

# School-to-Home Newsletter

Scott Foresman History-Social Science for California

## Unit 3: Early History to Statehood

**History-Social Science 4.3** Students explain the economic, social, and political life in California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush, and the granting of statehood.

### Here are the main ideas we are learning:

- Fort Ross was established north of San Francisco. Sutter's Fort was established near what is now the city of Sacramento.
- The United States started to expand in the early 1800s. American settlers followed trails leading west to California from the eastern United States.
- Gold was discovered in 1848, and California's population grew quickly during the Gold Rush.
- Mining life was hard and few people became rich.
- The Gold Rush changed California's government.
- Women who traveled west to California faced many challenges.
- Early women of California, including Bidley Mason, made a difference in the lives of Californians.
- In the 1840s changes in the control of California led to it becoming the thirty-first state in 1850.

## Family Activities

### Talk Together

Discuss how, when, and why your ancestors or your family settled in California. Compare the experience to those of immigrants in the 1800s.

### Learn Together

Help your child learn how California grew and eventually became a state.

- Examine gold and iron pyrite (fool's gold), either in person or using a book. Would you have been fooled by iron pyrite?
- Because California is a state, it has representatives in the U.S. Congress. Find out the name of your representative. How does this person want to improve your community?
- Both Mexico and Spain remain a part of California's culture. Find and discuss the various Mexican and Spanish influences within your community.

### Read Together

*California Gold Rush*, by Peter and Connie Roop.  
(Scholastic, Inc., ISBN 0-439-27315-3, 2002)  
Nonfiction

*The Ballad of Lucy Whipple*, by Karen Cushman.  
(HarperCollins, ISBN 0-064-40684-9, 1998)  
Fiction

*Snowbound: The Tragic Story of the Donner Party*, by David Lavender. (Holiday House, ISBN 0-823-41231-8, 1996) Nonfiction

### Unit Reading Skill

Students are learning about Cause and Effect. A *cause* is what makes something happen. An *effect* is what happens as a result of the cause. Words and phrases such as *because*, *so*, or *as a result* often show cause or effect. Also, a cause can have more than one effect, and an effect can have more than one cause.

**THANK YOU**  
for supporting  
your child's  
education!