

## Lesson 4 Transportation

### HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES

#### OVERVIEW

This lesson introduces students to the different types of horse-drawn vehicles that were used in California during the period from 1840-192. *In Lesson 4, students use the Sacramento History Online database at <http://www.sacramentohistory.org>.*

#### STUDENT OBJECTIVES

1. Name several types of horse-drawn vehicles that were used in the 1800s.
2. Use the SHO database to find specific historical information.
3. Determine the services that you would need to maintain a horse-drawn vehicle.

#### 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 4

**Horse-Drawn Vehicles** (page 4-4)

#### STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET 4 AND KEY

**Horse-Drawn Vehicles** (pages 4-5 and 4-6)

#### DOCUMENTS TO DISCUSS

The documents below provide examples of different types of horse-drawn vehicles.



**1. Western Hotel**

[1880]

Hand-colored view of the three-story Western Hotel with balconies on the second and third floors; horse-drawn streetcar, stagecoach, and wagon in the street.



**2. Union Hotel, Orleans Hotel, and Birch building**

[1857]

Shows a stagecoach in front of the Orleans Hotel, home of the California Stage Company.



**3. Hardware, farm implements and vehicles; The Thomson-Diggs Co.**

[1900-1909]

Catalog illustration of a rural mail wagon.



**4. City of Sacramento Waste Paper wagon**

[1922]

Eight men posed in front of horse-drawn, City of Sacramento waste paper wagon piled with sacks of paper.



**5. Photographic print of a horse-drawn wagon being loaded with pumpkins by two men** [ca. 1880]



**6. Wagon with children** [ca. 1900]  
Horse-drawn wagon with children and adults seated on benches.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Print any of the images shown above that you will use in your discussion, as well as **Student Activity Sheet and Key 4**. (Label the images by their number to identify them in the instructions).
2. Read **Background Article 4**. 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. Show and discuss **Document 1, Western Hotel**. Tell students that the picture shows the city of Sacramento. Ask them what kind of document it is. (*print*) How many kinds of transportation can they find? (*horse-drawn streetcar, stagecoach, wagon*) What is the same about these kinds of transportation? (*all are horse-drawn*) How old do they think the picture is? (*1880*) Why do they think so?
4. Show and discuss **Document 2, Union Hotel, Orleans Hotel, and Birch building**. The Orleans Hotel is the building where James Birch and other stage owners set up headquarters for the California Stage Company in 1853. Why do students think business owners would join forces, instead of competing against each other?
5. Tell students that many types of horse-drawn vehicles were needed to carry people and freight before automobiles and trucks were introduced. Ask the students for examples of the types of vehicles that would be needed. The SHO database includes a wide variety of wagons and carriages. Some documents are advertisements for vehicles or related services, and many show different types of delivery vehicles. Show and discuss **Documents 3 - 5, the Thomson-Diggs Co. rural mail wagon, the City of Sacramento Waste Paper wagon, and the wagon with pumpkins**.
5. Show and discuss **Document 6, Wagon with children**. Discuss how children might have traveled to school in 1900. Ask where the students think the children shown in the photograph might be going. Do they think this is a school bus? The description does not provide any more information.
6. Give students **Activity Sheet 4: Horse-drawn Vehicles** (*page 4-5*). After they have completed the activity, discuss their answers as a group.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

1. **Search Sacramento History Online** together, using the keyword and advanced searches. What types of horse-drawn vehicles can you discover?
2. **Decide what type of job** you would have liked to have in the decades from 1850-1909. Can you find a picture of a vehicle that would have helped you in this job? Draw a picture of the vehicle, and describe how you would use it in your work.
3. **Write a journal** entry describing a trip that you took on a stagecoach in the 1850s. How did it feel to ride in such a vehicle? Where did you stay? Whom did you meet, and where were they going?

## **REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

Dunlop, R. *Wheels West, 1590-1900*. Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1977.  
Winther, O.O. *Via western express and stagecoach*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1945.

## **RELATED LINKS**

### **Transportation in the 19th Century**

(<http://www.literary-liaisons.com/article033.html>)

Lists different types of horse-drawn vehicles.

### **Wells Fargo's History Pages**

(<http://www.wellsfargohistory.com/home/index.html>)

## background 4      HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES



In the early years of Sacramento's growth, horses and horse-drawn vehicles were the most common means of personal transportation. Many early settlers made the trip West in covered wagons, including Conestoga wagons and prairie schooners, named because of their resemblance to a boat with a sail. Covered wagons had large wheels that helped them clear obstacles such as rocks. Once in California, most people used horses and wagons to travel to and from their homes and towns, help with farm work, or move supplies.

Beginning almost as soon as the Gold Rush itself, stagecoach owners began to offer passenger services for people to travel among California towns. James Birch started the first stagecoach line from Sacramento in 1849. It carried passengers to stops along the American River, including Sutter's Mill. The fare was \$32, payable in cash or gold dust. Other lines began to offer stage services from Sacramento to such growing towns as Placerville, Marysville, and Shasta City. In 1853, Birch and several other stage owners joined together to form the California Stage Company, which had its headquarters at the Orleans Hotel.

In some ways, stagecoaches were similar to modern-day buses, stopping along the way for passengers to eat or stay overnight in a hotel. However, the roads were dusty and rough, and the hotels were not always the cleanest. Passengers were crowded together for long hours in a cramped space. Because stagecoaches often carried gold or other valuables, bandits sometimes held up the stage, taking cargo from the stagecoach driver or robbing the passengers.

About the same time, some businessmen started express companies to carry mail and other important items. Adams and Company began to make shipments from San Francisco to New York, across the Isthmus of Panama. In 1852, Wells Fargo and Company began its express service. Eventually, Wells Fargo had express lines covering much of California.

Although it lasted less than two years, the Pony Express used a relay system of many horseback riders to carry telegrams and mail back and forth from California to St. Joseph, Missouri. When a transcontinental telegraph line was completed in 1861, the Pony Express runs ended.

In 1870, the first streetcars in Sacramento began carrying passengers. The city had eight such horse-drawn vehicles, which were eventually replaced by electric-powered streetcars. One popular early destination was Oak Park, where the Joyland amusement park offered such diversions as a miniature scenic railway, a skating rink, a swimming pool, and performances by a diving horse.

Just as modern cars and trucks come in different shapes, styles, and sizes, there were many types of early horse-drawn vehicles, including buggies, surreys, carriages, carts, and wagons. To make and maintain such vehicles, it took people with special skills. A wainwright built or repaired horse-drawn vehicles. A blacksmith made horseshoes, which required heating iron in a forge until it could be shaped. The blacksmith might also make repairs on metal carriage parts. A farrier put shoes on (shod) the horses. A wheelwright built and repaired wagon wheels. Horses also needed to be fed, so most towns had feed stores, especially for city dwellers who could not grow their own feed. If you did not have a place to keep your horses, you could board them in a livery stable.

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**activity sheet 4**  
**HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES**

<http://www.sacramentohistory.org>

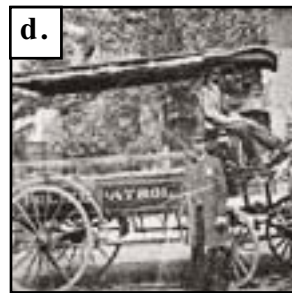
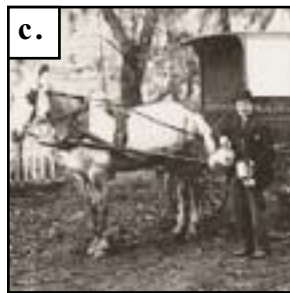
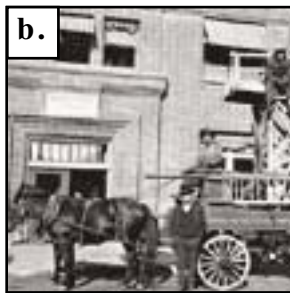
**I. FIND WHAT YOU NEED**

**Find the image using the keyword search. Write down what the person or business sold or did. Put an X by each business that you might use if you had a horse-drawn vehicle.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Visu \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Thomsen \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Simoni & Sons \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Osborn & Folger \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Paul Graf \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. G. Hickingbotham \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Favero and Striff \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. E. Kirtlan \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A. Wilson \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Neubourg & Lages \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Photo Match**

**Match the photo by putting the correct letter next to the description.**



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Golden Eagle Dairy wagon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Horse-drawn fire engine
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Pacific Gas and Electric Company wagon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Police wagon

**activity sheet 4**  
**HORSE-DRAWN VEHICLES**

KEY

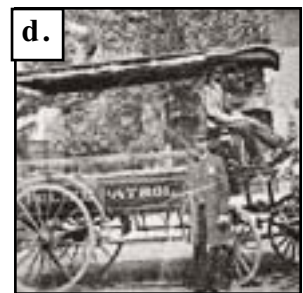
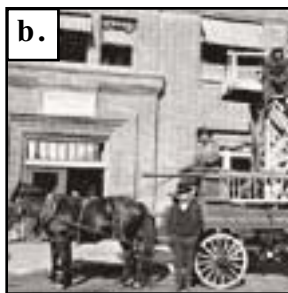
**I. FIND WHAT YOU NEED**

Find the image using the keyword search. Write down what the person or business sold or did. Put an X by each business that you might use if you had a horse-drawn vehicle.

- x   1. Visu   stable
2. Thomsen   automobile repair
3. Simoni & Sons   store and gas station
- x   4. Osborn & Folger   ice, coal, hay, grain
- x   5. Paul Graf   harness maker
6. G. Hickingbotham   automobile tires
- x   7. Favero and Striff   blacksmith and carriage repair
8. E. Kirtlan   automobile service station
- x   9. A. Wilson   livery stable and carriages
- x   10. Neubourg & Lages   mills & malt house, hops, corks, produce, feed

**II. Photo Match**

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



- c   1. Golden Eagle Dairy wagon
- a   2. Horse-drawn fire engine
- b   3. Pacific Gas and Electric Company wagon
- d   4. Police wagon