

California Gold Rush Unit



By,
Mrs. Tina Rasori
Fay Elementary School
San Diego Unified School District
twoelbing@sandi.net

Overview:

Our purpose is for students to learn about California History by making history come alive for the students. Throughout the 3-week unit, students have *gold pouches* and earn *fake gold nuggets* to spend during Gold Rush Day. In addition, students purchase *bandannas* to wear during our social studies time in order to dress more authentic for the time period. Each week is a different focus of the Gold Rush. In addition, each lesson of the Gold Rush Unit has a reading focus, social studies focus, and an activity to make the social studies content come alive. The culminating project is Gold Rush Day that can be implemented in your classroom.

Quick Overview of the Unit:

Week One: Discovery and Migration

- Sutter's Mill: (circle map for discovery)
 - Snap Shut Bag: *Social Studies in Action* (page 48)
- Gold: (add to circle map)
 - Poem: *Success for English Learners* (page 88)
- Ready, Set, Rush! (add to circle map)
 - Primary Source: Gen. William Sherman
- Bound for California (new circle map for migration)
 - Primary Sources: Bryant and Ship Advertisement
- Around the Horn/The Journey West (add to circle map)
 - What route would you take? Why? *HW and Practice Book* (pg 59)

Week Two: Way of Life (new circle map with this title)

- Staking a Claim
 - Make Claim Poster
- The Mining Camps
 - Games of the Gold Rush
- Matted Beards and Long Toms
 - Ways to find Gold Wheel
- Life of a Forty-Niner
 - Panning for gold
- Settlement Growth and Change
 - Boomtown Posters
- Law of the Land (pg. 242-243 last paragraph)
 - Wanted Posters

Week Three: People in the Gold Rush (new circle map)

- The New Economy
 - Cost of Things Activity/People who were entrepreneurs
- New Opportunities: Women/African American
 - Primary Sources: Louise Clappe and Biddy Mason
- A Changing Population: Chinese Americans
 - Chinese American excerpts
- Biographies of People of the Gold Rush
 - Jigsaw Activity and Effects of the Gold Rush *HW and Practice Book* (pg. 60)

Last Day is **Gold Rush Day!**

Additional enhancements/resources:

Read Aloud: *By the Great Horn Spoon* (vocabulary enrichment)

Play: "Gold Fever" in *Social Studies in Action* (pg. 50)

Independent Study: Gold Rush Project

Games: 21, Ante Up, Poker, Close to 100, PIG

Songs: Clementine, Buffalo Gals, and Oh Susanna

Simulations: PBS Strike it Rich (www.pbs.com)

Movie: *Clementine*

Gold Rush Day



Created By:
Tina Rasori

Objective:

To give students an authentic experience at a Gold Rush boomtown!

Set Up: Arrange your room into different stations/table groups/areas.

Students will rotate throughout the stations learning about life in a boomtown! Each station will be about 15 minutes and the total station time will be about one hour and fifteen minutes! After the stations, the class will participate in eating at a restaurant and auction. The restaurant and auction will be about 30-45 minutes.

The total Gold Rush Day Activity will take about two hours!

Boomtown Stations:



Station One: Saloon

- Students will play the different mining games that they were taught throughout the unit such as: 21, Ante Up, Poker, Close to 100, PIG

Station Two: Assay Office

- Students will weigh their gold nuggets they have earned throughout the 3 weeks and trade them in for Gold Rush money to spend at the auction.

Station Three: Post Office

- Students will write a postcard home describing life in the Gold Rush!

Station Four: Gold Fields

- Students will pan for gold to earn more money to spend at the auction.

Station Five: Newspaper Office

- Students will write the daily news in the boomtown based on their prior knowledge about the Gold Rush.

Early Finisher Activities:

Mining Word Search- students find various vocabulary words

Crossword Puzzle- students use vocabulary words to fill out the crossword

California Poster- students make an advertisement to bring people to CA

Other Optional Stations:

Barber Shop: An adult uses whipping cream on student's chins then scraps it off with a popsicle stick. The adult can use bandaids if they accidentally nick the student's skin

Oregon Trail: Students play the computer game Oregon Trail trying to make their way to Oregon

Gold Rush Game: Students play the Gold Rush Game

Grub and Auction:



After the station rotations, students will participate in a *Gold Rush Grub* time and auction. Students will eat authentic food that miners would have eaten during the *Gold Rush* era. During their mealtime, students will bid on various items with their earned gold nuggets/money that they exchanged at the assay office!

Sample Menu:

Barbeque Beans
Cornbread
Pickles
Pie
Rootbeer

Sample Auction Items:

Pencils
Paper
Licorice
Peppermint Patties
Cookies
Pretzels
Extra Free Time
Free Homework Pass
Anything Else!!!!