

## California Atlas Literature Connections

Emily M. Schell, Ed.D. (eschell@mail.sdsu.edu)

California Geographic Alliance

### Picture Books: General California

Book Title & Info	Description	Suggested Uses	Atlas Pages
<i>All Around California: Regions and Resources</i> by Mir Tamim Ansary (2003/2010, Heinemann Library)	Easy read nonfiction descriptions of Northern Coast, Southern Coast, Central Valley, High Mountains, Desert & Basin; explains land, resources, and human interaction in these regions; integrates maps throughout	* Read aloud section featuring a region; using atlas, have students write and illustrate a 3-fold brochure identifying physical and cultural features of that region * Place students in small groups, assign each student a specific feature to identify and take notes about during read aloud (e.g., climate, industry, natural resources, population); Instruct groups to create a mural depicting the region	p. 12 p. 15 pp. 16-19 p. 29 p. 33 pp. 34-36 p. 37 p. 38 pp. 39-41 pp. 43-44 pp. 46-47
<i>C is for California: Written by kids for kids</i> (2008, West Winds Press)	Simple ABC book written by students; text rhymes; photos of California places and people	* Read aloud; assign pairs one place from story to study topic in atlas, then illustrate on index card; students affix card to correct location on giant map of CA * Read aloud; have students select letters and create a new ABC book of California using new examples	p. 11 p. 12 pp. 16-17 p. 20 p. 23 p. 24 p. 27 p. 31 pp. 38-41 pp. 42-43 pp. 48-49
<i>California History</i> by Mir Tamim Ansary (2003/2010, Heinemann Library)	Easy read nonfiction brief account of California's history with maps integrated throughout book	* Read sections aloud; provide blank outline map of California for students to label using section subhead provided in book; have students use text clues and atlas to determine where labels (e.g., Bear Flag Revolt, Getting Water, Pony Express) should be written on map	p. 24 p. 22-23 p.28 p. 27 p. 30 p. 35-36 p. 43-44 p. 46-47 p. 50
<i>California: Plants and Animals</i> by Stephen Feinstein (2003, Heinemann)	Nonfiction presentation of CA's plant and animal species, endangered	* Provide students with blank map of California; while reading aloud and with assistance from atlas,	p. 12 p. 13 p. 14 p. 15

Library)	and extinct species, habitats and parks; maps integrated with photos and interesting sidebars (e.g., value of anchovies, tar pits)	have students illustrate map based on information in text placing illustration in approximate locations (e.g., redwoods in the north coast, roadrunners in desert regions, etc.) * While reading about regions (deserts, grasslands, etc.), have students discuss region wildlife using temperature and precipitation maps * Using urban land, highways, population, and cities/towns maps, discuss impact of human development on plants and animals	pp. 16-19 pp. 34-36 pp. 48-49 p. 38 pp. 44-45 pp. 46-47
<i>G is for Golden: A California Alphabet</i> by David Domeniconi (2002, Sleeping Bear Press)	A fun alphabet book written in rhyme with longer expository text with fun facts about CA	* Read aloud; assign a letter of the alphabet to each student; have students mix and mingle; stop students to pair up and share what they remember from the text about that letter; mix and mingle again; stop students to pair up and share what they know about CA using that letter * Have students do a cooperative line-up in alphabetical order and take turns stepping forward stating, "A is for ..." (using example from book or own example related to CA); challenge students to repeat prior examples and add own as you move through the alphabet * Have students state "A is for..." and point to where this exists on the map (prepare using atlas)	p. 20 p. 23 p. 24 p. 27 p. 28 p. 43
<i>Our California</i> by Pam Munoz Ryan (2008, Charlesbridge)	Fun, easy read; each spread features a short poem about a place in CA & great illustration; follow	* Read aloud while students follow path on map, stopping at each location to discuss or create a Playdoh marker (to	p. 33 p. 23 p. 27 p. 31 pp. 38-39

	book to follow travel through the state highlighting key locations	place on laminated CA map) * Read aloud; stop at each place to have students label an index card and illustrate that place; when done, have students pair up, shuffle cards, place face down on table, and play game of concentration	pp. 12 & 15 pp. 16-17, 19 p. 31
<i>People of California</i> by Mir Tamim Ansary (2003, Heinemann)	Nonfiction presentation of the peopling of California; diversity, movement, cultural groups, achievers	* Ask students to discuss with a partner how they came to live in California; share with class; summarize responses; read aloud using atlas; discuss comparisons * Explain and discuss population; review pp. 42-47 with class; read aloud; have students rewrite text for a map on pp. 42-47 using information from book	pp. 42-47
<i>Uniquely California</i> by Stephen Feinstein (2003, Heinemann Library)	Nonfiction presentation of what makes CA unique (e.g., scenic wonders, earthquakes, SF & LA, architecture, bridges, sports, business, Hollywood)	* Brainstorm list of unique features about CA; read aloud, checking off or adding to list * Assign students to write each feature on a Post-it note as you read aloud; allow students to locate place(s) for this feature in atlas; call students to large CA map to post note in correct location(s) while describing the unique feature	p. 11 p. 12 p. 13 p. 27 p. 31 p. 39 p. 41 pp. 46-47

### Picture Books: Specific California Content

Book Title & Info	Description	Suggested Uses	Atlas Pages
<i>California: Native Peoples</i> by Stephen Feinstein (2003, Heinemann Library)	Nonfiction presentation of CA's first peoples, where/how they lived, customs, and outside influences (settlers); maps integrated throughout	* Review atlas pages showing physical geography and invite students to determine where/how they would live off the original land & resources; introduce book and read about how	p. 12 pp. 13-19 p. 20 p. 21 p. 23 p. 24

		California Indians thrived; create T-chart to compare/contrast student ideas to text * While reading aloud, refer students to atlas pages showing Native Americans of 1770, Native American Lands Today, CA Missions	
<i>The California Gold Rush</i> by Pam Zollman (2003, Steck-Vaughn)	Nonfiction book describes discovery of gold, Gold Rush, and impact on CA in mini-chapters	* Brainstorm and record what students know about the Gold Rush; read aloud; have students work in small groups to use atlas to retell the story and generate a list of questions about the Gold Rush	p. 12 p. 26-27 p. 28 p. 29 p. 46
<i>Death Valley: A Day in the Desert</i> by Nancy Smiler Levinson (2001, Holiday House)	Level 2 reader; highly pictorial; ideal for reluctant readers or English Learner; describes life in the desert	* Brainstorm what exists in a desert; record to compare and contrast after read aloud * Provide students with drawing paper and colored pencils; explain that students will illustrate a desert scene using information from the text; read aloud; stop periodically and instruct students to add another feature to desert scene; invite students to label features (like in the book)	p. 12 p. 15 pp. 16-19 p. 36 pp. 48-49
<i>Gold Fever (Step into Reading)</i> by Catherine McMorrow (1996, Random House)	Easy reader for reluctant readers, well illustrated story for ELs explaining discovery and Gold Rush in CA	* Create a KWL Chart about the Gold Rush; read aloud and validate knowledge, review questions, and record new learnings * Read aloud while students take notes in a graphic organizer (flow chart) capturing story; use atlas to help students identify locations in story and routes traveled to CA	p. 12 p. 26-27 p. 28 p. 29 p. 46
<i>Hello Ocean</i> by Pam Munoz Ryan (2001, Talewinds)	Beautifully illustrated with simple prose describing life on the ocean/beach; focuses	* Review human senses (hear, see, touch, taste, smell); create a graphic on the board and ask students	p. 12 p. 15

	on senses	to identify their senses in different places (e.g., school, neighborhood, zoo, desert, mall, etc.); have pairs share senses at the ocean/beach; read aloud; have students compare and contrast paired conversations with information in text * Review physical map and physiographic regions to identify and discuss the coast/impact of ocean; refer to exploration, mission, university, population density maps	
<i>How do you Raise a Raisin?</i> By Pam Munoz Ryan (2003, Charlesbridge)	Fun information about raisins, 90% of which come from the Fresno area of CA	* Provide raisins for students to taste while discussing what they know about raisins; have groups complete a KWL chart on raisins; read aloud; use atlas to identify where grapes are grown; complete KWL * Read aloud; discuss story and other top agricultural products grown in CA (p. 39 in atlas); have small groups research information about other products to create a book like text read aloud	p. 12 p. 29 p. 26 pp. 15-19 pp. 35-37 pp. 38-41
<i>Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain: An Angel Island Story</i> by Katrina S. Saltonstall Currier (2005, Angel Island Association)	The story of a young boy who travels from China to San Francisco to meet his father, but is detained at Angel Island before the two are reunited	* Discuss islands with students (e.g., name some they know; unique features of an island; advantages/disadvantages of islands); study maps in atlas with islands and share any information/stories students may have about any of these islands; introduce Angel Island and explain purpose; read aloud story; discuss story and use of landform * Use world map to locate China and CA/U.S.; discuss routes that people	pp. 4-5 p. 12 p. 24 p. 26 p. 41 p. 42 p. 43 pp. 45-47

		travel(ed) to get from China to CA; introduce and read aloud story; discuss the transportation modes and experiences from the story; discuss how it might be different today; have student share or write travel stories based on their personal experiences/knowledge	
<i>Mojave</i> by Diane Siebert (1988, Harper Trophy)	Beautifully written poem and illustrations describing the Mojave Desert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Share experiences in the desert; brainstorm features of a desert; record; compare and contrast list after reading text</li> <li>* Provide students with drawing paper and colored pencils explaining that they will all create a scene of the Mojave while listening to the poem; read aloud; stop periodically and ask students to draw a specific feature (e.g., hawk, sand, mountain ranges, dust devils, tumbleweeds); share drawings and discuss</li> <li>* Define desert, basin, climate, topography and use associated maps in the atlas to help students compare and contrast Mojave region to other parts of CA</li> </ul>	<p>p. 12 p. 13 p. 14 p. 15 pp. 16-17 p. 18 p. 19 p. 20 p. 27 pp. 34-37 pp. 38-39 pp. 44-46</p>
<i>The Rainbow Bridge</i> by Audrey Wood (1995, Voyager Books)	This Chumash creation tale describes how people came to earth and moved from Santa Cruz Island to populate the mainland of CA; explains people's connection to dolphins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Explain creation stories/tales; ask students for examples of stories they know about how people and/or animals came to live on the land; introduce creation tale from the Chumash people; read aloud; discuss story</li> <li>* Ask students to use atlas to identify where the Chumash lived/live; share map that provide this information (p. 20); ask students to describe the features of this region and</li> </ul>	<p>p.20 p. 12 p. 13 p. 14 p. 15 pp. 16-17 p. 18 p. 19 p. 21 pp. 22-23 p. 28 p. 29 p. 32 p. 38 p. 42 p. 43</p>

		identify the map that helps with the description (e.g., physical map for topography, temperature maps for climate, etc.)	pp. 44-45 pp. 46-47
<i>Sierra</i> by Diane Siebert	Beautifully written poem and illustrations describe life in the Sierra Nevada	* Read aloud while students note interesting lines, phrases, or terms; discuss text and answer questions; use atlas to identify Sierra Nevada and elements from text; have students work independently or with partners to combine notes to develop a Found Poem that describes the Sierra Nevada	p. 12 p. 15 pp. 16-19 pp. 36-37 p. 44 p. 48
<i>Ten Mile Day: And the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad</i> by Mary Ann Fraser (1993, Henry Holt & Co.)	Picture book tells about the last big push to complete the building of the first transcontinental railroad	* In small groups, ask students to create a timeline of transportation between CA and the East Coast; share timelines and discuss the importance of transportation over time; introduce and read aloud story; discuss changes to transportation since 1869 using maps in atlas; have student recreate individual, illustrated timelines of transportation in the U.S. * Ask students to think about the costs and benefits of building and using transportation in the U.S.; chart responses in a T chart on the board; introduce story and ask students to think about the costs and benefits while you read aloud; discuss ideas and highlight the changes to the environment using maps in the atlas	U.S. map p. 24 p. 26 p. 28 p. 30 p. 32 p. 33 p. 41

### Other Trade Books

*California History for Children: A Handbook of Short Stories from California's Colorful Past*  
edited by James Stevenson (1999, James Stevenson Publisher)  
*The California Missions* by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk (1995, Franklin Watts)

*Classic Tales in California History* by Alton Pryor (1999, Stagecoach)  
*Earthquakes: Witness to Disaster* by Judy & Dennis Fradin (2008, National Geographic)  
*Gold Fever: Tales from the California Gold Rush* by Rosalyn Schanzer (1999, National Geographic)  
*I Didn't Know That Almanac: 2007 California Edition* (2006, Coolsprings Press)  
*Little Known Tales in California History* by Alton Pryor (1997, Stagecoach Publishing)  
*Missions of the Southern Coast* by Nancy Lemke (1996, Lerner)  
*Stories California Indians Told* by Anne B. Fisher (1957, Houghton Mifflin)  
*Stories Where We Live: The California Coast* edited by Sara St. Antoine (2001, Milkweed)  
*Tales from Gold Mountain: Stories of the Chinese in the New World* by Paul Yee (1989, Macmillan Publishing)  
*In the Days of the Vaqueros: America's First True Cowboys* by Russell Freedman (2001, Clarion)

### **California Chronicles (Cobblestone Magazines)**

California in WWII (March 1999)  
The California Missions (September 1999)  
California Through Artists Eyes (May 1999)  
Gold (May 1998)  
High Sierra (January 2000)  
Hollywood (March 2000)  
Native Americans of Northern California (November 1998)  
Native Americans of Southern California (November 1999)  
Railroads (January 1999)  
Statehood (May 2000)  
Water (September 1998)

### **Chapter Books/Novels**

*Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan (2000, Scholastic Press)  
*Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell (1960, Houghton Mifflin)  
*Juan & Mariano: Passage to Monterey* by Debra Romeyn (2003, Gossamer Books)  
*Never Turn Back: Father Serra's Mission* by Jim Rawls (1993, Steck-Vaughn)  
*Patty Reed's Doll: The Story of the Donner Party* by Rachel K. Laurgaard (1989, Tomato Enterprises)  
*Pasquala: The Story of a California Indian Girl* by Gail Faber & Michele Lasagna (1990, Magpie Publications)  
*Quake! Disaster in San Francisco, 1906* by Gail Langer Karwoski (2004, Peachtree Publishers)  
*The Stories of Juana Briones: Alta California Pioneer* by Glenda Richter (2002, Bookhandler Press)

### **Books to Improve Basic Understanding of Geography**

*Geography from A to Z: A Picture Glossary* by Jack Knowlton (1997, HarperCollins)  
*If America Were a Village: A Book about the People of the United States* by David J. Smith (2009, Kids Can Press)  
*If the World Were a Village* by David J. Smith (2004, A & C Black Publishers)  
*Maps and Globes* by Jack Knowlton (1986, Harper Collins)  
*Me on the Map* by Joan Sweeny (1998, Dragonfly Books)  
*Where I Live* by Frances Wolfe (2001, Tundra)