

DO *California!*

by Amy Headley
and Victoria Smith



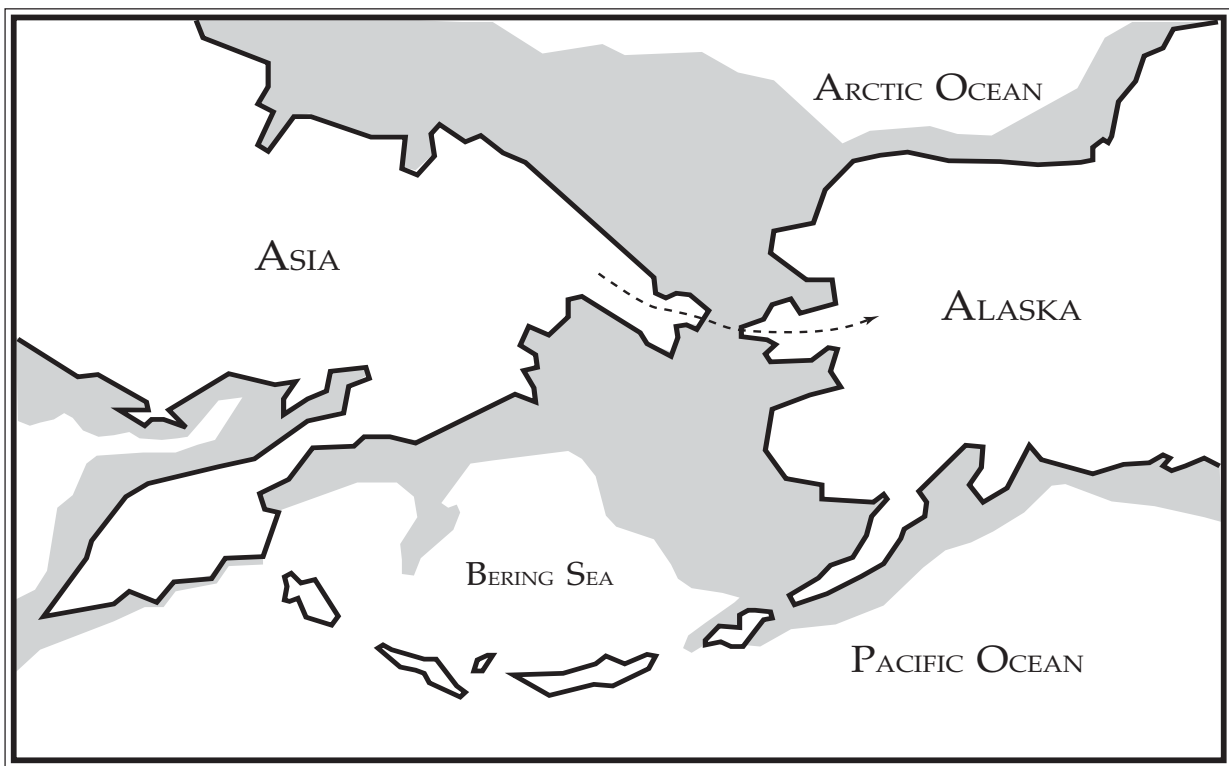


CALIFORNIA'S FIRST PEOPLE



The first humans to live in **North America** and the area now known as the state of California were hunters. **Archaeologists** (ar•kee•OL•uh•jists) believe that these hunters were originally from the **continent** of Asia. They entered North America by walking across the Bering Land Bridge.

The Bering Land Bridge was actually a strip of frozen land that was 1,000 miles wide. It connected northeast Asia to western Alaska thousands of years ago. Wild animals crossed back and forth over the Bering Land Bridge. The Asian people followed the animals into North America. When the ice melted, the frozen bridge disappeared and the water raised the level of the sea. The people who followed the animals into North America had no way to get back to Asia. They continued following the wild animals throughout North America. Some of these people settled in California.



FAST FACTS:



- In 1728, Russian explorer and sea captain Vitus Bering was sent to the North Pacific to find out if North America and Asia were connected by land. Vitus Bering sailed around the northeast corner of Asia, proving that there was water between Asia and North America.
- In 1741, Vitus Bering returned to the North Pacific with his crew of 10,000 men on a journey to find and make maps of the west coast of America.

CALIFORNIA'S EARLY NATIVE AMERICANS

California's first people arrived about 12,000 years ago from the north and the east. Over the next **centuries**, these people crossed California's steep mountains and dry deserts in search of food and shelter. We call their descendants Native Americans. Long before the arrival of Spanish explorers, there were about 300,000 Native Americans living in 22 separate tribes throughout California. More than 135 different languages were spoken by California's first people.

California's early tribes of Native Americans can be divided into six regions or **culture** areas. They included the Northwestern, Northeastern, Central, Great Basin, Southern, and Colorado River cultures. Each culture spoke its own language and had its own way of life. The daily lives of each culture depended upon the climate, plants, and animals available in each area. Tall mountain ranges and huge desert areas separated the cultures and made it difficult to travel long distances and come in contact with one another.

THE NORTHWESTERN CULTURES

The Hupa (HOO•puh), Shasta, and Yurok cultures once inhabited the northwestern corner of California. The Hupa lived in the Hoopa Valley along the Trinity River. The Shasta lived along the upper Klamath River in the northernmost part of California. The Yurok lived along the lower Klamath River on the Pacific Coast of northwestern California. The Northwestern cultures found more than enough food in this part of California. Twice a year they fished for king salmon along the rivers of their territory. They also hunted and gathered shellfish, plants, and acorns from the oak trees.



The Northwestern cultures lived in small villages where they built houses out of cedar or oak planks. Their houses were **submerged** partly beneath the ground over a pit that ran the entire length of their **dwellings**. Each house had a fire **hearth** in the center, a small round doorway in one corner, and a porch made out of stone.

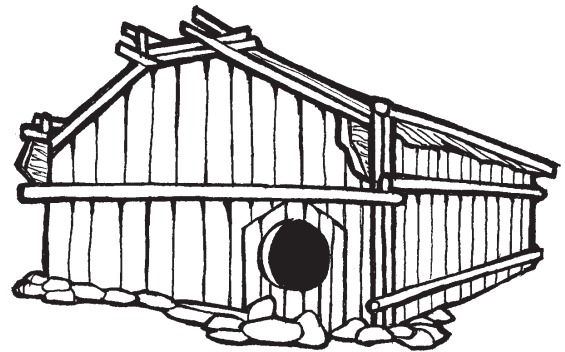
The Northwestern cultures were considered wealthy because of the available resources in this part of California.

The richest men in the

Northwestern tribes were the leaders. Wealth was based upon the number of woodpecker scalps, white deerskins, and seashells that a man owned. These items were treated like money and could be used to buy other things that the tribes needed. Trade was very important to the Northwestern cultures. They often traveled as far as northern Asia to trade for iron to make knives.

The Northwestern cultures made very good use of the cedar trees that grew in thick forests throughout the region. Houses big enough to hold large families and canoes that were strong enough to travel the ocean on fishing trips were made from cedar trees. Blankets and rugs were woven from the fiber of the cedar bark. Tools, baskets, and bowls were made from cedar trees as well.

The Northwestern cultures also made totem poles from cedar trees. Totem poles were carved with pictures of family history and showed faces of animal and human spirits that helped the Native Americans throughout their lives. They were created to mark land owned by different tribes, to honor the dead, or in celebration of important events.



NORTHWESTERN PLANK HOUSE

THE NORTHEASTERN CULTURES

The Modoc (MOE•doc) and Achumawi (uh•KOE•muh•we) cultures lived in northeastern California. The Modoc people originally lived around the Klamath and Tule lakes. The Achumawi inhabited the area along the Pit River in the far northeastern corner of California. Both groups depended upon fish, acorns, roots, and vegetables that they grew in the river valleys. Deer was plentiful in northeastern California. Deep pits were dug to trap the deer which provided food and clothing for the Northeastern cultures.

To protect themselves from the cold winter climate in this part of California, the Northeastern cultures built their winter homes partly below the ground. More than six feet of snow often fell upon these earth covered dwellings during the coldest winter months.

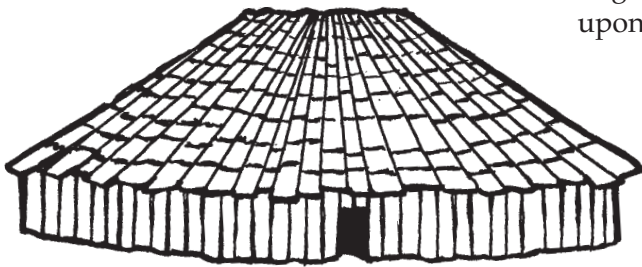
During the summer, the Northeastern cultures built cone-shaped houses made of poles that they covered with mats made of **tule** reeds. The Modoc also built "sweat houses" where men could cleanse themselves by sweating everyday. Sweathouses were also used for praying and other religious ceremonies.



THE CENTRAL CULTURES

The Central cultures included the Pomo, Maidu (MY•doo), Miwok (MEE•wahk), and Yokut people. These cultures lived along the Pacific Ocean, beside the rivers, and in the mountains of central California. Those tribes that lived near water were supplied with plenty of shellfish and salmon. Acorns from the oak trees were another important source of food for the Central cultures. The women used stones to pound dried acorns into powder. The powder was used to make cakes or boiled to make cereal. To gather their food, both the men and women of the Central cultures wove baskets that were so well made they could hold tiny seeds and even water without leaking.

The Central cultures built their villages far apart to give themselves plenty of room to hunt and gather food. Many different types of dwellings were built depending upon the resources available and the type of climate.



MIWOK DWELLING

The Miwok people, for example, built round dwellings covered with thick planks of bark from the forest's trees. The Pomo covered their bowl-shaped houses with three layers of plants, bark, and tule. The Maidu built dwellings that were partly below ground and covered with dirt and clay to keep out the sun's heat. The Yokut built single family dwellings that were oval-shaped and covered with tule mats. Larger houses in the Yokut villages had steep roofs and held up to ten families at a time.



THE GREAT BASIN CULTURES

The Paiute (PIE•yoot) and Shoshone (show•SHOW•nee) peoples lived along the eastern edge of California. The land in the Great Basin contained large hills, some as much as a mile high, with low valleys in between. A dry climate in this area of California made it difficult for the Great Basin cultures to find food and water. As a result, most of their time was spent moving from one place to another in an effort to find food. This didn't leave much free time for religious ceremonies or recreational activities.

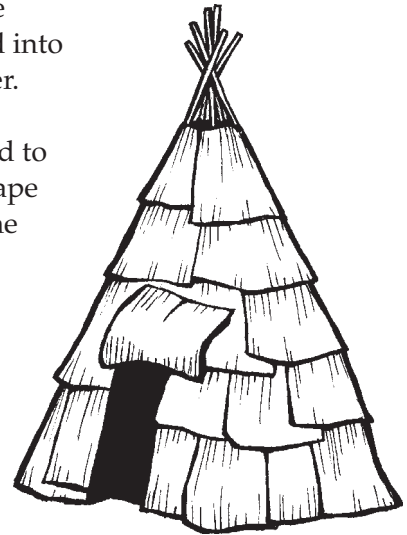


"First Fruits" was one important ceremony that the Great Basin cultures took time to celebrate. During the ceremony, the Native Americans gave thanks for the importance of pine nuts that they collected once a year.

The men pulled pine cones from trees and the women and children piled them into large baskets that were strapped onto their backs. The pine cones were roasted until the pine nuts fell out. The pine nuts could be eaten hot or cooked further until they hardened. The hardened pine nuts were ground into pine nut flour and stored for later.

Great Basin dwellings were **temporary** structures that could be easily **abandoned** when groups had to move to find more food. Willow branches were put together in the shape of a cone and then covered with twigs, branches, and reeds. During the warmer months, the Great Basin cultures depended upon ground squirrels, waterfowl, and fish. Rice grass and cattails that grew along the swampy areas of the Great Basin were ground into flour. During the fall, the Great Basin cultures collected pine nuts and hunted rabbits.

Winter was the most difficult time for the Great Basin cultures because their temporary structures offered little protection from the freezing temperatures and snow storms that blasted the Great Basin's deserts. Food was even harder to find during the winter months because the fish were trapped beneath frozen lakes and animals hid in underground **burrows** until the cold weather was over. During these cold winter months, women of the Great Basin cultures were busy pounding plants into shreds and weaving the fibers into clothing. They also wove baskets that were traded with other cultures for meat and animal skins.



GREAT BASIN DWELLING

FAST FACTS:



- The Great Basin cultures believed that when people died, their souls, or ghosts, were released from their bodies. These souls were feared, because they might try to bring others to death with them. Because of this, a dead person's house and all of his or her belongings were burned. Those still living prayed to release the dead person's soul so it could go to "the land of the dead."

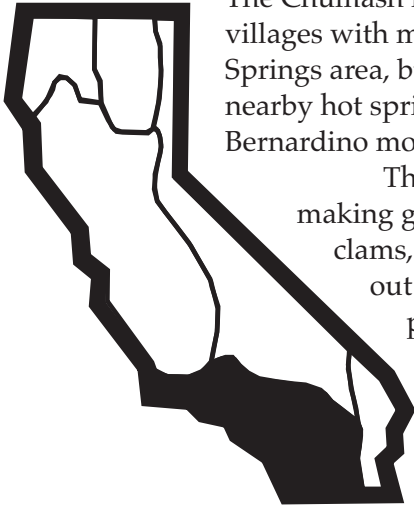
THE SOUTHERN CULTURES

The Southern cultures included the Chumash, Cahuilla (kuh•WE•yuh), and Serrano peoples.

The Chumash inhabited the coast along the Santa Barbara Channel where they built villages with more than 1,000 people living in them. The Cahuilla settled in the Palm Springs area, built villages in the canyons, and enjoyed plenty of water from the nearby hot springs. The Serrano lived in the valley between the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains.

The Southern cultures were hunters and gatherers who survived by making good use of the land. In addition, the Chumash fished and gathered clams, mussels, and **abalone**. They became known for making plank canoes out of redwood that were 30 feet long and could hold as many as ten people. The Cahuilla was the only group of the Southern cultures to grow crops of corn, pumpkins, beans, squash, and melons. They dug ditches that they lined with rocks so that water from the nearby streams could flow to their small farms.

The Southern cultures lived in large villages with permanent dwellings. Throughout the year, small groups of people would leave the villages to hunt, gather plants, or trade with other Native American tribes. Although each group probably had its own design, houses in the villages were basically dome-shaped shelters made out of willow poles and covered with brush mats or strips of bark. To protect themselves from the cold weather, the Southern cultures dug a pit in the ground and built their houses over the hole. A fire in the center of the pit kept the dwelling warm and a hole was left in the top of the dwelling for the smoke to escape.



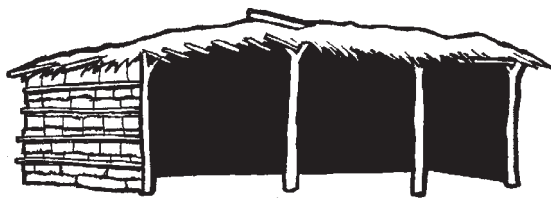
THE COLORADO RIVER CULTURES

The Colorado River cultures lived along the Colorado River in southeastern California. They included the Mohave and Yuma tribes. The Mohave inhabited the northern section of the Colorado River in California while the Yuma lived along the southern portion of the Colorado River. Extreme heat and little rain in this corner of California made life difficult for the Colorado River cultures.

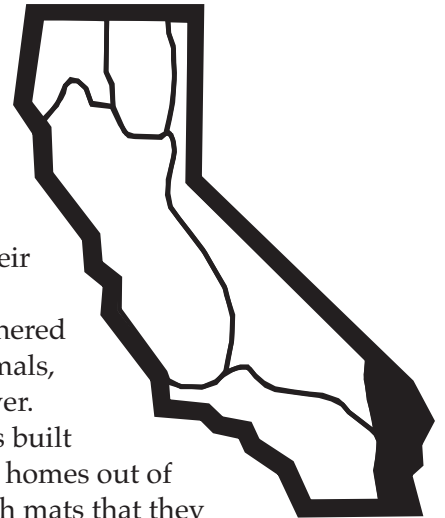
The Colorado River cultures were desert farmers. They planted vegetable seeds in the river's dry bottom areas and then waited for the rain to flood the Colorado River and water their

crops. Besides farming, the Colorado River tribes also gathered wild plants, hunted small animals, and fished in the Colorado River.

The Colorado River tribes built permanent square or rectangular homes out of logs and covered them with brush mats that they wove out of weeds. They covered the brush mats with a thick layer of sand or mud to keep out the extreme heat in this part of California.



COLORADO RIVER DWELLING



SPANISH AND ENGLISH EXPLORERS

In the 1500s, life began to change for California's Native Americans. Spanish and English explorers arrived and claimed all of the land in California for themselves. Disease, warfare, and starvation took the lives of thousands of Native Americans. By 1845, California's Native American population had been cut in half. You will soon learn about the Spanish speaking **intruders** who took control of California and forever changed the lives of California's first people.



CALIFORNIA'S FIRST PEOPLE



Directions: Read each question carefully. Darken the circle for the correct answer.

- 1 According to the first paragraph of California's Ancient Peoples, the first people in North America were –
- A Spanish explorers
B wild animals
C hunters from Asia
D American soldiers
- 2 How did these people enter North America?
- F They swam across the Arctic Ocean.
G They crossed the Bering Land Bridge.
H They flew on American Airlines.
J They traveled by boat.
- 3 Why did these people enter North America?
- A They were following herds of animals.
B They were searching for freedom.
C They wanted to live where the climate was warmer.
D They were searching for gold and silver.
- 4 California's early tribes of Native Americans can be divided into six cultures. Cultures are –
- F people who live outside of their place of national birth
G quickly moving bodies of water
H buildings where a large amount of items are produced in the same way at the same time
J groups of people who share a set of beliefs, goals, religious customs, attitudes, and social practices
- 5 Which phrase about the Northwestern cultures tells you that religion was important to them?
- A ...hunted and gathered shellfish, plants, and acorns from oak trees..
B ...carved totem poles with faces of animal and human spirits that helped them through their lives..
C ...considered wealthy because of the available resources in this part of California..
D ...blankets and rugs woven from the fiber of cedar bark...
- 6 All of these things about the Central cultures are true except –
- F the Central cultures lived along the Pacific Ocean, beside the rivers, and in the mountains of central California
G acorns were an important source of food for the Central cultures
H the Central cultures built their villages close together for protection
J the Central cultures wove baskets that were very well made
- 7 Why was survival difficult for the Colorado River cultures?
- A They were not able to find gold.
B They often had more food than they knew what to do with.
C The cold wet climate was difficult for them.
D They experienced extreme heat and little rainfall in the southeast corner of California.

READING

Answers

- 1 (A) (B) (C) (D) 5 (A) (B) (C) (D)
2 (F) (G) (H) (J) 6 (F) (G) (H) (J)
3 (A) (B) (C) (D) 7 (A) (B) (C) (D)
4 (F) (G) (H) (J)



CALIFORNIA'S FIRST PEOPLE



Directions: Darken the circle for the word or phrase that gives the complete subject of each sentence.

- 1 **The Bering Land Bridge was a strip of frozen land that was 1,000 miles wide.**
A frozen land that was 1,000 miles wide
B The Bering Land Bridge
C was a strip of frozen land
D was
- 2 **California's first people arrived thousands of years ago from the north and the east.**
F arrived
G from the north and the east
H people
J California's first people
- 3 **The Pomo, Maidu, Miwok, and Yokut people were part of the Central cultures.**
A The Pomo, Maidu, Miwok, and Yokut people
B were
C people were part of the Central cultures
D cultures
- 4 **How did the Southern cultures survive?**
F How
G the Southern cultures
H did
J survive
- 5 **In the 1500s, Spanish explorers arrived and claimed all of the land in California for themselves.**
A for themselves
B explorers
C claimed all of the land in California
D In the 1500s, Spanish explorers

Directions: Darken the circle for the word or phrase that gives the complete predicate of each sentence.

- 6 **The Modoc people originally lived around the Klamath and Tule lakes.**
F The Modoc people originally lived around
G lived
H lived around the Klamath and Tule lakes
J Klamath and Tule lakes
- 7 **During the fall, the Great Basin cultures collected pine nuts and hunted rabbits.**
A During the fall
B collected pine nuts and hunted rabbits
C During the fall, the Great Basin cultures
D collected and hunted
- 8 **The Southern cultures were known for making canoes out of redwood.**
F were known for making canoes out of redwood
G cultures
H The Southern cultures were known
J canoes out of redwood
- 9 **Spanish explorers changed the lives of the Native Americans forever.**
A Spanish explorers changed the lives
B changed
C Native Americans
D changed the lives of the Native Americans forever

Answers

LANGUAGE

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | (A) (B) (C) (D) | 5 | (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 2 | (F) (G) (H) (J) | 6 | (F) (G) (H) (J) |
| 3 | (A) (B) (C) (D) | 7 | (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 4 | (F) (G) (H) (J) | 8 | (F) (G) (H) (J) |
| | | 9 | (A) (B) (C) (D) |

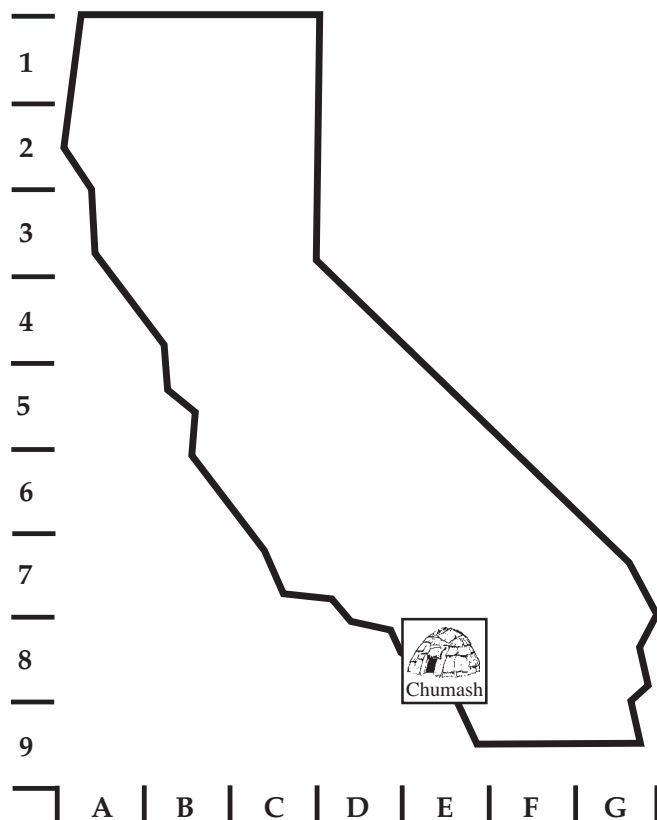
MAPPING: CALIFORNIA'S EARLY CULTURES

You have already had experience working with a **road atlas** in another activity. A **road atlas** is a special book of maps that helps you locate cities, towns, lakes, and places of interest within a state. Numbers or letters along the bottom and sides of a **road atlas** are used as guides to help find places. These numbers and letters work together to form a kind of “grid” that puts places in an invisible box or a square. Once you know how to use the numbering and lettering system, it’s easy to find your way around.

Example:

Your family is driving through the state of California to locate where each of California’s early cultures once lived. The Chumash were part of the Southern culture. They lived in large villages and built dome-shaped houses covered with brush mats. When you open your road atlas to the page that features the state of California, you see that the Chumash villages were located at E-8. Then you see a map of the entire state of California with numbers along the side of the page and letters along the bottom.

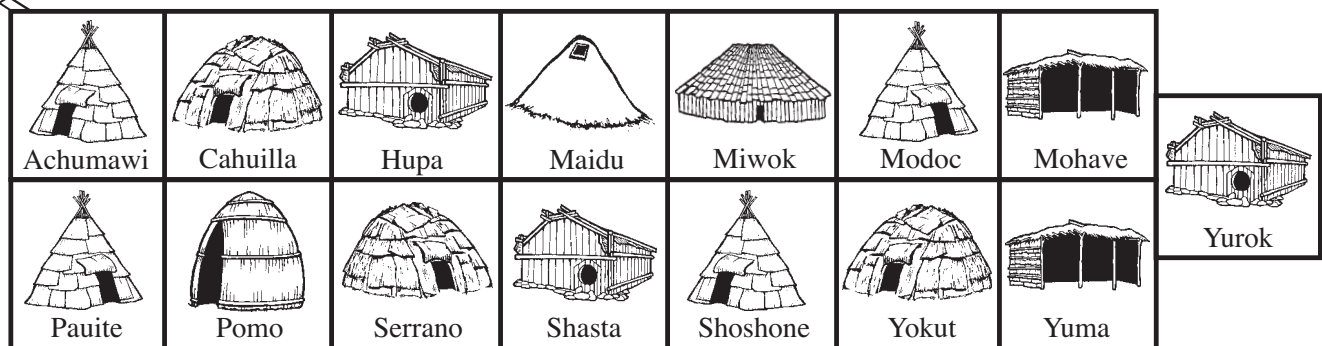
- By following the simple rule of over and up, it’s easy to find the Chumash villages located at E-8 on the map. Use the letters along the bottom to slide your finger over to E. Then use the numbers along the side to slide your finger up to 8. You will find Chumash villages in this area.



Directions: In this activity you will create a Road Atlas for California's early cultures. As you create your Road Atlas, you will learn more about the types of dwellings built by each culture.

1. Use your scissors to carefully cut out the squares at the bottom of this page.
2. Use the blank map of California and the descriptions below to locate each of California's early cultures on your map.
3. Follow the example on the last page: If the culture is located at E - 8, use the letters along the bottom to go **over** to E. Then use the numbers along the side to go **up** to 8.
4. Glue the square containing the name of the early culture in its correct spot on the map. Don't worry if some of the squares overlap.
5. When you have finished placing all 16 cultures, use your coloring pencils to add color to your map.
6. The Chumash culture, located at E - 8 has been placed on your map as an example.

California's Early Cultures		
Achumawi	Cone-shaped dwellings covered with tule reeds	C - 1
Cahuilla	Dome-shaped dwellings covered with brush mats	F - 9
Hupa	Houses made out of cedar or oak planks	A - 2
Maidu	Dirt or clay covered dwellings	B - 3
Miwok	Round dwellings covered with thick planks of bark	C - 3
Modoc	Cone-shaped dwellings covered with tule reeds	C - 2
Mohave	Log homes covered with brush mats	G - 7
Paiute	Cone-shaped dwellings covered with twigs	D - 4
Pomo	Bowl-shaped houses made of poles, covered with thatch	B - 4
Serrano	Dome-shaped dwellings covered with brush mats	F - 8
Shasta	Houses made out of cedar or oak planks	B - 1
Shoshone	Cone-shaped dwellings covered with twigs	E - 6
Yokut	Oval-shaped dwellings covered with tule mats	C - 5
Yuma	Log homes covered with brush mats	G - 8
Yurok	Houses made out of cedar or oak planks	A - 1



Name _____

CALIFORNIA'S EARLY CULTURES



ANSWERS TO COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

CALIFORNIA'S FIRST PEOPLE

Reading

1. C
2. G
3. A
4. J
5. B
6. H
7. D

ANSWERS TO CALIFORNIA'S EARLY CULTURE MAP

Language

1. B
2. J
3. A
4. G
5. D
6. H
7. B
8. F
9. D

