that made up California, Mexico would not sell. When the Mexican American War ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States finally received the land, along with a great deal of other land Mexico had occupied. California became the 31st state of the Union on September 9, 1850. Some famous people from California include Sally Ride, Allyson Felix, Venus Williams, April Ross, Missy Franklin, Earl Warren, Peggy Fleming, Landon Donovan, Florence Joyner, Shirley Temple, Joe DiMaggio, Vince Guaraldi, and Jeff Gordon.

Look at the map of California on the next page. Add the capital of California to the map. Locate the cities of Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, Anaheim, Long Beach, Bakersfield, Fresno, Stockton and Santa Ana and add them to the map. Next, add the Klamath Mountains, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the Cascade Mountains, along with Mount Whitney, Lassen Peak, and Mount Shasta. Also, locate the Sacramento River, San Joaquin River, Colorado River, Tuolumne River, Feather River, Lake Tahoe, Owens Lake, and Searles Lake, and add them. Lastly, label the states, provinces, or bodies of water that border California.



**California**



# Timeline of California History

Use the facts on the following page to complete the timeline.

1542

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1770

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1776

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1812

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1822

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1826

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1841

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1846

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1848

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1850

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1853

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1869

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1873

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1906

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1915

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1937

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1945

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1955

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1965

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1989

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1. California becomes a province of Mexico
2. The first transcontinental railroad is completed and links Sacramento with the eastern part of the United States
3. The Russians found Fort Ross on the northern coast of California
4. The Golden Gate Bridge is completed
5. The Bear Flag Revolt occurs
6. California becomes the thirty-first state
7. Disneyland opens
8. Gaspar de Portolá begins a military post at Monterey
9. American settlers come in an organized group by land for the first time to settle in California
10. A serious earthquake hits the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose area
11. Spanish settlers found a fort and mission at present-day San Francisco
12. Racial violence breaks out in Watts, a section of Los Angeles
13. Gold is discovered in California at Sutter's Mill
14. First test of the cable car system in San Francisco occurs
15. Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo becomes the first known European to see the California coast
16. Representatives meet in San Francisco to approve the United Nations Charter
17. An earthquake destroys much of San Francisco
18. California sponsors the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco
19. Jedediah Strong Smith becomes the first American explorer to reach California by land
20. The California Academy of Sciences is founded in San Francisco

Critical Thinking Question #1

Do some research on the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Why were immigrants brought in to help with the building of the railroad? How did feelings toward the immigrant population change after the railroad was finished? How were these changing feelings dealt with?

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