

Lesson Plan: Day 2 Gila River to the Colorado River

I. Concepts:

Maps help us to learn about geography (a science which encompasses a great variety of topics). Anza's trail leads through two large deserts, which impacted their travels. Students will see and receive a map of the Anza Trail for the first time and trace out the route to the Gila River. They will learn about some of the desert plants and animals in the areas that they are crossing through. Finally, they will write in their journals what desert animals and plants are their favorites.

II. Preparation:

- Display a large map on the wall that can be drawn on. An overhead map may be made from the transparency included
- Gather information of desert environment, animals and native cultures of the area. See "Extras "
- Approximate time for lesson: 45 minutes (can be extended)

III. Classroom Activities:

- Teacher uses large wall map to point out the location of the trail that Anza had discovered on his first trip
- Teacher discusses where the trip will take them, following the route of the second expedition
- Teacher and class read the Day 2 Summary
- During the discussion the teacher will share information on the geography and native people of the area (Sonoran and Colorado Deserts)
- Students will become aware of the native flora and fauna of the desert area
- Students refer to the map on page 3 in journal, locate hometown listed on their identity card and trace the route on their map

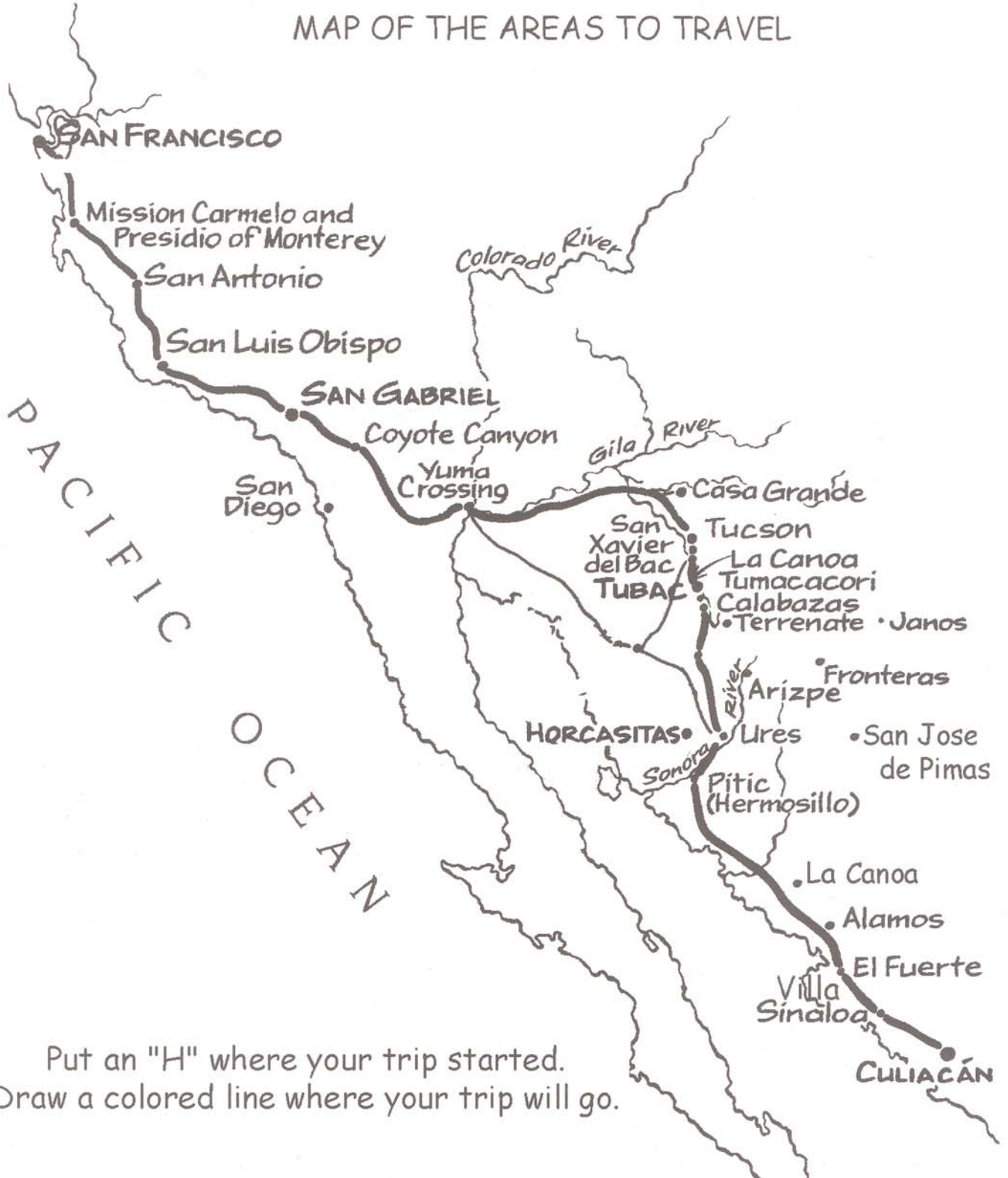
Notes:

The trip should start in Horcasitas (see *Day 1 Summary* and on Day Five "Synopsis of Anza 's Trek "). During the discussion you may wish to draw on the wall map the progress of the trip and during this time pin large pictures on the map of plants, animals and native tribes seen in these areas. On this day you should only go as far as the Colorado River if you plan to go back to the map after the trek on Day Five. If you go as far as San Gabriel Mission you can finish the map on the last day and tie in a later study of missions and presidios.

Students could brainstorm before being informed about what they would expect to see.

If unable to gather additional research materials on desert life, you may wish to eliminate the student journal page "My favorite desert plant, my favorite desert animal."

MAP OF THE AREAS TO TRAVEL



Put an "H" where your trip started.
Draw a colored line where your trip will go.

ANIMALS & PLANTS OF THE SONORAN & COLORADO DESERTS

Anza 's trail leads through two of the North American deserts. The area that these pioneers came from is the Sonoran Desert. This area encompasses most of Baja California, the northwest area of Mexico and the southwest area of Arizona. The Sonoran Desert has more types of plants than any other North American desert partly because it has two rainy seasons. Winter rain comes from the Pacific Ocean and summer rain from the Gulf of Mexico. It is also one of the hottest with summer temperatures reaching over 120 degrees and winter rarely below freezing.

Our pioneers came from the inland areas of the Mexican Sonora Desert, so they would not have experienced the animals that might have been seen near the Pacific Ocean or the Gulf of California. Some plants they might have seen:

SAGUARO CACTUS	ORGAN PIPE CACTUS	CARDOON CACTUS
PRICKLY-PEAR CACTUS	CREOSOTE	BRITTLEBUSH
YUCCA	CHAIN-FRUIT CHOLLA	PALO VERDE
MEXICAN POPPY	OWL 'S-CLOVER	CARDON
TEDDY-BEAR CHOLLA	OCOTILLO	COTTONWOOD

Some animals they might have seen:

TURKEY VULTURE	HARRIS ' HAWK	CACTUS WREN
GAMBEL'S QUAIL	ROADRUNNER	BAT
KINGSNAKE	RATTLESNAKE	TARANTULA
WESTERN WHIPTAIL	RINGTAIL CAT	MULE DEER
COLLARED LIZARD	VELVET ANT	STINK BEETLE
BARK SCORPION	WOODRAT	COATI
COTTONTAIL RABBIT	JAVELINA	COUGAR
BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT		SIDE-BLOTCHED LIZARD

Once the group crossed the Colorado River they would have entered a slightly different environment. The name Colorado Desert is given to the land west of the river, north to about the bottom of Nevada, and about halfway down the southeastern coast of Baja California. Many of the same animals and plants are found in the Colorado Desert but there are some special plants and animals to add to the list. The terrain varies from vast sand dunes (Algodones Dunes) to rocky mountains. The winter rains give areas of colorful fields of wildflowers in the spring.

Some new plants to see:

FISHHOOK CACTUS	BARREL CACTUS	HEDGEHOG CACTUS
PENCIL CHOLLA	CHUPAROSA	SMOKE TREE
IRONWOOD	FAN PALM	AGAVE
MORMON TEA	SAND VERBENA	EVENING PRIMROSE
BEAVERTAIL CACTUS	DESERT DANDELION	INDIGO BUSH
LUPINE	SILVER CHOLLA	

Some new animals to see:

RED-TAILED HAWK	COSTA 'S HUMMINGBIRD	CHUCKWALLA
PAINTED LADY	SPINY LIZARD	SIDEWINDER
BLISTER BEETLE	POCKET MOUSE	KANGAROO RAT
COYOTE	BIGHORN SHEEP	ANTELOPE SQUIRREL
WHITE-LINED SPHINX MOTH		

Possible Lesson Extension (see journal pages)

My favorite desert plant is _____

because

My favorite desert animal is

because

Day 2 Summary

The Gila River stretched out like a broad ribbon to the west. The Anza expedition used it as a guide, knowing that it would lead them across the desert to Chief Palma and the Yuma People at the Colorado River. Although there was enough water, the animals were always in search of more grass. The Sonoran Desert offered very little grass for the horses and cows. As the weather began to turn cold, the lack of trees made the search for firewood difficult.

As the group followed the Gila River, they encountered many different Native American communities. At each community, Anza would distribute small gifts to the Indians, such as ribbon and beads. The beads were often made into jewelry. Father Font estimated that 3,000 Native Americans were living along the Gila River. As they neared Gila Bend, Anza and Font traveled to view the ruins at Casa Grande and to marvel at the ancient cultures that had built them.

The expedition was forced to stop for a number of days as another woman gave birth. As she slowly gathered strength, many other people including Font and some of the soldiers became sick as they headed west. The delays were definitely a concern for Anza. With a limited number of animals, he had only brought enough food and supplies for four months. Each delay depleted more and more of their food. They would have to take advantage of any food they could find along the way. Hunting for animals and trading with the tribes along the trail would help out. As they were resting along the Gila River, some of Anza's soldiers took advantage of the break to look for additional supplies. Along the Gila, they discovered large fields of salt and collected as much as they could carry both for seasoning and to cure meat.

As the expedition got closer to the Colorado River, Chief Palma of the Yuma Indians sent scouts out to help guide Anza and the expedition in. Anza had met with Palma in 1774 when he had brought a small group of soldiers along the trail. Anza had brought a number of gifts for Palma, including an ornate uniform fitting for a king of the Yuma people. While there, Anza promised that on his return, he would bring Palma south to Mexico to meet the viceroy.

The expedition rested along the Colorado River and enjoyed the hospitality of the Yuman speaking people. The Yuma Indians shared their supply of melons as beans with the Spanish settlers. While they waited, they helped construct a small shelter for the two priests that would stay behind and help serve as missionaries to serve the Yuma community.

When the day finally came to leave, Palma sent some of his strongest swimmers into the river to help catch any of the settlers who fell off of their horses. Many of the settlers could not swim and the Colorado River was running wide, deep, and cold. In the end, everyone made it across the river. Their next big challenge would be to cross the California desert.