

Build a California Mission

Classroom craft & history project • California Missions Learning Center

Name: _____

Date: _____

Design a model inspired by one of California's 21 missions while learning about architecture, geography and history.

MATERIALS

- Cardboard or shoebox
- Construction paper
- Glue and tape
- Scissors
- Paint, crayons or markers
- Craft sticks / modeling clay
- Sand, rocks, twigs or recycled materials

INCLUDE THESE 7 FEATURES

- 1. Mission church
- 2. Bell tower
- 3. Courtyard
- 4. Cemetery
- 5. Adobe-style walls
- 6. Gardens
- 7. Water system or acequia

PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose a Mission

Select one of California's 21 missions. Research its location and founding year.

2. Make a Plan

Draw an overhead sketch showing where each part of your model will go.

3. Build the Base

Use sturdy cardboard as the foundation for your model.

4. Construct the Buildings

Create the church, bell tower, walls, courtyard and other structures.

5. Add the Landscape

Include gardens, trees, pathways, water features and surrounding terrain.

6. Label Your Model

Clearly identify all seven required architectural features.

7. Add People & History

Identify the California Native people connected to the area and explain their experiences.

8. Complete the Mission Card

Use page 2 to record key facts and what you learned.

IMPORTANT HISTORY NOTE

California missions are part of a complex history. Study Spanish colonization alongside the experiences, labor, resistance, survival and continuing cultures of California Native peoples.

Mission layouts and building materials varied by site and time; your model should be based on the mission you research.

My California Mission Research Card

Complete this page and turn it in with your mission model

Student: _____

Date: _____

MISSION INFORMATION

Mission name: _____

Mission number: _____

Founded: _____

Location: _____

Founder: _____

Native community/communities: _____

THREE HISTORICAL FACTS

1

2

3

ONE ARCHITECTURAL FACT

WHAT I LEARNED

What did you learn from building your California mission that you did not know before?

FINAL CHECK

- ☐ All 7 architectural features are included and labeled
- ☐ Mission information is complete
- ☐ Native history is included respectfully
- ☐ Model is based on research, not just imagination