

# The Land and the First People



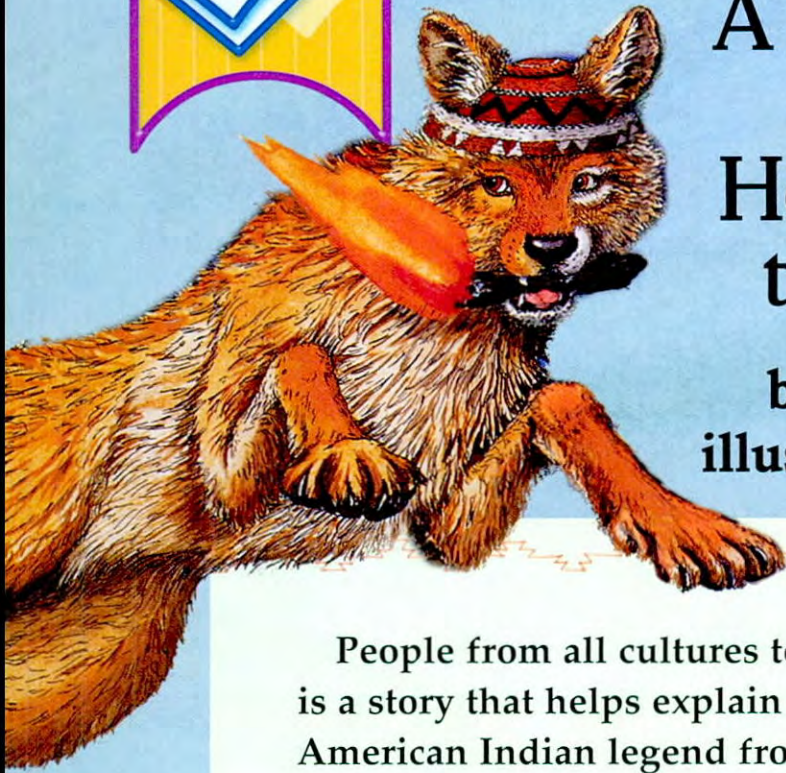
▶ A Hupa Indian fishes on California's Trinity River.



Start  
with a  
Legend



# FIRE RACE



## A Karuk Coyote Tale of How Fire Came to the People

by Jonathan London  
illustrated by Sylvia Long

People from all cultures tell legends. A **legend** is a story that helps explain something. Read this American Indian legend from the Karuk tribe to find out how fire came to the people.

**L**ong ago, the animal people had no fire. Then one day a wise old Coyote heard about fire. But the fire was guarded by three Yellow Jacket sisters and they did not want to share it. They lived high on top of a snowy mountain. Coyote went to the sisters' house and was able to sneak out with a charred oak branch in his teeth. The Yellow Jacket sisters came after him and tried to sting him. Coyote was able to pass the fire to Eagle, who passed it on to Mountain Lion. Then Mountain Lion passed the coal to Fox, and then the coal was passed to Bear.

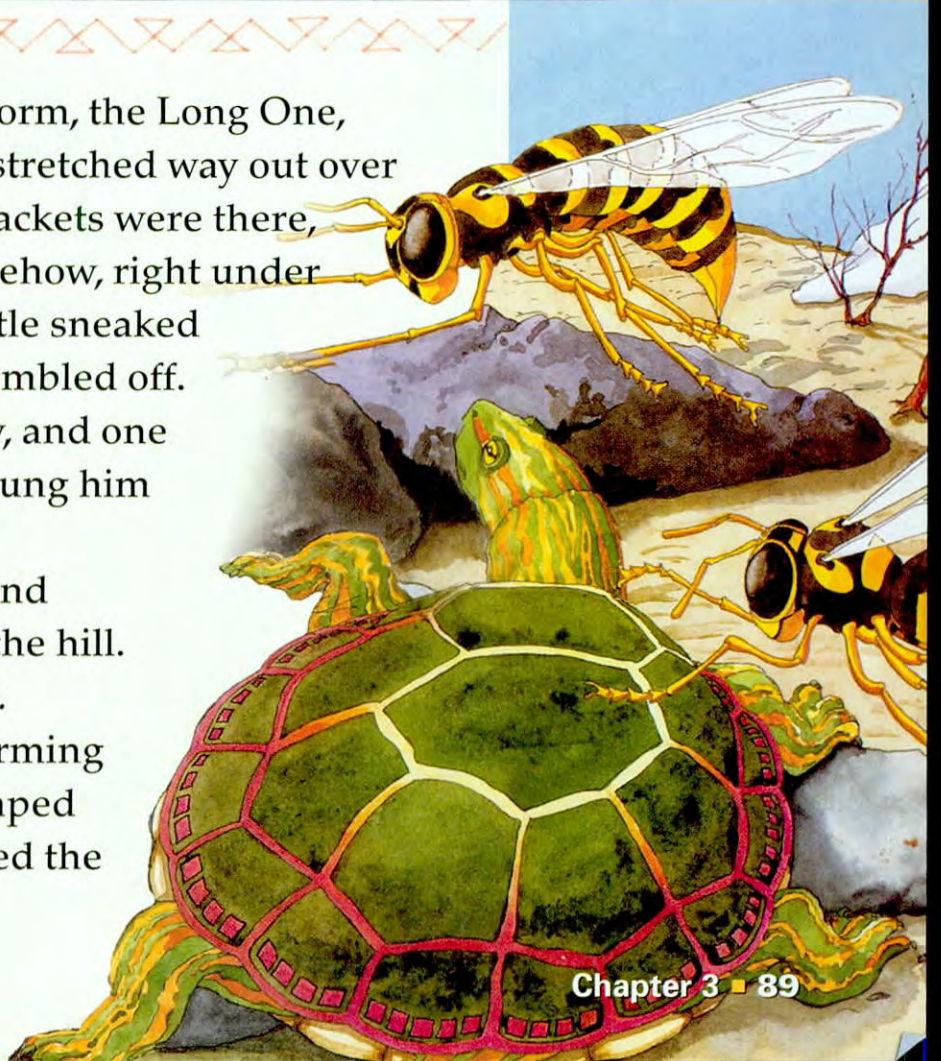




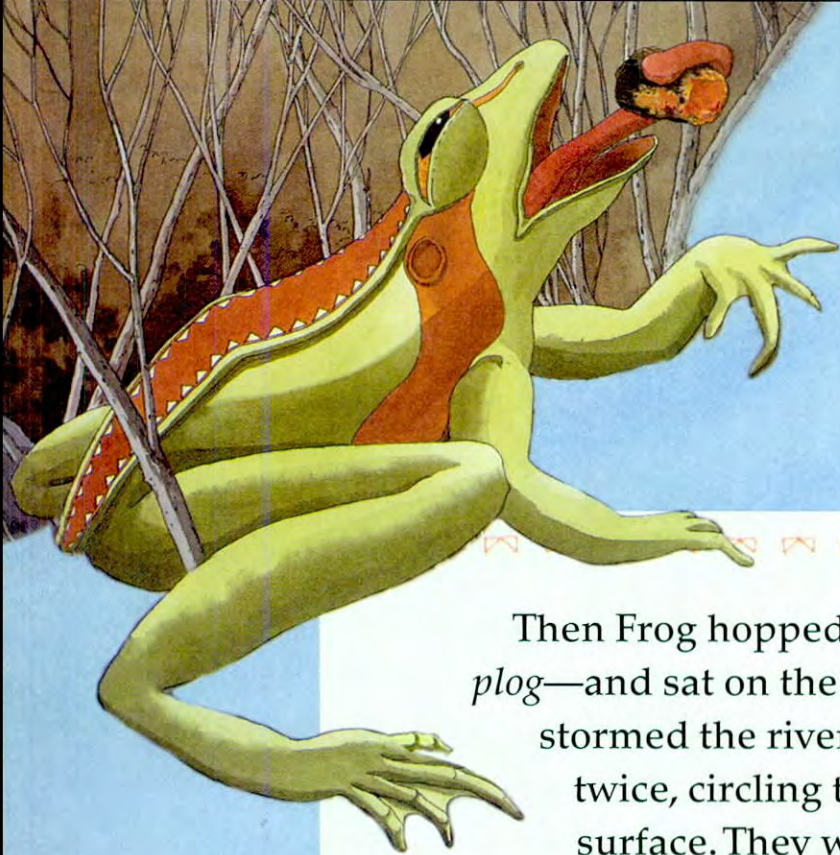


As Bear fell, Measuring Worm, the Long One, took the fire. The Long One stretched way out over three ridges, yet the Yellow Jackets were there, waiting, ready to strike. Somehow, right under the Yellow Jackets's eyes, Turtle sneaked in, grabbed the fire, and scrambled off. But of course Turtle was slow, and one of the Yellow Jacket sisters stung him on his tail. *Akee! Akee! Akee!*

Turtle pulled in his head and legs and flip-flopped down the hill. *Fallumph. Fallumph. Fallumph.* The Yellow Jackets were swarming all over Turtle, when Frog leaped out of the river and swallowed the fire. *Gulp!*







Then Frog hopped back into the river—*plog*—and sat on the bottom. The Yellow Jackets stormed the river, circling once, circling twice, circling three times, buzzing the surface. They waited and they waited and they waited, but Frog held the fire, and his breath. Finally, the Yellow Jackets gave up, and flew back home.



As soon as the Yellow Jacket sisters were gone, Frog burst out of the water, and spat the hot coal into the roots of the willow growing along the river. The tree swallowed the fire, and the animal people didn't know what to do.



Then once again Coyote came along, and the animal people said, "Grandfather, you must show us how to get the fire from the willow." So Old Man Coyote, who is very wise and knows these things, said, "Hah!" and showed them how to rub two willow sticks together over dry moss to make fire.



From that time on the people have known how to coax fire from the wood in order to keep warm and to cook their food. And at night in the seasons of the cold, they have sat in a circle around the fires and listened as the elders told the old stories. And so it is, even to this day. *Kupanakanakana*.





## Response Corner

- 1 Why do you think people create legends?
- 2 Use the illustrations to retell the story of how fire came to the people.



## Lesson

# 1

# Tribes of California



### What to Know

Who were the early American Indians in California?

- ✓ Four geographical groups of American Indians lived in California long ago.
- ✓ These groups were in different parts of California.

### Vocabulary

**tribe** p. 92

**language** p. 93

**shelter** p. 94



### Cause and Effect



California Standards

HSS 3.2, 3.2.2

Hundreds of years ago, only American Indians lived on the land that would become California. When people from Europe first arrived, about 300,000 American Indians were living in what is now California.

## Four Geographical Groups

American Indians in many parts of North America lived in groups called tribes. A **tribe** is an Indian group that shares some common ways of life. In California, however, Indian tribes were smaller than in other places.

► This 1857 painting shows American Indians fishing on the Noyo River in Mendocino County.





California Indians lived in small villages. Several villages made up each tribe. Some villages were long-lasting. Other villages were used for only a short time before the Indians had to move to look for food.

Most California tribes belonged to one of four main geographical groups. They were California's Northern Coastal group, Central Valley and Mountain group, Southern Coastal group, and Desert group.

Because the tribes in each group lived in the same type of environment, their lives were alike in some ways. For example, tribes in the Desert group ate the same kinds of foods, because they found the same kinds of plants and animals near them. Since they had the same climate, their homes and their clothes were nearly alike.

Each tribe had its own language. A **language** is the group of sounds and words people use to communicate.

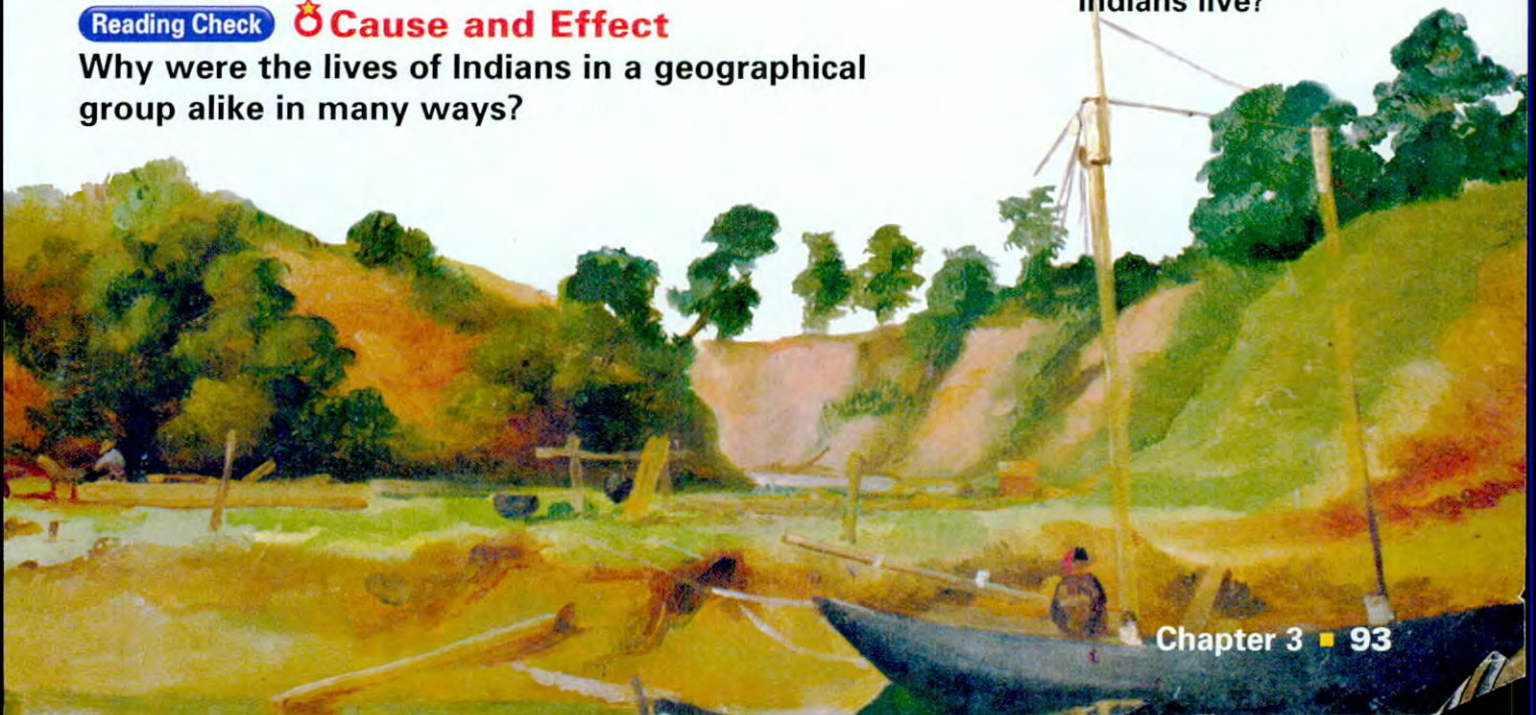
**Reading Check** ★ **Cause and Effect**

**Why were the lives of Indians in a geographical group alike in many ways?**



**ANALYZE SKILL** **Analyze Maps**

❖ **Regions** Where in California did the Yurok and Mojave Indians live?





# Indians of the Northern Coast

The Northern Coastal people survived by using the area's rich natural resources. The forests were full of animals and were thick with cedar and redwood trees. The rivers and the Pacific Ocean had lots of fish. People used the rivers and oceans for travel, too.

The Northern Coastal lands have much rain and cool weather. For this reason, the people built strong **shelters**, or homes and buildings that protected them from the weather. Women wore tightly woven basket caps. People wrapped themselves in capes or blankets made of animal skins. Among the Indians of the Northern Coastal area are the Yurok (YOOR•ahk), Hupa (HOOP•uh), Karuk (KAHR•uhk), Pomo, and Wiyot (WEE•ot).

► Because food sources were plentiful, year-round village life was possible for the Indians of the Northern Coast.

## Reading Check 🔥 Cause and Effect

Why did Indians of the Northern Coastal group build strong shelters?








## Indians of the Central Valley and Mountains

Indians of the Central Valley and Mountain group lived in the valleys, foothills, and mountains of the Sierra Nevada.

The Central Valley and Mountain tribal group had the most land in what is today California. This group also had the largest population.

People living in California's valleys enjoyed a mild climate. Because they needed little protection from the weather, their clothes and homes were simple.

These Indians traveled from the valleys during hot summer months to the cooler regions of the foothills. In the winter, they moved back to the valleys. In both places, they found plenty of food. They hunted animals for food and gathered seeds, nuts, acorns, and berries. The rivers had plenty of fish. The Indians of this region include the Miwok (MEE•wahk), Maidu (MY•doo), and Yokuts (YOH•kuhts).

**Reading Check**  **Cause and Effect**  
Why was the Central Valley and Mountain tribal group the largest in California?



# Indians of the Southern Coast

People of the Southern Coastal group lived in the southwestern part of what is today California. They lived inland, along the coast, and on islands near the coast. They built strong canoes for traveling by water. Some of these tribes lived in large villages. A village might have as many as 2,000 people!

People of the Southern Coast hunted and fished. They gathered acorns as one of their main foods. Among the Indians of the Southern Coastal area are the Chumash (CHOO•mash) and Gabrielino (gah•bree•uh•LEEN•yoh) tribes. The Gabrielino are also known as the Tongva (TONG•vuh).

► Many Indians of the Southern Coastal group lived along the Pacific coast.

## Reading Check

### Compare and Contrast

How were the Indians of the Southern Coastal group like those of the Central Valley and Mountain tribal group?

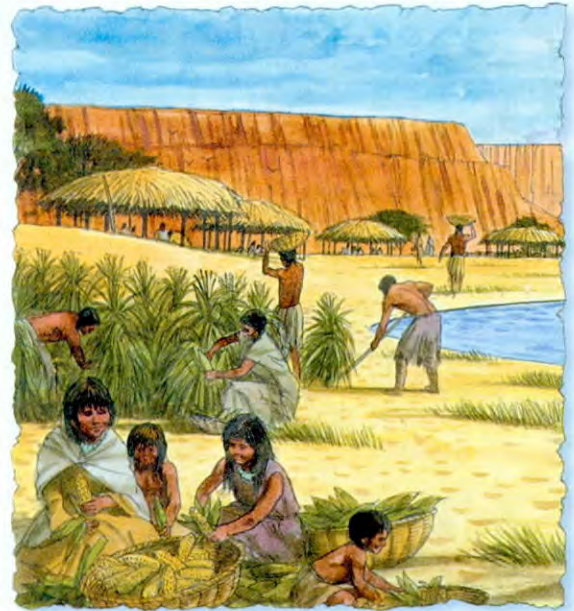




# Indians of the Desert

The Desert tribal group lived to the east of the Southern Coastal Indians. They had a small population. Life for Desert tribes was very hard. The California desert is hot and dry in summer, and few plants grow in its sandy soil.

Most Desert people survived by eating insects, seeds, and beans. A smaller number of the Desert people lived along the Colorado River and farmed. Some tribes in the Desert tribal group are the Mojave (moh•HAH•vee), Cahuilla (kuh•WEE•yuh), and Serrano.



► Desert Indians adapted to the climate of the Mojave Desert.

**Reading Check** ⚡ **Cause and Effect**  
Why was it hard to live in the desert?

**Summary** Many Indian tribes lived in California before Europeans came. The tribes can be divided into four major groups, based on where they lived.

## Review

1. Who were the early American Indians in California?
2. **Vocabulary** Use **shelter** in a sentence about California Indians.
3. **Your Community** What tribal group lived in or near your community?
5. **Make a Map** Make a map showing which California Indian tribe or tribes once lived where your community is now.
6. **Cause and Effect** Copy and complete the graphic organizer below.

## Critical Thinking

4. **Make It Relevant** How is your life similar to the lives of Indians who lived in your part of California?







## Read a Table

### ► Why It Matters

A **table** is a graphic organizer that shows information in columns and rows. Knowing how to use a table will help you compare numbers and other kinds of information easily.

### ► What You Need to Know

Like charts and graphs, tables have titles that describe what they show. Below the title, headings give the topics. The information is organized into columns and rows.

Columns go up and down, and rows go across. In the table on this page, there are four columns and three rows.

The table on page 99 gives information about different groups of California Indian tribes. It lists the names of the main tribal groups, some of the tribes that were part of each group, the places the groups lived, and the geography of each group's area.

To find information about each tribal group, look for its name in the first column. Then read across that row.

	Title			
	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Row A				
Row B				
Row C				



## Tribal Groups in California

TRIBAL GROUP	TRIBES INCLUDED	WHERE THEY LIVED	GEOGRAPHY OF THEIR AREA
Northern Coastal	Yurok, Hupa, Karuk, Pomo, Wiyot	northern coastal California	forests, rivers; rainy, mild climate
Central Valley and Mountains	Miwok, Maidu, Yokuts	Central Valley and mountains of California	valley, foothills, mountains, hills, rivers; mild climate
Southern Coastal	Chumash, Gabrielino	southern coastal California	sunny plains, valleys, rivers, mountains; warm climate
Desert	Mojave, Cahuilla, Serrano	southeastern California	desert, mountains, rivers; hot climate

### Practice the Skill

Use the table on this page to help you answer these questions.

- 1 Where did the Indians of the Desert tribal group live?
- 2 Which main tribal group were the Gabrielino Indians part of?
- 3 Where did the Miwok, Maidu, and Yokuts live?
- 4 Which main tribal group lived in a wet area of thick forests?

### Apply What You Learned

**Make It Relevant** Work with a partner to list the titles of tables you find in the newspaper. Cut out three tables that interest you. Share your list and the tables with your class.



# Lesson

# 2

# Using the Land



## What to Know

How did geography affect the ways early American Indians lived?

- ✓ Early California Indians got their food, clothing, shelter, and tools from their environment.
- ✓ Geography and climate affected what California Indians ate, what they wore, and what kind of shelters they built.

## Vocabulary

**tool** p. 101



## Cause and Effect



California Standards

HSS 3.2, 3.2.2

Like people today, American Indians used California's rich natural resources. They treated the land and its plants and animals with respect. Like all American Indians, the Pomo, the Maidu, the Gabrielino, and the Mojave used natural resources for food, clothing, shelter, and tools.

## The Pomo

California's Pomo Indians lived along the north-central coast in what are today Mendocino, Sonoma, and Lake Counties. The Pomo group had more than 70 villages.

► The Pomo hunted and fished from boats made of bundled grass.







► Pomo Indians made their homes, boats, and baskets from plants that grew around them.

The Pomo lived in small, bowl-shaped shelters. In the rainy season, groups lived in villages. These were often built on the side of a hill to stay safe from flooding rivers. When the rains ended, people burned their winter shelters and moved closer to a river, lake, or the ocean. There they used many **tools** to do their work. These tools included nets, spears, and traps for fishing, and the bow and arrow for hunting birds, deer, and other animals. Food was so plentiful that the Pomo languages had no word for famine, or starvation.

The Pomo were expert basket makers. They used baskets for gathering, storing, and cooking food. Other baskets, decorated with feathers and shells, were used in special ceremonies.

**Reading Check** ✨ **Cause and Effect**

**Why did the Pomo build their villages on hillsides?**



# The Maidu

California's Maidu Indians lived in the north-central part of the state, from the Sierra Nevada west to where Sacramento is today. The Maidu often built their villages on high ground so that they could see strangers coming.



► Maidu feast basket

A Maidu lodge, or home, looked like a big, rounded mound of earth with a hole in the top. The floor and first few feet of the walls were dug into the ground. Inside, log poles held up the frame for the roof, which was covered with a heavy layer of earth. The hole in the roof was the doorway. The Maidu built these lodges mainly to keep warm in the winter. Several families might share one lodge.

In warm weather, the Maidu built open-air shelters. They cut branches to support a roof of sticks, grass, or dirt. The roof blocked the sun's heat but still let the breeze through.



► Maidu woman preparing acorns to eat







 Maidu summer shelter

In cooler seasons or high in the mountains, the Maidu sometimes wore tall moccasins stuffed with grass to protect their feet from the snow. They tied animal skins around their legs. Blankets of deerskin or rabbit fur also provided warmth.

Maidu men made knives and arrowheads from flint. They hunted deer, elk, rabbits, birds, and sometimes even bears! They fished for salmon, trout, and eels in nearby rivers and streams.

The Maidu also gathered much of their food. In the spring, Maidu groups might travel for weeks gathering wild plants, seeds, roots, insects, and berries. In the fall, the Maidu gathered acorns. The Maidu carried, stored, and cooked food in baskets woven from reeds and grasses.

**Reading Check** **Summarize**

**Why did the Maidu use different shelters at different times?**



## The Gabrielino

The lands of the Gabrielino Indians stretched from Topanga south to Laguna Beach and included what is today Los Angeles. They built villages near the Los Angeles River and on the nearby Channel Islands. Like other Indians in the area, the Gabrielino built strong plank boats. They used the boats to carry people and goods to and from the islands. Men also fished for swordfish and hunted seals and sharks from their boats. They used hooks and nets to catch smaller fish. They hunted rabbits, squirrels, deer, and ducks.

Women ground acorns into flour. They boiled the flour to make a hot cereal called mush. The Gabrielino also ate pine nuts, seeds, and fruits.



▶ A Gabrielino woman

▶ A Gabrielino shelter made of bent tree saplings covered with tule mats





Like many other California tribes, the Gabrielino were expert basket makers. Gabrielino women wove so tightly that they could carry water and cook liquid foods in their baskets! To cook acorn mush, for example, they heated rocks in a fire. Then they dropped the rocks into the mush in the basket. Skillful stirring with long sticks kept the rocks from burning the basket before the mush was cooked.

Gabrielino women wore skirts woven of tule (TOO•lee). Tule is a tall, reedlike grass that grows in wet, marshy areas. Young tule shoots are tender enough to eat. Fully grown shoots are very strong. When woven together, they can be used as a building material.

**Reading Check** **Sequence**

**What steps were used to cook acorn mush?**

► Gabrielino women were expert basket makers.

► Wicker seed-beating tool

► Purse or bag woven from plant fibers





# The Mojave



► A Mojave clay pitcher

The Mojave tribe lived in the Mojave Desert, in southeastern California. Unlike other California tribal groups, the Mojave were farmers. Yearly floods left rich soil on both sides of the Colorado River. In this rich soil, the Mojave planted beans, corn, and pumpkins.

The Mojave gathered wild plants, seeds, and roots. They also fished in the Colorado River with traps and nets. They trapped small animals, such as rabbits, skunks, and beavers.

The clothes of the Mojave were suited for a hot climate. Sometimes, the men wore cloth tied around their hips. Women sometimes wore knee-length skirts of woven willow bark. The women also wore shirts of beaver and rabbit skins in winter months.



► A Mojave camp from the late 1800s





The Mojave did not live in villages. Instead, they built simple shelters where they found good land for farming. They made their shelters from willow poles covered with grasses. Unlike most California tribes, the Mojave lived where the clay was good for making pots. They also wove baskets, but they used clay pots for cooking and storing food.

**Reading Check** ⚡ **Cause and Effect**

**Why were the Mojave able to farm in their desert environment?**




**Summary** California tribes used the natural resources of the land. The Pomo hunted and fished. The Maidu built lodges and gathered acorns. The Gabrielino built boats and cooked in baskets. The Mojave grew crops and made clay pots.



**Fast Fact**

Mojave Indians, like this woman with a pot of water, often carried things on their heads.

## Review

-  How did geography affect the ways early American Indians lived?
- Vocabulary** What types of **tools** did early American Indians make?
- Your Community** How did geography and climate affect the way American Indians lived in or near what is now your community?
-  **Write a Paragraph** Write a paragraph about a California Indian tribe that lived near your community. How did they get their food, clothing, shelter, and tools from the environment?
-  **Focus Skill Cause and Effect**  
On a separate sheet of paper, copy and complete the graphic organizer below.

### Critical Thinking

- Make It Relevant** How does geography affect your life?
- ANALYSIS SKILL** Why do you think early California Indians depended on the land for their way of life?

Cause

Effect

The Gabrielino could carry water in their baskets.





# Read a Cutaway Diagram

### ► Why It Matters

Understanding how to read a diagram can help you learn about something quickly. A **cutaway diagram** shows both the inside and the outside of an object at the same time.

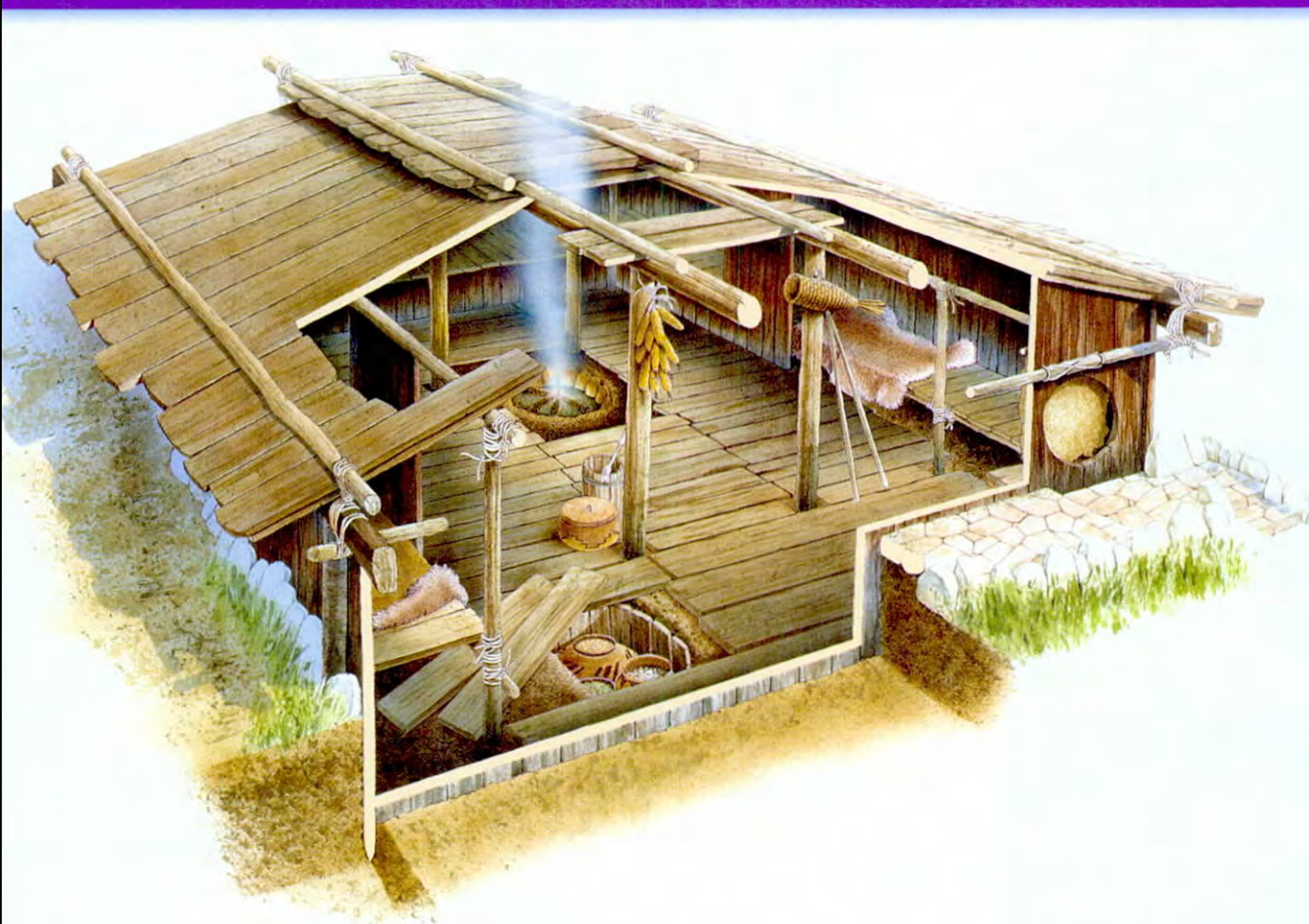
### ► What You Need to Know

On a cutaway diagram, part of the object has been “cut away” to make a kind of window. The cutaway part of the diagram shows the inside of the object.

The photograph on this page shows a shelter called a plank house. A plank is a wooden board. Many Indian tribes of the Northern Coast, such as the Hupa and the Yurok, lived in these wooden homes shaped like boxes. Hupa homes were made with cedarwood, while Yurok homes were made with redwood. Each tribe used the resources that were plentiful in its environment. Many of the houses were partly below the ground and had a round door.







### ► Practice the Skill

Look at the cutaway diagram on this page. It lets you see inside a Yurok plank house. Use the diagram to answer the questions.

- 1 What materials were used to build this shelter?
- 2 How was the roof of the shelter held up?
- 3 Where did people sleep?
- 4 Where could extra supplies be stored?

### ► Apply What You Learned

**Make It Relevant** Use library books to find out what something is like inside. Draw a cutaway diagram of that object, and add a title and labels. Then use your diagram to explain to classmates what the object is like inside and outside.