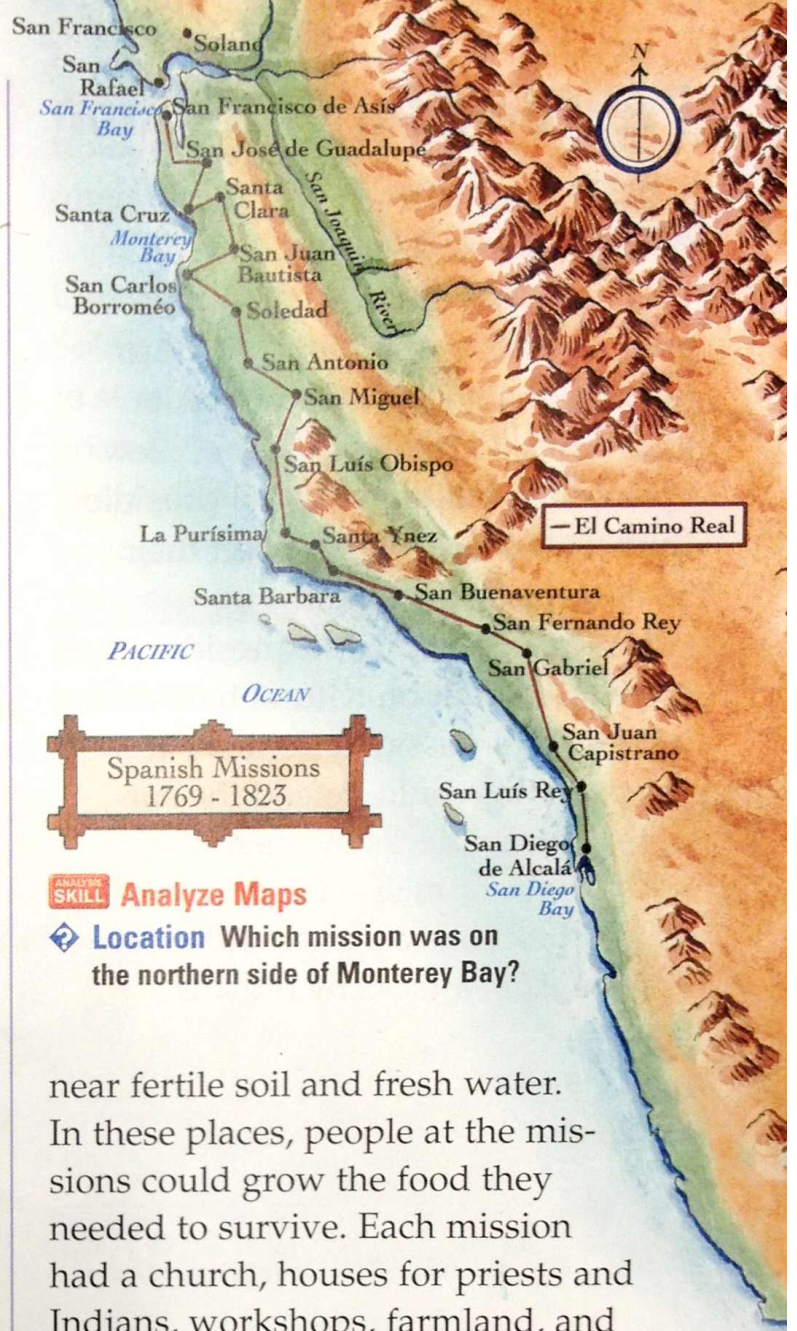
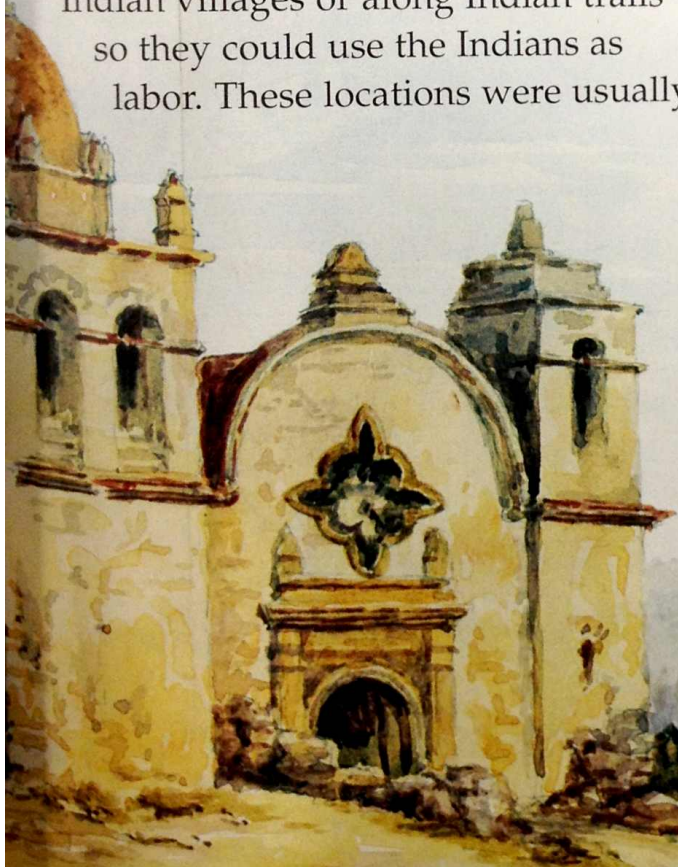


The Mission System

Starting in 1769, under the direction of the Franciscan priests, the Indians were forced to build a chain of missions in Alta California. These 21 missions were planned to stretch along the coast from San Diego, in the south, to Sonoma, in the north. Each mission was about a day's walk from the next on El Camino Real.

At the missions, the priests worked to create loyal Spanish subjects, or supporters of the king. To do so, the priests followed a system, or plan, that had been used in other parts of New Spain. They would move the California Indians into the missions, teach them to be Christians, and show them European ways.

Most missions were built near Indian villages or along Indian trails so they could use the Indians as labor. These locations were usually



ANALYZE SKILL Analyze Maps

Location Which mission was on the northern side of Monterey Bay?

near fertile soil and fresh water. In these places, people at the missions could grow the food they needed to survive. Each mission had a church, houses for priests and Indians, workshops, farmland, and pastures for cattle and sheep.

By the late 1700s, the Franciscan priests had brought about 20,000 Indians into the missions. To attract Indians, the priests gave them glass beads and colored cloth. Often soldiers used force to bring in Indians.

READING CHECK GENERALIZE

Why were missions built near Indian villages?