

## **lesson 3 Transportation**

### **TRANSPORTATION IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY**

#### **OVERVIEW**

This lesson introduces students to the general history of transportation in Sacramento County, provides an overview of the types of transportation that were important to Sacramento, and highlights Sacramento's role as a transportation hub. You can view or print most single images directly as a JPEG file. However, some documents are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format and must be viewed or printed with Acrobat Reader. *In Lesson 3, students use the Sacramento History Online database at <http://www.sacramentohistory.org>.*

#### **STUDENT OBJECTIVES**

1. Locate Sacramento, Sacramento County, and the Sacramento River on a map.
2. Name five important types of transportation from the 1840s through the 1920s, and place them in the order of their arrival in Sacramento.
3. Analyze several photos to determine how transportation changed over time.
4. Use the SHO database to find specific historical information.

#### **CALIFORNIA HISTORY STANDARDS**

**4.1.3 - 4.1.5 Physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California**

**4.4.1 - 4.4.4 California's rise as an agricultural and industrial power**

#### **BACKGROUND ARTICLE 3**

**Sacramento Transportation History Overview** (*pages 3-5 and 3-6*)

#### **STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET 3 AND KEY**

**Sacramento Transportation** (*pages 3-7 and 3-8*)

#### **DOCUMENTS TO DISCUSS**

The documents shown below provide examples of how Sacramento has changed over time. In this set, all are photos or prints, except for #4a, which is a PDF file. **CLICK** on an image to view or print the document.



**1. Californie. Vue de la Ville de Sacramento**

[ca. 1850]

View of Sacramento from the Sacramento River looking east.



**2. Sacramento wharf area with the steamboat, Yosemite**

[ca. 1874]

At the dock of the California Steam Navigation Company.



### 3. Inundation of the State Capitol, City of Sacramento

[1850]  
Depiction of the 1850 flood, one of many over the years. Eventually the downtown streets and many buildings were raised as much as 10 feet.

## Changes over Time (downtown streets, changes over a day, over years)



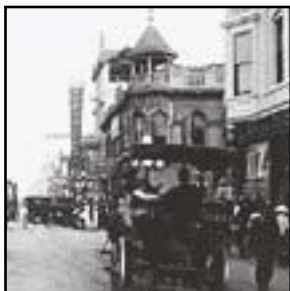
### 4a. Street and river scenes -Sacramento

[1878]  
The top image is a street scene downtown, possibly 12th and I Streets, while the middle picture shows Front and K Streets in what is now Old Sacramento. The bottom view is the Sacramento River waterfront and the first railroad bridge.



### 4b. K Street near Seventh [ca. 1910]

View looking east down K Street; post office at left; horse-drawn wagons and carriages, automobiles, bicycles, and people fill the streets and sidewalks.



### 4c. Automobiles, horse-drawn vehicles, trolley, downtown Sacramento

[ca. 1910]  
This image is taken at the same place as 4b, probably on the same day by the same photographer.



### 4d. Street cars on J Street [ca. 1924]

This image shows cars and streetcars in downtown Sacramento about 14 years after #4b and #4c. Most wagons have been replaced by cars.

## Changes over Time (same downtown street ca. 1909 and ca. 1924)



### 5a. Horse-drawn vehicles, pedestrians Sixth & K Streets, downtown Sacramento

[ca. 1909]  
This is the same location as in #5b.



### 5b. Automobile, pedestrian traffic - downtown Sacramento, Sixth & K Streets

[ca. 1924]  
Same location as #5a, 15 years later.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Print any of the documents shown above that you will use in your discussion, as well as **Student Activity Sheet and Key 3**. (Label the documents above by their number to identify them in the instructions).
2. Read **Background Article 3**. You may wish to read it to your students or print it and have them read it by themselves. Discuss any questions that they may have.
3. Find Sacramento and Sacramento County on a California map. Find the Sacramento River. Ask if any students have been to Sacramento. What did they see on their trip?
4. Show and discuss **Document 1, Californie. Vue de la Ville de Sacramento**. Tell students that the picture shows the city of Sacramento. Ask students what kind of document it is. (*print*) How old do they think the image is? (*1850*) Why do they think so? What kinds of transportation do they see?
5. **Document 2, Photographic print of the Sacramento wharf area**. How many kinds of transportation can they find? (*steamboat, electric train, wagons*) What kind of document is this image? (*photograph*) Do they think **Document 2** is older or more recent than **Document 1**? Why?
6. **Document 3, Inundation of the State Capitol**. Students may remember a similar image from Lesson 1, which shows a flood in 1862. Ask students what they think the word *inundation* means. Ask them why they believe that the city often flooded. (*rivers*) What are the benefits of living by a river? What are the problems?
7. **Documents 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d**. These **views of downtown Sacramento** (I, J, and K streets) show changes in transportation over time. **Documents 4b and 4c** look almost identical but were taken at two different times, probably on the same day. Show students all four images and ask them to help you with some detective work. Have them identify the document type. (*a is a print; the rest are photos*) Ask them to put the images in order by date. (*a, b or c, d*) How can they tell which image is older than another? Students should be able to see that automobiles gradually replaced wagons. How can students tell that b and c are not identical? Why do they think that these images were found in two different archives?
8. Show and discuss **Documents 5a and 5b, Sixth & K Streets Downtown Sacramento**. These images show the same intersection, almost 15 years apart. Ask students to identify which image was taken in 1909 and which in 1924. What changes do students notice? (*lack of overhead wires, no carriages in later image*)
9. Give students **Activity Sheet 3: Sacramento Transportation History Overview** (*page 3-7*). After they have completed the activity, discuss their answers as a group.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

1. **Find an image** in the database that shows two different decades. Compare the types of transportation shown in each picture.
2. By looking at the materials in the database that come from different time periods, which decade do you think you would have liked best? Why? Pretend that you live in that decade. **Write a letter** to a friend, telling about how you traveled to see a relative in another location.
3. If you do not live in the Sacramento area, **find out about the transportation history of your own community**. Can you find any websites that will help you in learning more? Where else can you find such information?

## **REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

- Edinger, M. *Seeking history, teaching with primary sources in grades 4-6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. (includes a CD-ROM).
- Holden, W. *Sacramento: Excursions into its history and natural world*. Fair Oaks, CA: 2 Rivers Publishing Co., 1988.
- Hunt, R.D. and Arent, W.S. *Oxcart to airplane*. Los Angeles, CA: Powell Publishing Co., 1929.
- Kalman, B. and Calder, C. *Travel in the early days*. New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 2001. (juvenile)
- Neasham, V.A. and Henley, J.E. *The city of the plain: Sacramento in the nineteenth century*. Sacramento: The Sacramento Pioneer Foundation, 1969. (Includes many old photos)
- Wilkinson, P. and Pollard, M. *Ideas that changed the world: Transportation*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1994. (juvenile)

## **RELATED LINKS**

**Bridges over the Sacramento River (Tower Bridge, I & M Street Bridge)**  
([http://www.highwayman-routes.com/tower\\_bridge\\_history.htm](http://www.highwayman-routes.com/tower_bridge_history.htm))

**California: Sacramento and the Delta**  
(<http://www.fostertravel.com/CASACR.html>)

**Historic Drawbridges of the Delta**  
(<http://www.californiadelta.org/bridges.htm>)

## **Our Century**

Series of articles on how Sacramento has changed since the turn of the 19th century.  
([http://www.sacbee.com/static/archive/news/projects/people\\_of\\_century/](http://www.sacbee.com/static/archive/news/projects/people_of_century/))

### background 3 SACRAMENTO TRANSPORTATION HISTORY OVERVIEW



Sacramento was a hub or center for transportation systems that provided the foundation for the rapid growth of California's economy and population. The city is built at the point where the American River joins the Sacramento River and was the location of Sutter's Fort, one of the first inland European settlements in Northern California. Once word spread of the gold discovery at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, the population of California grew dramatically, as fortune-seekers from all over the world swarmed to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Sutter supplied food and equipment for miners headed for the gold fields. In 1854, Sacramento became the capital of California.

Many new arrivals to California landed in San Francisco, traveled up the Sacramento River, and then continued on to the foothills to try their luck at mining. The journey was not easy. Even as late as the early 20th century, few roads were available to cross the marshy Delta region between San Francisco and Sacramento. However, regular steamship and stagecoach travel began in the 1850s, and the railroads were not far behind. By the time the Gold Rush faded and agriculture's importance rose, the steamships and railroads were used to transport crops as well as people. Steamship travel eventually ended around the time of World War II.

The rivers offered a powerful means of transportation, but their size and force also presented challenges. In many years, floods inundated the city of Sacramento. Bridges were built to connect the land on either side of the river. One of the first such bridges was the Sacramento-Yolo Bridge, a wagon and pedestrian bridge constructed in 1858. This bridge and the ones that later replaced it were *swing* bridges, which could be opened by swinging them to the side to make room for river traffic. In 1870, this bridge was rebuilt to allow railroad traffic alongside wagons. It was washed out and replaced again in 1894. In 1911, the double-deck I Street Bridge was completed, to make room for automobiles on the top level and trains on the lower. The I Street Bridge still stands today in Sacramento. It is sometimes called the Southern Pacific Railroad bridge or Central Pacific Railroad bridge. A railroad and automobile bridge at M Street, built at the same time, was replaced by the current Tower Bridge.

Sacramento also played a key role in the development of the major railroads in California. As agriculture replaced gold mining as the major industry, first boats and then the railroads became critical in moving produce among cities in the Sacramento Valley. The Sacramento Valley Rail Road, which traveled 22 miles from Folsom, was the first train to arrive in Sacramento and the first in California. Eventually, the Central Pacific Railroad was founded and joined the Union Pacific at Promontory Point, Utah, to complete the first transcontinental railroad in 1869. More railroads followed, including the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific, which also carried passengers and freight to and from Sacramento.

As the role of automobiles grew, Sacramento became home to several early manufacturers, including S. S. Albright. The city also became a part of the Lincoln Highway, designed to link New York and San Francisco with a paved road.

Construction of the Yolo Causeway, connecting Sacramento and Yolo counties with a highway elevated above marshy wetlands areas, made it possible to drive more easily between Sacramento and San Francisco. Farmers began to use trucks to haul their produce to docks, railroad yards, and markets.

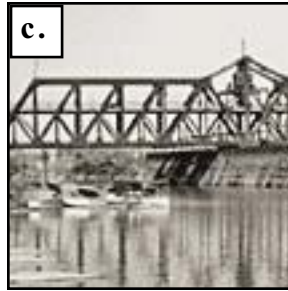
Sacramento also had its own early aviation pioneers and dedicated its airport in 1930. Charles Lindbergh visited the city in 1927 with his plane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, following his non-stop Atlantic flight earlier that year.

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**activity sheet 3**  
**SACRAMENTO TRANSPORTATION**

**I. Image Match**

Match the image by putting the correct letter next to the description.



\_\_\_\_\_ 1. The *I Street Bridge*

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. A *market* in 1857

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The *M Street Bridge*

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. A *market* in about 1895

**II. Transportation Scramble**

Number the transportation methods from 1 to 5 by when they came to Sacramento.

\_\_\_\_\_airplane    \_\_\_\_\_steamboat    \_\_\_\_\_wagon    \_\_\_\_\_automobile    \_\_\_\_\_railroad

**III. Photo Database Detective**

Find two photos that show how *Breuners Store* delivered *furniture*. (hint: try *Breuner*). Draw a picture of each photo. Put the earliest picture in the box on the left. Fill in the date for each picture.



Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years apart were these pictures taken? \_\_\_\_\_

How are the two pictures different?

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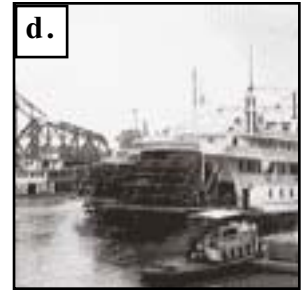
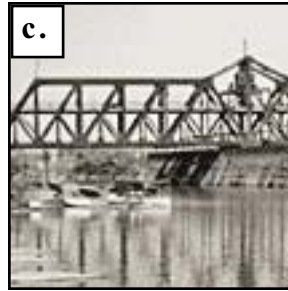
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## activity sheet 3

### SACRAMENTO TRANSPORTATION

#### I. Image Match

Match the image by putting the correct letter next to the description.



  c   1. The *I Street Bridge*

  b   3. A *market* in 1857

  d   2. The *M Street Bridge*

  a   4. A *market* in about 1895

#### II. Transportation Scramble

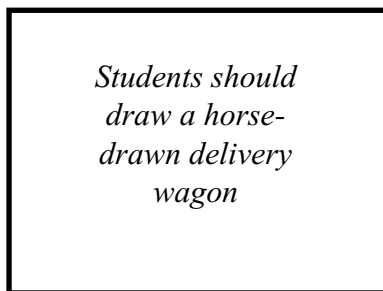
Number the transportation methods from 1 to 5 by when they came to Sacramento.

  5   airplane     2   steamboat     1   wagon     4   automobile     3   railroad

#### III. Photo Database Detective

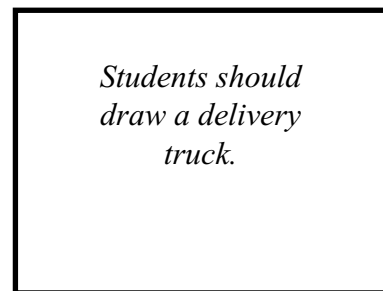
Find two photos that show how *Breuners Store* delivered *furniture*. (hint: try *Breuner*). Draw a picture of each photo. Put the earliest picture in the box on the left. Fill in the date for each picture.

1.



Date:   ca. 1882  

2.



Date:   ca. 1920  

How many years apart were these pictures taken?   about 38  

How are the two pictures different?

  (answers will vary but should mention that trucks replaced  
horses and wagons as delivery vehicles. Clothes are also different)