

FIRST PEOPLES OF THE CANYON

2ND-4TH GRADE

CCSS: 2-HSS2, HSS4; 3-HSS2; 4-HSS2, HSS3

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Identify ways in which early inhabitants of San Emigdio Canyon used local natural resources, including stones, plants, and animals, to survive.
2. Explain the importance of plants in early Chumash daily life, from basketry and homes to food and medicine.
3. Describe elements of Chumash culture that are relatable to their own lives, such as ceremonies, music, art, or games.

PRE-TRIP DISCUSSION TOPICS

- How can we show respect to nature?
- How can we help protect plants, animals, and the environment when we visit natural spaces?
- How do we use plants in our everyday life? Can students find plant-based products around the classroom?
- How can we talk about the Chumash and other Native American people in a respectful way? (See the link in the Resources section for more tips).
 - When possible, refer to specific Native people (e.g. Chumash, Yokut) rather than use generic terms (e.g. Native American, American Indian).
 - Discuss Native Americans as contemporary people; do not speak of them exclusively in the past tense.
 - Recognize the unique diversity in cultures, languages, and traditions across the over 600 Native American tribes in the United States.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

CHUMASH ROCK ART

Supplies: Rocks, paint or paint pens (acrylic works best and is washable), brushes, wet wipes (optional)

1. Have students gather smooth rocks from home or around your school.
2. Watch the Chumash Rock Art and Cave Paintings video (linked in the Resources section) with your class and discuss the importance of rock art in Chumash culture.
3. Allow each student to select a rock and paint a Chumash-inspired image from the video or from this study guide. Have them think about what kind of story their image could tell.



- KEY TERMS -

CULTURE

The behaviors, beliefs, and arts of a group that make them unique.

CHUMASH

Native Californian people whose homeland ranged from what is now San Luis Obispo to Malibu and as far east as the southern San Joaquin Valley. As recently as 200 years ago, Chumash lived on what is now Wind Wolves Preserve. They are known for their sea-faring boats, called tomols, and their rock art.

YOKUTS

Native Californian people whose homeland encompassed the southern San Joaquin Valley, including the area that is now Bakersfield. Yokuts are known for their basket-weaving skills.

- RESOURCES -

BOOKS

The Rainbow Bridge: A Chumash Legend
(adapted by Kerry Nechodom)

When the Animals Were People: Stories Told by the Chumash Indians of California
(by Kay Sanger)

Chumash Indians
(by Martin Schwabacher)

VIDEOS

[Chumash Rock Art & Cave Paintings](#)

WEBSITES

[Teaching about Native peoples](#)

REFERENCES

[Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History](#)



THE WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY
WIND WOLVES PRESERVE

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CHUMASH PICTOGRAPHS

