



Benicia Historical Museum  
2060 Camel Road ♦ Benicia, CA. 94510  
Tel: 707-745-5435  
Email: [info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org](mailto:info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org)

## Station #1

### BUCKET BRIGADE

1. Line up in a row between the two large water containers.
2. The first student fills the bucket with water and then passes it to the next student.
3. The second student passes it to the next student and down the line until the last one.
4. The last student pours it in the large container to put out the (FIRE). Repeat going the opposite way if time allows.

The bucket brigades were used for putting out fires during the 1840s-1870s, before there was running water, fire trucks or fire hydrants. Fire was a constant danger because pioneers used candles for light, cooked with fire in their stoves and heated their homes with open fireplaces.

Discuss how fires are put out today. Compare a bucket brigade with limited water and modern fire fighting.



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## Station #2

### LAUNDRY

1. Select one item of clothing.
2. Place item in wash water and scrub with soap.
3. Scrub on washboard.
4. Use agitator to agitate the cloths, a group can agitate together.
5. Rinse in rinse water.
6. Wring out thoroughly over the tub.
7. Use the heavy flat iron to iron the cloths.
8. Hang them on the clothesline using the clothespins to dry.

Remember, in those days each person had 3 to 4 outfits and did their laundry once a week.

Discuss how long you think it would take to do your family's laundry? How long would it take to build the fire, heat the water, and haul it?



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### Station #3

## WATER HAULING AND STEER ROPING

### WATER HAULING DIRECTIONS

1. Put the yoke on the student and add water buckets to the hooks. The buckets will have sand in them to represent water (this is conserve water due to the drought).
2. The student then carries the water to the wire fence gate and back.

### STEER ROPING DIRECTIONS

1. Hold the lasso to form a circle with one hand. Hold the knot of the lasso in one hand and the other end of the rope tightly with the other hand.
2. Thrown at the horns and round the steer's neck.

The average woman spent 30% of the day hauling water. It was one of the most important jobs in any home or ranch. Clean water was one of the most precious commodities that existed. ASK the students why they might need to rope a cow and haul water.



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## Station #4

### INDIAN CORN GRINDING

1. Place one spoon of corn in the mortar (bowl).
2. Use the widest part of the pestle (grinding stone).
3. Grind the corn with the pestle until you can shake it through a colander onto a large bowl.
4. Re grind any corn that didn't fit through the colander.
5. Put the ground cornmeal into a small bowl.

The Mexican-Spanish term for the bowl is molcajete and the grinding stone is tejolote. Many people had problems grinding their teeth down because particles of stone would get into their food.



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## Station #5

### ARTIFACTS TABLE

Enjoy holding and studying the items listed below that could have been used by people who lived around this area in the 1800's.

\*Ask the students to identify each of these items and discuss what they were used for.

- Raccoon hat – protection
- Pioneer hat (ladies)– sun protection
- Tin cups – eating and drinking
- Broom – used to clean Native American huts
- Mini papoose basket – to carry infants
- Chaps – leather pants for protection while through brush
- Baskets – woven from natural materials; used to store items or for cooking
- Horseshoes
- Gun powder horn – storing gun powder
- Gold pan – used to find gold along a creek or river, miners used the pan for cooking and eating out of.
- Paddle – for cooking
- Ball and stick games – children played these
- Railroad ties – securing the tracks
- Galls and walnuts – for food (galls are found on tree limbs and trunks)
- Abalone shell – beads, money, holding items, trade, decorations, food
- Pump drill – for drilling holes in shells, etc. (try it!)



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- Serpentine – state rock of California
- Mini ball – used for hunting
- Musket ball – used for hunting
- Cow bell – hung around animals to know where they are
- Harness – used with a saddle for horses
- Jacobs' ladder – toy for children
- Cattle brand – used on cattle to identify what ranch they belong to
- Quilt square – pioneer women made several squares and sewed them together for a blanket
- Saddle – (on steer) made of cowhide-has wooden stirrups(place for rider's feet)
- Rope – made with horse's tail hair (called a reata)



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## Station #6

### CALIFORNIA INDIAN PICTOGRAPHS

1. Each student selects *one* rock from the basket.
2. Look at the pictograph designs on the sheets provided. Draw designs on your rock; remember you can draw on all sides of the rock.
3. Put your initials somewhere on the rock so you know which one is yours. Leave it in the sun to dry and remember to grab it before you leave.

Discuss how hard it would be to write a book using pictographs. Native Californians used pictographs as a way of identifying themselves. They also wrote on walls of caves and on huge boulders.



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## Station #7

### ADOBE BRICK MAKING

1. Have the students share the shovels. Place three large scoops of dirt into the bucket.
2. Use the small cup to get sand from the pile next to the dirt. Pour about half the cup into the dirt.
3. Add a handful of straw to the sand and dirt mixture. The straw acts as a binder to hold the brick together.
4. Add water in small amounts until mixture resembles a chocolate cake mix. It should be a thick paste. If the mixture is too watery the brick will not hold together.
5. Fill the wooden adobe brick mold with the mixture. Smooth out the mixture in the mold with the shovels. Pat and press with the wooden form to even out.
6. Each group of students will make one layer of the adobe brick. Together your class will make one whole brick.

Take a look at some of the dry brick around the sand to see what a dry brick looks and feels like. Discuss how long it would take to make an adobe house for six people. How many bricks do you think it would take?