



INTRODUCTION

Orange County is rich in history, from its early rancho period to today's modern skyscrapers, freeways and burgeoning housing developments. Yet, most of us simply don't know much about the history of the community where we live nor how it came to be.

The purpose of this downloadable curriculum supplement – *Orange County: Ranchos, Oranges and a Mouse* – is to provide teachers in Orange County and their third grade students an easy, fun and engaging way to learn about Orange County history. By bringing to life the people and events of the past, these materials are meant to help students gain a stronger understanding of their local roots and to appreciate important historical moments that influenced the county's development.

Created by the Orange County Archives in conjunction with local elementary school teachers and education experts, this curriculum supplement is designed to be easy to use. Lesson plans are flexible, require little preparation and are correlated to meet California State Education Content Standards for third grade. Historic photos, photos of artifact reproductions and documents supplement the lessons and provide memorable learning moments for students in a variety of formats – games, experiments, presentations, writing projects and worksheets. The curriculum supplement focuses on the post-rancho period (1850 and beyond). Its agriculture theme – probably one of the most important influential factors in the county's development – helps provide context and a common thread to increase student's learning and retention. By unit end, all students will have created their own "My Orange County" history booklet, serving not only as a keepsake, but as a way to reinforce lesson concepts.

We hope you find this program a helpful and meaningful addition to your classroom activities. We'd welcome any feedback you have to make this an even more enriching and meaningful experience for all students.



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Orange County Clerk-Recorder



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Orange County Archives would like to recognize those who have contributed to this project:

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GETTING STARTED



1. We highly recommend reading through this manual first before presenting the lessons.
2. First, it would be helpful to review the lesson plans (listed in the table of contents) to familiarize yourself with how the plans are ordered.
3. A brief three-page “History of Orange County” and “Historical Timeline” are provided upfront to give teachers general background knowledge before presenting the unit.
3. The first lesson plan contains a slide show presentation designed as a fun and visual way to introduce students to the subject matter. It is downloadable separately as a PowerPoint. Lesson 1 includes a reader-friendly script to help involve students as “show narrators.”
4. Each of the 14 lesson plans in this unit follows the same format. Each lesson plan includes teacher background information specific to that lesson. All materials needed for the lesson are included in each downloadable file.
5. Lesson plans are sequenced to “tell a story” about the county’s development, but can also be taught as individual lessons if necessary to accommodate limited classroom time. Teachers facing time constraints can choose to focus on core lessons (marked on the previous page with an asterisk *), which provide enough information to teach essential unit concepts.
6. Each lesson plan includes one or more accompanying ready-to-go student activity or assignment. Teachers should not feel compelled to do all activities, but rather select elements that are best suited for their particular class, teaching style or time availability.
7. After each lesson, students will create a page to include in their own “*My Orange County*” history booklet. These pages also make ideal study pages for teachers interested in creating a vocabulary word test at the end of the unit.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF ORANGE COUNTY

Teacher Background

(Note that starting with Lesson #2, all lessons include teacher background information pertinent to that lesson.)

Beginnings

The first people to live in Orange County came here thousands of years ago. They lived by hunting and fishing and gathering the plants and seeds. When the first Spanish explorers arrived, they found two native groups here. They called the *Acjachemen* people in the southern part of the county the Juaneño, and the *Tongva* people to the north the Gabrielino.

In 1769, Spain sent Catholic missionaries and Spanish soldiers to colonize California. Don Gaspar de Portolá led the first overland expedition through Orange County that summer. In 1771, Father Junípero Serra founded Mission San Gabriel in what is now Los Angeles County. Five years later, on November 1, 1776, Mission San Juan Capistrano was founded. The two missions laid claim to much of what would become Orange County, grazing cattle, horses, and sheep here until the 1830s.

In 1784, Manuel Nieto, a retired Spanish soldier, was granted grazing rights between the Santa Ana and San Gabriel rivers. Around 1800, Juan Pablo Grijalva began running cattle south and east of the Santa Ana River; in 1810 his son-in-law, José Antonio Yorba, and his grandson, Juan Pablo Peralta, received a formal concession to the land that became known as the Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana.

Mexico broke away from Spain in 1821, and the Mexican government secularized the California missions in 1834. More and more settlers were granted grazing lands. By 1846, almost all of Orange County was part of one rancho or another. Trading vessels from the United States and other countries sailed up and down the California coast, collecting cattle hides and tallow in return for manufactured goods. With the end of the Mexican War in 1848, California was ceded to the United States by Mexico. When California became a state in 1850, what is now Orange County was a part of Los Angeles County.

The Gold Rush of 1849 brought thousands of new settlers to California, and gave the rancheros a new market for their cattle, sold to feed hard-working miners. The local economy soared. But a series of droughts, floods, and diseases, and the costs of defending the ownership of their lands in the American courts, eventually drove many of the rancheros to ruin.

Some of the old ranchos were sold to new American owners with names like Stearns, Bixby and Irvine, and sheep ranching began replacing cattle during the Civil War. Other ranchos were broken up and sold off in pieces to settlers and developers.

Communities Form

Anaheim was the first American town founded in what is now Orange County. In 1857, a group of German immigrants living in San Francisco bought a portion of the Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana to start a new community, built on winemaking. After the initial development was complete, the first colonists moved to Anaheim in 1859.

In 1868, vast areas on either side of the Santa Ana River were placed on the market, and the towns of Santa Ana, Tustin, Orange, Westminster, and Garden Grove were soon founded. Farming became the backbone of the local economy. Wine and raisin grapes, wheat, barley, and corn were all successful. In the 1870s, new irrigation systems were built, which allowed more tree crops to be planted, including walnuts, apricots, and the first few orange groves.

In 1870, the first commercial vessel entered Newport Bay, which soon became a regular shipping point. The Southern Pacific built the first railroad in the area, extending its tracks south from Los Angeles to Anaheim in 1875.

A County is Born

The Southern Pacific Railroad held a monopoly in Southern California until 1885, when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway pushed its tracks over the Cajon Pass. Competition brought a burst of advertising, and a sharp drop in ticket prices, setting off a great real estate boom throughout the region. New towns and subdivisions sprang up by the dozens as tourists and settlers poured into Southern California, and existing communities grew rapidly. But in less than two years, the boom had collapsed, and with it, many of the new towns. Carlton, San Juan-by-the-Sea, St. James, and other “paper towns” faded away. Others, like Fullerton, Buena Park and El Toro survived.

The burst of economic growth and local pride in 1886-88 led to the creation of the County of Orange in 1889. As early as 1870, local residents tried to break away from Los Angeles and form their own county, but it was not until 1889 that the California Legislature passed a bill to allow a vote on county division.

Originally, the proposed county line was drawn at the San Gabriel River, but the line was moved south to Coyote Creek to help gain support in Sacramento. This angered Anaheim and some of the other northern communities that had hoped to be near the center of the new county, and they voted against the measure. But the rest of the area voted overwhelming for division. Santa Ana was selected as the county seat, and the County of Orange was officially formed on August 1, 1889.

Wealth from the Soil

Until the 1950s, agriculture remained the most important part of Orange County’s economy. As other crops disappeared, citrus became more and more popular. The grape industry never recovered from a devastating blight in 1886-87. Apricots had all but disappeared by 1920. Growers began planting celery, sugar beets, walnuts and lima beans in the 1890s. Cattle still grazed on the vast ranches in the southern end of the county, while dairy farms grew in the north. But it was citrus that came to dominate the area. By the 1930s, Orange County was producing a sixth of the nation’s Valencia orange crop.

The oil industry also played a key role in the development of Orange County. The first successful wells were drilled locally in the 1890s along the northern edge of the county. Oil fields were soon developed in La Habra, Brea Canyon and Olinda. Major strikes in Placentia (1919) and Huntington Beach (1920) started an oil boom that swept the county. While agriculture has all but disappeared, many local oil wells are still pumping today.

Transportation

Much of Orange County’s growth in the first half of the 20th Century was fueled by new forms of transportation. Between 1904 and 1910, the Pacific Electric Railway built three main lines to serve Orange County with its “big red cars.” The coast line spurred development from Seal Beach to Corona del Mar. The Santa Ana line prompted the founding of Cypress and Stanton. And the La Habra line ran all the way down to Yorba Linda.

In the 1910s and 1920s, new highways led the way to new communities. California’s first state highway in 1914-15 crossed Orange County from San Juan Capistrano to La Habra. Several small communities later developed along Beach and Manchester Boulevards, and the completion of the Coast Highway in 1926 brought new growth to places like Laguna Beach and Dana Point.

Freeway construction began in the 1950s with the opening of the Santa Ana (I-5) Freeway, and continued almost unabated into the 1970s. Beginning in the 1990s, toll roads were built to meet the needs of growing communities.

Modern Development

During World War II, a number of important military bases were established in Orange County, including the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, the Los Alamitos Naval Weapons Station and the Santa Ana Army Air Base. At the end of the war, many veterans decided to settle in Southern California, and the region began to grow at an unprecedented rate.

By the mid-1950s, Orange County's farms were being replaced by tract housing faster than any other community in the United States. Existing cities began annexing territory in every direction, and new cities incorporated almost every year. Between 1953 and 1962, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, La Palma, Garden Grove, Cypress, Westminster, Fountain Valley, Los Alamitos, San Juan Capistrano and Villa Park all voted to incorporate. In 1963, the county population topped one million.

Tourism, manufacturing and the service industry began to dominate the local economy. The opening of Disneyland in 1955 made Orange County an international tourist destination. Beginning in the late 1950s, aerospace firms and light industry began expanding here, and the increasing population meant more and more jobs at hospitals, restaurants and stores.

South Orange County began to grow in the 1960s, with master planned communities such as Irvine, Mission Viejo and Laguna Niguel. Aliso Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, Ladera Ranch and others followed in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, Orange County is home to more than three million residents, with 34 incorporated cities.

ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Chronology of Important Events and Developments

1784 Manuel Nieto granted grazing rights between the Santa Ana and San Gabriel Rivers; the first private rancho in Orange County.

1801 Juan Pablo Grijalva given permission to establish a rancho south and east of the Santa Ana River; later granted to his heirs, the Yorba and Peralta families, as the Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana.

1821 Mexico gains independence from Spain; California becomes a Mexican territory.

1825 Severe flooding changes the course of the Santa Ana River.

1834 Secularization of the missions begins opening more land to be granted as ranchos.

1837 Rancho San Joaquin granted to José Sepulveda; later becomes the core of the Irvine Ranch.

1845 Juan Forster is granted Rancho Mission Viejo.

1846 California captured by the United States during the early weeks of the Mexican War; formally ceded in 1848 by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

1848 Gold discovered at Sutter's Mill; the Gold Rush creates a huge market for cattle from the local ranchos.

1850 California admitted to the Union as the 31st state. Los Angeles County formed; includes what is now Orange County.

1857 Anaheim founded as a co-operative farming colony; first settlers arrive in 1859.

1863 Two-year drought begins, devastating local cattle ranches.

1864 Anaheim Landing established on Alamitos Bay.

1864 Flint, Bixby & Co. (including partner James Irvine) buy two old Mexican ranchos and a part of third for a sheep ranch. Becomes the Irvine Ranch when Irvine buys out his partners in 1876.

1868 Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana partitioned among the Yorba and Peralta heirs and other owners. Several new towns soon founded.

1868 Stearns Ranchos west of the Santa Ana River placed on the market, opening that area to settlement. Other new towns soon follow.

1869 Santa Ana founded by William Spurgeon.

1870 Tustin founded by Columbus Tustin.

1870 Rev. Lemuel P. Webber founds Westminster.

1870 First attempt to form a separate county to be known as Anaheim County; passed the State Assembly but dies in committee in the State Senate.

1870 First local orange trees planted; first English walnut trees planted.

1870 First commercial vessel enters Newport Bay.

1871 Orange founded by Alfred Chapman and Andrew Glassell. The town was originally known as Richland, but was renamed in 1873.

1875 Southern Pacific railroad builds branch line from Los Angeles to Anaheim; extended to Santa Ana in 1877.

1886 Mysterious disease begins to sweep through local vineyards, devastating local wine and raisin industry.

1887 Santa Fe Railroad arrives; real estate boom.

1887 Fullerton and Buena Park founded.

1888 Original Newport Beach Wharf built by the McFadden brothers.

1889 Orange County formed out of the southern third of Los Angeles County; Santa Ana selected as county seat.

1891 First successful celery crop in Orange County.

1893 Southern California Fruit Exchange (Sunkist) formed; citrus becoming major local crop.

1896 Sugar beet factory built at Los Alamitos.

1897 James Irvine donates Irvine Park to the county.

1901 Huntington Beach founded; originally known as Pacific City. Renamed in 1903.

1903 Brea founded; originally known as Randolph.

1905 Cypress and Stanton founded.

1907 The Newbert Protection District is formed to help control the unpredictable Santa Ana River.

1913 First Fuerte avocado grove planted in Yorba Linda.

1920 Knott family moves to Buena Park to go into the berry business.

1925 San Clemente founded by Ole Hanson.

1927 Orange County Flood Control District formed.

1929 Santiago Orange Growers Association in Orange ships over 820,000 crates of Valencia oranges, becoming the largest Valencia packing house in the United States.

1931 Santiago Dam built, forming Irvine Lake.

1933 Long Beach earthquake causes serious damage and loss of life in several Orange County communities.

1936 Newport Harbor is dedicated following an extensive dredging program.

1938 Serious flooding, loss of life and property damage throughout much of Orange County.

1942 With the start of World War II, the Santa Ana Army Air Base, Los Alamitos Naval Air Station and other military installations are established in Orange County.

1951 Municipal Water District of Orange County formed.

1955 Disneyland opens.

1958 Hughes Aircraft Co. opens Orange County's first major aerospace plant in Fullerton.

1963 Orange County's population passes one million.

1967 South Coast Plaza opens in Costa Mesa.

1971 First section of Dana Point Harbor opens.

1983 Donald Bren purchases a controlling interest in the Irvine Company.

1986 The Orange County Performing Arts Center opens.

1986 First homes in Rancho Santa Margarita go on the market.

1994 Orange County files bankruptcy after a \$1.67 billion investment pool loss.

1999 El Toro Marine Corps Naval Air Station closes.

2006 Villa Park Orchards Association, Orange County's last citrus packing house, closes.