**The 1870s**

**Bad Days Over**

Do you remember the terrible floods and drought in the 1860s? It was a bad time for Los Angeles. The desert looks like a desert in the 1860s, but it does not anymore.

**Links to standards**

**Social Studies:** 4.3.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4  
**Language Arts:** RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.4, RF.4.3, RF.4.4a&c, W.4.1a-d, W.4.3a-e, W.4.4, W.4.7, SL.4.1, SL.4.2, SL.4.3, SL.4.5

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**Additional activities:**

1. **Writing exercise:** Using the 1870s decade sheet as a reference, ask students to imagine that they just arrived to Los Angeles by train and are writing to a friend or family member elsewhere in the United States explaining what the trip was like and what their opinion is of California in the 1870s.

2. **Research:** History doesn’t just happen, people make decisions that later we look back on and see how they affected society. Have students research the transcontinental railroad and how it transformed California. Have students provide their opinion about how California would have been different in the 1870s, if the railroad did not connect California to the rest of the United States. Encourage students to include images, charts, and/or audio when they present their findings.

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**Objective:**

1. To discover and explore the history of California in the 1870s

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Materials:**

1. “The 1870s”

**Directions:**

1. Review the definition of “decade” with your students.
2. Distribute “The 1870s.”
3. Have students read “The 1870s” individually, in pairs, groups, or as a class. You may want to review the vocabulary words in bold.
4. When finished, point out the highlights of the 1870s—the population of Los Angeles, what kind of work people did, what kind of houses people lived in, and how people traveled to and from places. Each of these highlights will be discussed with students when they visit the Homestead Museum.
5. Compare the highlights of the 1870s with the 1840s and 1920s after studying each of the decades.

**Lesson Plan**

1. **The 1870s**
2. **House to Rent**
3. **Furniture for Sale**
4. **Pioneer Hack Line, Bell Union Hotel, Bell Union Hotel**
5. **Bargains! A Young Orange Grove, On Pico Street—Cheap.**
7. **FOR SALE By WORKMAN & TOWNSEND BANKERS, Tange & Co.—Los Angeles Legal & Rural. Real Estate, Land, Deeds, and Bonds.**
8. **Bargains! A Young Orange Grove, On Pico Street—Cheap.**
10. **FOR SALE By WORKMAN & TOWNSEND BANKERS, Tange & Co.—Los Angeles Legal & Rural. Real Estate, Land, Deeds, and Bonds.**

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**Homestead Museum: A Journey Through Time © Historical Resources, Inc.**
Frontier Town Grows

Have you noticed the changes in Los Angeles lately? The population has really grown. In the 1840s Los Angeles was a small pueblo of 2,000 people. Now it is a big town of 16,000 people. Why are people moving here?

Immigrants come here in search of a new life. Others choose Los Angeles to escape the cold weather in the Midwest and on the East Coast. Finally there is a lot of farmland available. Thank goodness for all of these new settlers. Otherwise, Los Angeles would still be an isolated town on the West Coast.

Bad Days Over

Do you remember the terrible floods and drought back in the decade of the 1860s? It was a bad time for us all as we watched most of our cattle die. What would we do if we could not farm? California’s climate is perfect for growing agricultural crops like wheat, grapes, and oranges. Los Angeles may have looked like a desert in the 1860s, but it does not anymore.

Census Report for 1870

**Los Angeles County**

- Horses ................. 9,652
- Sheep .................. 247,503
- Wheat ................. 12,210 bushels
- Indian corn ........... 454,896 bshls
- Wine .................. 531,710 gal.
- Factories ............... 79
- Steam Engines .......... 6

**San Francisco County**

- Horses .................. 611
- Sheep ................... 1
- Wheat .................... 0
- Indian corn ............ 0
- Wine ..................... 0
- Factories .............. 1,223
- Steam Engines .......... 207

Workman Remodels House

William Workman of Puente has just completed the remodeling of his home. Many Los Angeles residents like Workman are constructing stores and homes out of brick and wood, replacing the once-popular adobe. Workman has taken care to add a lot of decorations too. Many of these decorations were manufactured in factories thousands of miles away and then transported by train to California.

This grand house is an impressive addition to the San Gabriel Valley and Workman extends his hospitality to all who visit.

Train Arrives

Everyone is excited that we can now travel by train from Los Angeles to the rest of the nation. Traveling by train is much faster than by ship or wagon. A wagon coming overland from Boston took up to six months to reach California. The train takes only six days.

We are also excited because any modern conveniences we order through the catalog from the East Coast will take only six days to arrive.

A Dull Place?

Many people think there is not much to do for fun in Los Angeles. How wrong they are! When visiting you can see a play at the Merced Theater, roller skate at the roller rink, see the monkeys and leopards at Washington Gardens, or enjoy ice cream at the ice cream parlor.

Everyday Los Angeles is changing and becoming a more exciting place to live. Just think what it will be like in another 50 years.

Advertisements

House to Rent

**AND**

FURNITURE FOR SALE

On Fort Street, between First and Second.

Apply to C. A. RICHMOND, Bella Union Hotel

Grand Ball!

There will be a Grand Ball at LAFAYETTE HOTEL, Main Street, Los Angeles on the Night of December 25. Excellent Music & a Splendid SUPPER will be furnished.

BARGAINS!

- A Young Orange Grove, On Pico street—cheap.
- A Ranch at the San Gabriel Mission.
- A Farm at Anaheim.

FOR SALE BY WILEY & BARRY.

Pioneer Hack Line, Hacks, Carriages, and Coaches.

EXCURSION & PICNIC PARTIES

Safely and expeditiously conveyed to all parts of the City, Race Track, and Fair Ground by Careful Drivers.

Inquire at the Pico House.