

# In Search of JUAN RODRÍGUEZ CABRILLO

A Unit of Study for Grades 3–8

JOSHUA FRANK

KRISTEN HILLAIRE GLASGOW

WENDY GORTON



THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS, UCLA

WITH

CABRILLO NATIONAL MONUMENT

For additional copies of this unit, as well as other teaching units and resources:

The National Center for History in the Schools  
University of California, Los Angeles  
6265 Bunche Hall  
405 Hilgard Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90095-1473  
(310) 825-4702  
FAX: (310) 267-2103  
nchs@history.ucla.edu  
<http://nchs.ucla.edu>

CATALOG: <http://nchs.ss.ucla.edu>



© 2011, The Regents, University of California and The Cabrillo National Monument

COVER ILLUSTRATION: Photo and design by Marian Olivas and Annie Tsai

Permission is hereby granted to reproduce and distribute this publication for individual classroom use only, except for the limitations set forth in the paragraphs below.

This publication also contains certain materials separately copyrighted by others. All rights in those materials are reserved by those copyright owners, and any reproduction of their materials is governed by the Copyright Act of 1976.

Any reproduction of this publication for commercial use is prohibited.

In Search of  
**JUAN RODRÍGUEZ CABRILLO**

A UNIT OF STUDY FOR GRADES 3–8

JOSHUA FRANK  
KRISTEN HILLAIRE GLASGOW  
WENDY GORTON

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS, UCLA  
*WITH*  
THE CABRILLO NATIONAL MONUMENT

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was initiated by Karl Pierce, then Ranger for Cabrillo National Monument. Karl had the vision to create a new perspective on Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo for a new century and a new generation of students. Bob Munson, interpretive historian, offered insights into the daily life of Cabrillo and his crew. Rick Jenkins facilitated the conclusion of the project.

Since the National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA (NCHS) tries to approach curriculum with as many primary sources as possible, they sought a researcher to initiate the project. JOSHUA FRANK, then an undergraduate in the UCLA History Department, ably filled that role, conducting exhaustive research on primary documents and contextual material. Joshua is now a candidate at the University of New Mexico for a Masters degree in Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies, specializing in American Indian Education.

KRISTEN HILLAIRE GLASGOW served as the historical consultant for the project, reviewing the sources, text, and writing the historical background. She is a fifth year PhD candidate in the UCLA History Department with a specialty in African-American intellectual history, particularly women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As an undergraduate she minored in Art History.

WENDY GORTON, an elementary teacher and then a PhD candidate in the UCLA Education Department, reviewed all of the research material, organizing and filtering it into topics that would be accessible to younger learners. She provided great insight into the elementary learner and designed the mapping and interactive log.

MARIAN MCKENNA OLIVAS served as the content, design, and production editor.

The NCHS office team provided invaluable assistance during completion of the publication. Thanks goes to Cara Marie Adams, Jaclyn Blackwell, Gloria Chou, Adrian Contreras, Rachel Garcia, Binh Ngo, and Annie Tsai.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: <i>Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo</i>	
Approach and Rationale	1
Unit Context	1
Unit Overview	2
Correlation to Learning Standards	2
Unit Projects	3
Lesson One: <i>Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo: Historical Memory and Evidence</i>	5
Lesson Two: <i>Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo: Historical Context</i>	55
Lesson Three: <i>Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo: The Geography of Exploration and Conquest</i>	79
Lesson Four: <i>Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo: Final Expedition</i>	99
Glossary	139



---

# INTRODUCTION

---

## TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIALS

### I. APPROACH AND RATIONALE

*In Search of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo* is one of over 70 National Center of History in the Schools teaching units that are the fruits of collaborations between historians and experienced teachers. They represent specific moments in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meaning of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative. By studying a crucial moment in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our teaching units are based on primary sources taken from documents, journals, diaries, literature, correspondence, and art from the period under study. What we hope you can achieve using the primary source documents in these lessons is to have your students connect more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation, and construct a coherent narrative.

Because the unit includes primary sources from the time period, some of the vocabulary will be challenging. A glossary is provided at the end of the unit. However, it is not meant to be comprehensive. The readings can be folded into your English lessons with instruction on how to find context clues to come up with definitions for words.

### II. UNIT CONTEXT

By the time of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's expedition up the Pacific coast of California, the European "Age of Exploration" was evolving into an age of settlement. A soldier, shipbuilder, and settler, circumstances made Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo an explorer. His role in exploration situates him as a man who

crossed between both the Old and New Worlds. The lessons in this unit can be used towards the end of a study of the age of exploration and colonization, or as a preface to a study of the Spanish missionization of California.

### III. UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit introduces students to Spanish exploration during the sixteenth century through primary source documents. The documents are grouped into four separate but interrelated categories. Those in Lesson One introduce students to the concept of historical memory, how monuments and sites come to be officiated, and why certain figures are remembered in history while others remain anonymous. Lesson Two places Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo within the larger historical context of the “Age of Exploration.” In this lesson, students will work with the main primary source documents that historians themselves have used to study Cabrillo. Lesson Three situates Cabrillo within the geographical successes and constraints put upon explorers when contending with early maps and travel narratives. In Lesson Four, students will follow Cabrillo’s final journey by tracing a summary log that he kept until his premature death on the voyage. This last lesson will allow students to apply the skills from the other lessons as they analyze the summary log as an historical written document, and will try their hand at mapping the travel narrative step by step.

The sixteenth century is often called the “Age of Exploration.” Many European countries participated in seeking out new lands to expand empire and to supply the Crown with an abundance of riches—including gold, silver, and other natural resources. Spain was a major player during this time, and was responsible for much of the western colonization of the Americas, most especially Tenochtitlán, or what would become Mexico. The entire region would be re-named New Spain.

A main emphasis in this unit will be on historical thinking skills, guiding students to interpret and weigh historical evidence that includes written, visual, and map sources. Two possible unit projects are included. In one, students will create a presentation about Cabrillo, adding to it as they gain more evidence about him and his life. The second unit project guides students to choose their own subject for an historical monument, defend their selection, and then create their monument.

### IV. CORRELATION TO LEARNING STANDARDS

*In Search of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo* provides teaching materials that address history standards in *National Standards for History, Basic Edition* (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996): **Era One** (Three Worlds Meet), Standard 2A “The student understands the stages of European oceanic and overland exploration,” including “routes taken by early explorers” and “motives for exploration;” Standard 2B “The student understands the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the Americas,” including “the social composition of early settlers” and “their various motives for exploration and colonization.”

The unit also meets History-Social Science Standards for California Public Schools, Standard 4.2.2, “Identify the early land and sea routes to, and European settlements in California . . .” and Standard 4.2.3 “Describe the Spanish exploration and colonization of California, including the relationships among soldiers, missionaries, and Indians.”

The unit addresses important historical thinking standards and historical literacy standards, including:

Standard 1: Chronological Thinking [A] Distinguish between past, present, and future time and [B] Identify the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story.

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension [A] Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility; [B] Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage; [D] Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations; [E] Read historical narratives imaginatively; [G] Draw upon data in historical maps.

Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation [B] Consider multiple perspectives; [C] Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of the individual, the influence of ideas; [H] Hold interpretations of history as tentative. Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities [A] Formulate historical questions; [C] Interrogate historical data.

### **Common Core Standards**

Lastly, the activities also meet state Core Common Reading Standards for understanding key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas for informational text.

## **V. UNIT PROJECTS**

### **I. Unit Project One: *Who was Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo?***

As a class, in groups, or as individuals, students will piece together their own narratives of the Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo account as they go through the lessons. Tell students that historians are detectives of the past. They gather evidence of the past and put together the story. During this unit they will each be historians.

The project can take the form of a poster, digital slideshow, or online blog/journal. Have students title it “Who was Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo?” The elements to include follow the order of the unit:

- What he is remembered for.
- Facts that are established about Cabrillo from the primary sources they study (especially Lesson One and Lesson Four).
- Contextual details about Cabrillo’s time: legends believed, exploration boasting and realities, crossbows, and ships (Lesson Two).

- An outline map of the Americas with the title: *Where was Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo?* Returning to the documents from the lessons, students should highlight place names and then mark these on their maps. They could also add more information with the place labels (what Cabrillo did there, who was there with him, etc.).

## 2. Unit Project Two: *Who Should History Remember?*

As an ongoing project that can integrate your history, art, and writing programs, have students select an event, person, or group to commemorate. Project Steps:

- Gather historical evidence to defend why their monument should be built and given space. Based on this evidence, write a preliminary report with a description of their project and a defense of its historical importance.
- Locate their event, person, or place on a map. They should prepare a version of this map for the monument information card.
- Return to their historical evidence and decide on a monument design based on how they rank the importance of the evidence.
- The final project will be the monument design with a written report explaining the importance of the historical event, people, or group, and the evidence for that event. The monument should have a plaque with a summary of the information and a small map indicating the city (cities) or region(s) involved. You may also want students to create a poem to commemorate the monument. Their monument can be virtual (drawn on paper or on the computer) or an actual a model.