

**SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH



INCLUDES GOOGLE SLIDES



This unit was created with this guy in mind. He has autism and an intellectual disability. He is a non-reader, and would have loved digging for gold. With some support he is able to do this unit, and enjoys the challenge. He is my tester!!

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Also included with this unit is a detailed lesson plan including group activities to add to your routine as well as helpful tips and suggestions. 😊

This unit contains over 100 pages of material. I have included a detailed lesson plan to help you make the most of everything in this unit including how to add some group activities.

California Gold Rush

Lesson Plan

Preparation

- Print out a vocabulary board for each student to use throughout unit
 - Laminate or place in page protector
- Book (there are 2 versions to choose from; easy and challenging)
 - Print out, laminate, and bind
 - OR your students can listen to the pre-recorded version
- Vocabulary cards
 - Print out a set of cards onto cardstock and laminate
 - Make one set for each student and also one for the teacher to use in I Spy games

Preassessment (do day 1 before starting lesson)

- Choose the form of the assessment that best fits the learning level of your students
- Give the assessment to assess what your students may already know
- I cannot emphasize enough how important this step is. If you want to see growth, this preassessment is so important!!

Teaching Tips

1. *Color Coding:* this is a really easy way to add more structure to a matching activity. Outline or color in an empty box or sorting label. Outline or color in the corresponding picture symbols the same colors. Becomes a color matching task.
 - a. For more info, read more here:
<https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2015/09/05/using-color-coding-for-differentiation/>
 - b. I also have a blog post on differentiating one activity 3 ways:
<https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2018/10/22/differentiating-1-activity-3-ways-easily-and-effectively/>
2. *Make you own copies of the activities:* Every day I review the activity we did yesterday. For that reason:
 - a. I often complete the activity myself and often laminated it for easy review that I could use year after year.
 - b. My copies were also helpful as either a model for students who needed more support or as a way for more advanced students to self-check their work.

The lesson plans contain:

Overall tips for teaching students with significant needs

Quick Look

Day	Activity		Day	Activity
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards introduction• Circle map		6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards cut and paste• Sudoku puzzle
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• Sorting activity		7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards cut and paste• Word search
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• Map of California		8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• Close worksheet
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• How much is it worth?		9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• Close worksheet
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocab cards activity• Pan mining simulation		10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment

The lesson plans contain:

*A quick look at what you
will do each day*

Day 2

Activity	Notes	Materials
Read or listen to a recording of the book (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read through the story, asking lots of questions• Continue to make connections between book and vocabulary board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book• Vocabulary board
Vocabulary cards I Spy Game (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine how many cards your students can handle in front of them. This can vary, some students may be able to have all the cards, so may only be able to handle a field of 3-5• Since this is the first time playing this game, I make it easy. Hold up a card, and have students find the matching one and hold it up• Discuss relevant points on the card<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ You can also play this game in this manner having them find the symbol on their vocabulary board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocabulary cards (student set and teacher set)
Review (5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the circle map completed yesterday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle map completed yesterday
Sorting activity (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the sorting activity that looks at tools that would and would not be good for mining• Decide if you want to use the photos or picture symbols (or both)• Add color coding if needed (directions included in activity)• Make connections to the book and fact sheet as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• worksheet• Scissors• Glue
Sharing (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each student shares their finished activity using the communication method of their choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed activity• Communication devices

The lesson plans contain:

Detailed instructions on how that day's lesson should run

This unit comes with a vocabulary board.

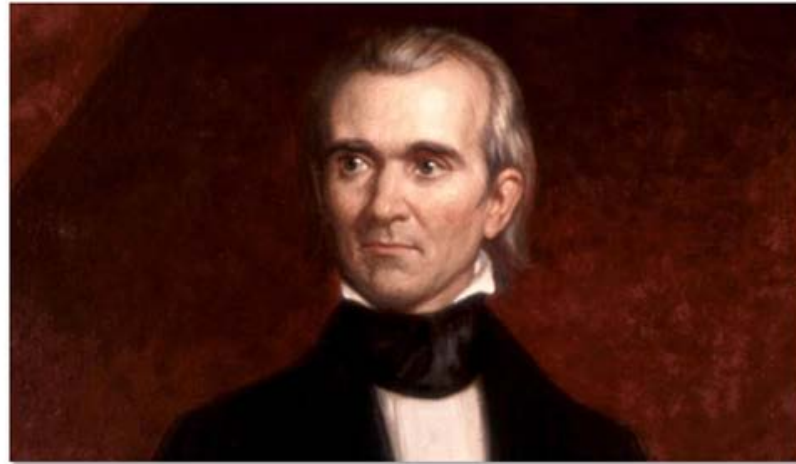
Vocabulary boards are great for ALL students to assist with participation and engagement in group discussions.

Tips on how to use in the unit!!



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News of the discovery was in the local paper, and eventually, the president, James K. Polk, announced this finding to Congress.



Christa Joy, Special Needs for Special Kids

There is a 36 page book with simple text and photos that outlines the history of the California Gold Rush.

As these miners would reach California, they would set up small towns near the rivers and areas they believed gold would be found.



Christa Joy, Special Needs for Special Kids

They come in a pdf version as well as voice recorded PowerPoint (so you don't have to print it out.)

California Gold Rush

1848-1855

Time when the most people ever came to California looking for gold.



James Marshall

First to find gold in a river when building a sawmill for John Sutter.



John Sutter

Owned the land where the first gold was found by James Marshall.



Mass-migration

When a very large number of people move from one place to another in a short period of time.



There are 11 vocabulary cards that come in color and black and white.

California

Where the Gold Rush occurred in 1848-1855. Became the 31st state to join the USA.



Forty-niners

Name given to the men who came to California to mine for gold. Most came in 1849.



Boomtown

Towns that grew up around the rivers where gold was being mined. They had stores, churches and schools.



Ghost Town

Empty towns that were left behind when the miners left after no more gold could be found.



Included are suggestions for group activities to do with these each day.

California Gold Rush

1848-1855

Time when the most people ever came to California looking for gold.

James Marshall

First to find gold in a river when building a sawmill for John Sutter.


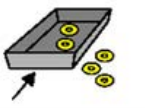









John Sutter

Owned the land where the first gold was found by James Marshall.

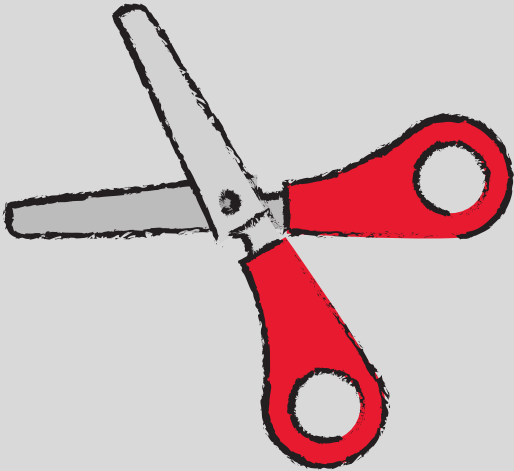
Mass-migration

When a very large number of people move from one place to another in a short period of time.


Cut out images and match to correct definition.


There is an activity where students will match either the picture to the definition (easier) or the definition to the picture (harder).




California




Forty-niners



Boomtown



Ghost Town



Cut out definition and match with correct image on previous pages.

When a very large number of people move from one place to another in a short period of time.	Tools used by the miners to dig up the dirt in the riverbeds.	Flat, shallow pan miners would use to shake the dirt from the river, letting the gold settle to the bottom.
Empty towns that were left behind when the miners left after no more gold could be found.	1848-1855 Time when the most people ever came to California looking for gold.	Where the Gold Rush occurred in 1848-1855. Became the 31 st state to join the USA.
First to find gold in a river when building a sawmill for John Sutter.	Towns that grew up around the rivers where gold was being mined. They had stores, churches and schools.	Most common method miners used to find gold. They would shake a pan of dirt causing the heavy gold to fall to the bottom.
Name given to the men who came to California to mine for gold. Most came in 1849.	Owned the land where the first gold was found by James Marshall.	

Errorless version

Cut apart pictures and place in circle map.



Cut apart pictures and place in circle map **ONLY IF** they are about the Gold Rush.

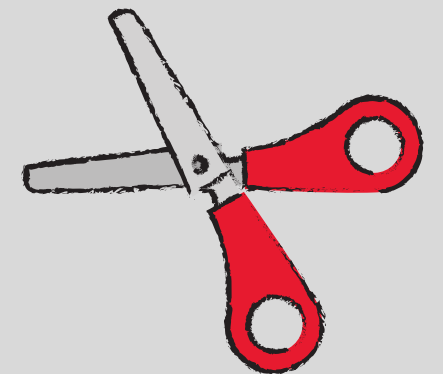


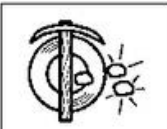
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There is a circle map that covers the facts from the book.


Circle maps are a great way for students to see the concept at a glance. There are 2 versions:

- One is errorless
- One has wrong answers mixed in students will have to set aside

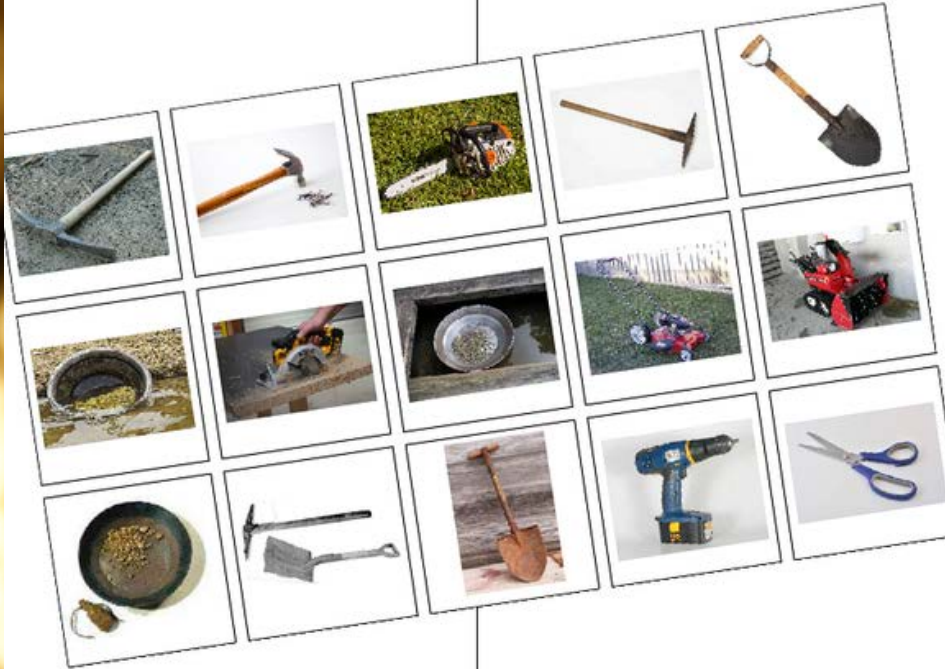





gold mining tools




gold mining tools



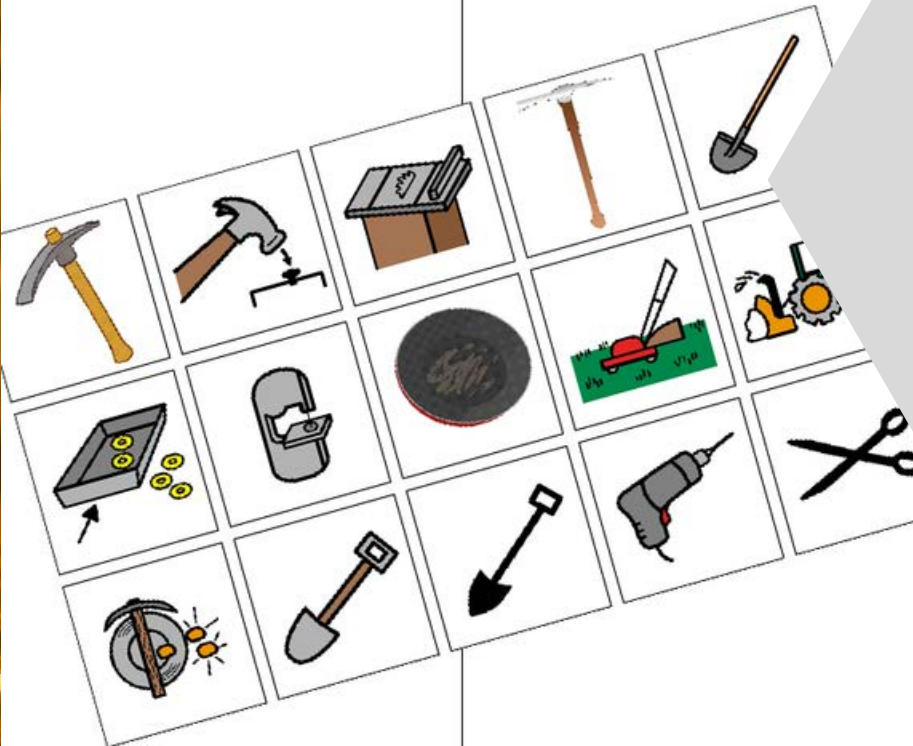
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gold mining tools

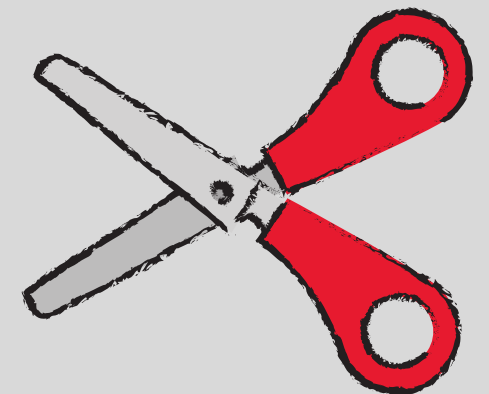


gold mining tools

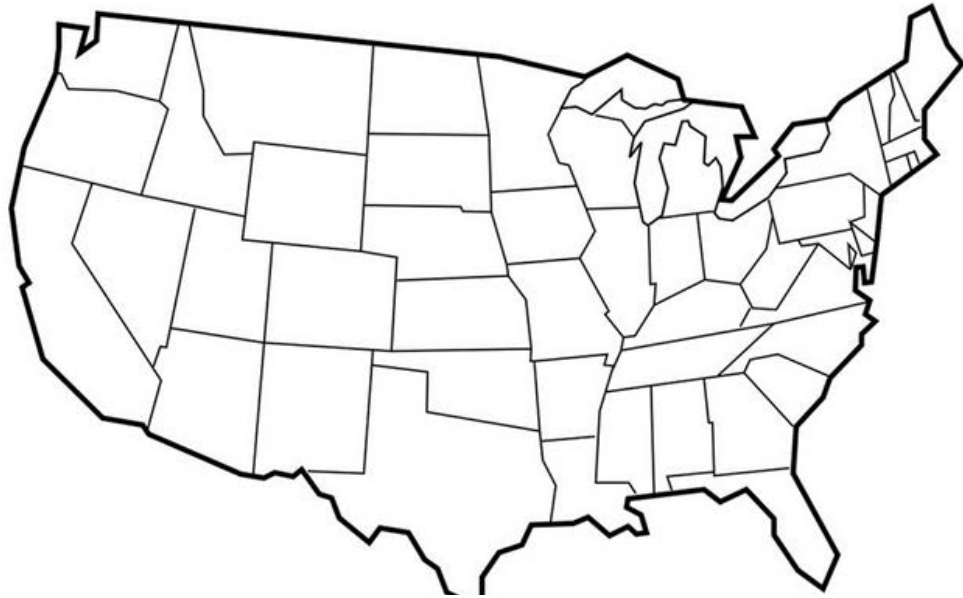


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There is a sorting activity that looks at tools used in mining for gold. It comes with either photos or picture symbols.



Find California



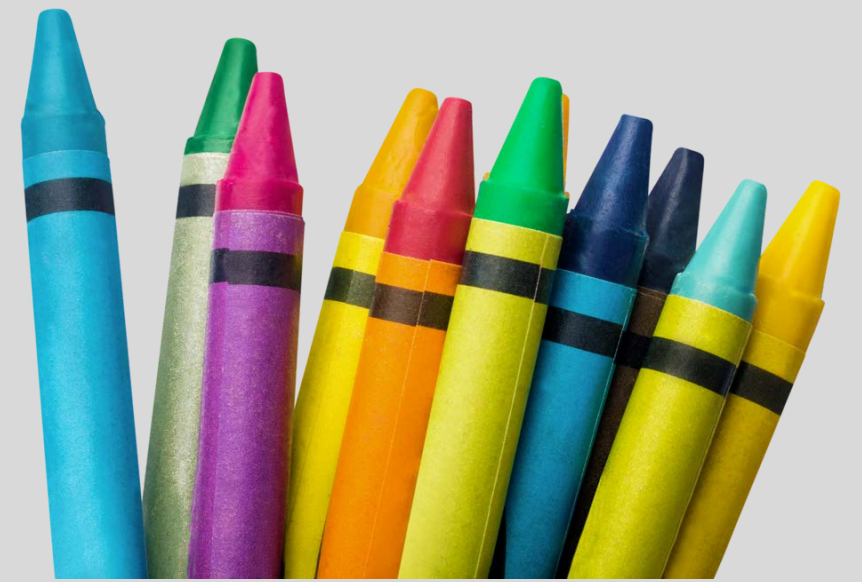
Find California



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Differentiated

There is a map of the United States. Students will color in the state of California. There is a differentiated version provided.



Gold is very valuable. One ounce is worth about \$1000 and half an ounce about \$500. Look at each scenario below and determine how much money you would make if you found that much gold.







$$\text{Gold Nugget} = \$1000$$

	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>

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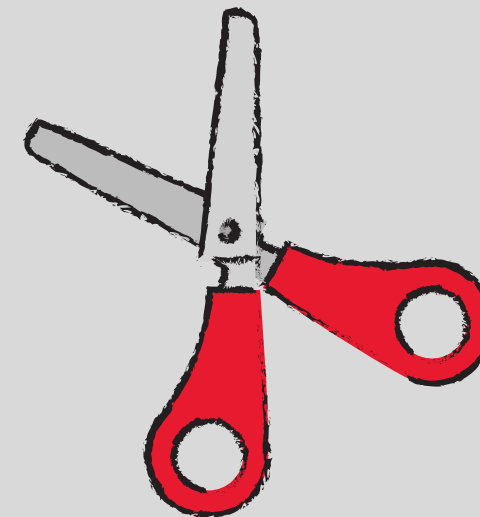
Gold is very valuable. One ounce is worth about \$1000 and half an ounce about \$500. Look at each scenario below and determine how much money you would make if you found that much gold.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Small Gold Nugget} &= \$500 \\ \text{Gold Nugget} &= \$1000 \end{aligned}$$

	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	
\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>

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Students will determine how much a certain amount of gold would have been worth. There are 2 versions (shown here) provided.



Supplies

1. 9 inch cake pan
2. Oatmeal (dirt)
3. Couscous (gold)



- Create a mixture that is 3 parts oatmeal and 1 part couscous
- Allow students to place a scoop of the mixture into their pan
- Shake pan which will cause to fall to the bottom
- Now comes the hard part, separating the dirt from the gold



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Panning for Gold



Describe your experience panning for gold. Circle your answer.

1. How difficult was it shaking the pan?



2. How difficult was it separating the gold from the dirt?



3. This is what I would buy with my gold:



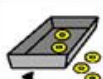



















4. Would you have liked to live during the time of the Gold Rush?



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



There is a hands-on activity where students will practice what it would be like panning for gold (minus the water and the gold.) They will fill out an observation sheet once done.

California Gold Rush










 panning	 James Marshall		 Boomtown	 Forty-niners	
	 pickaxe			 Gold Rush	 James Marshall
	 Gold Rush		 pickaxe		 panning
 pickaxe	 panning		 Forty-niners	 James Marshall	
 James Marshall	 Forty-niners				
	 Boomtown	 pickaxe	 James Marshall	 panning	

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Place the following images in the empty squares on the previous page, completing the sudoku puzzle.

 Gold Rush	 Gold Rush	 Gold Rush	 Gold Rush
 James Marshall	 Forty-niners	 Forty-niners	 Forty-niners
 Boomtown	 Boomtown	 Boomtown	 Boomtown
 panning	 panning	 pickaxe	 pickaxe

California Gold Rush

 Gold Rush			 pickaxe
 pickaxe	 panning		
 Boomtown	 pickaxe	 panning	
	 Gold Rush	 pickaxe	

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There are Sudoku puzzles in this unit as well. This is a great way to work with the new vocabulary!!

There are 2 versions plus answer keys.



California Gold Rush

Z X G D G Z U Y Q K B P J Z Y
A W J P K J S P M L Y X O L F
K Y L M R A I Z J L O X H X O
H Q C I G M I T B T T J N F R
E F A N S E D H D D H J S D T
S H L I C S B O E G S F U B Y
J G I N G M O K S N J B T F N
L O F G H A N D J V H O T A I
E L O P O R K P P R Q O E K N
G D R A S S V A I G D M R R E
C R N N T H K N C N T T C H R
W U I F T A P N K Q I O L S S
Z S A O O L K I A I B W Y T K
I H Z H W L I N X L C N T M U
W O J G N Y W G E O W S I O C

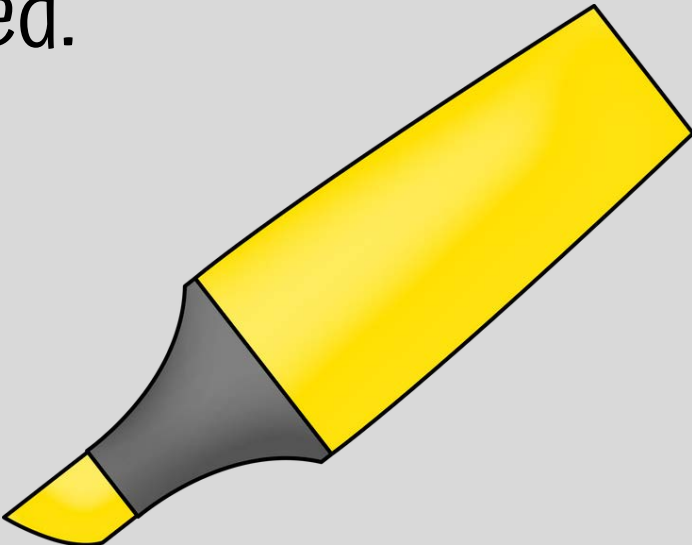
- James Marshall
ghost town
Boomtown
- Forty-niners
mining pan
panning
- California
Gold Rush
- John Sutter
pickaxe

California Gold Rush

Z X G D G Z U Y Q K B P J Z Y
A W J P K J S P M L Y X O L F
K Y L M R A I Z J L O X H X O
H Q C I G M I T B T T J N F R
E F A N S E D H D D H J S D T
S H L I C S B O E G S F U B Y
J G I N G M O K S N J B T F N
L O F G H A N D J V H O T A I
E L O P O R K P P R Q O E K N
G D R A S S V A I G D M R R E
C R N N T H K N C N T T C H R
W U I F T A P N K Q I O L S S
Z S A O O L K I A I B W Y T K
I H Z H W L I N X L C N T M U
W O J G N Y W G E O W S I O C

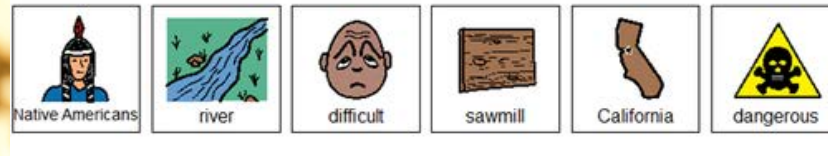
- James Marshall
ghost town
Boomtown
- Forty-niners
mining pan
panning
- California
Gold Rush
- John Sutter
pickaxe

There is also a word search.
Suggestions on how to
complete if your students are
not able to do word searches
are included.



California Gold Rush

1. James Marshall was building a when he first saw gold in the river.
2. People started traveling to looking for gold.
3. The miners often displaced the who were already living on the land.
4. These new towns, called boomtowns were built on the .
5. Finding gold was and .



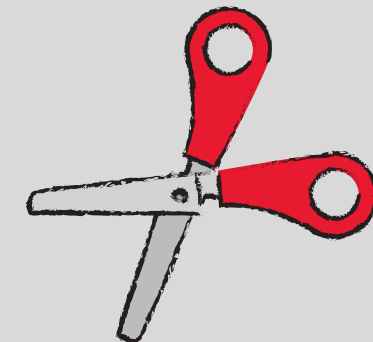
California Gold Rush

6. To find gold, most miners used a method called .
7. A tool they would often use was a .
8. The chemical the miners would use were for the environment.
8. Miners started looking for gold in the once there was no more in the rivers.
9. Not everyone who came looking for gold got .



Close worksheets are a great informal assessment. This unit has 2 worksheets that review the main facts of the California Gold Rush.

Answer key included.



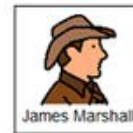
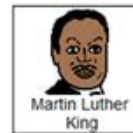
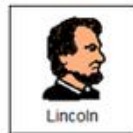
1. When did the Gold Rush occur:

1848
-
1855

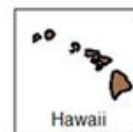
1900
-
1925

2000
-
2018

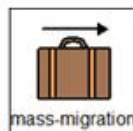
2. The first gold was discovered by:



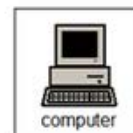
3. Where did the Gold Rush start:



4. Huge numbers of people traveled to California during this time and it was called a:



5. How did people find out about the gold in California?



FINALLY the
assessment!! There are 3
versions. This version has
10 questions with 3
picture choices for each
question.

Answer key included.

Print onto cardstock or mount on index cards. Cut pictures apart and show student answer choices for each question.

Q 3



Q 4



With this version, you cut out the answer choices and glue them on index cards. Ask the student the question, and they point to the correct answer.

1. When did the Gold Rush occur:
 - A. 1848-1855
 - B. 1900-1925
 - C. 2000-2018

2. The first gold was discovered by:
 - A. Lincoln
 - B. Martin Luther King
 - C. James Marshall

3. Where did the Gold Rush start:
 - A. North Pole
 - B. California
 - C. Hawaii

4. Huge numbers of people traveled to California during this time and it was called a:
 - A. Mass-migration
 - B. vacation
 - C. Field trip

5. How did people find out about the gold in California?
 - A. TV
 - B. Newspapers
 - C. computer


This is your traditional multiple choice version. It can also be used as a recording sheet if your students are using the version with index cards.


More often, once the gold was gone in that area, all the people would leave looking for a new place to find gold. These boomtowns would become empty and all the businesses would close. They would become **ghost towns**.





Watch the movie on the California Gold Rush

This unit also has digital activities. There is a movie version of the books students can listen to read aloud.


 = \$1000



\$


\$


\$

\$


\$


\$

Gold is very valuable. One ounce is worth about \$1000 and half an ounce about \$500. Look at each scenario below and determine how much money you would make if you found that much gold.

\$0

\$3000

\$4000

\$1000

\$2000

\$5000

The digital activities have students click and drag their answers.



Sort the tools into those that would be good or not good for mining for gold. If you are not sure, place it on the middle line.



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There are 2 sets of slides. One set has color-coding for more support.



I realize there will be some students out there unable to do cutting activities. I have a blog post with ways to complete activities without a pair of scissors!!

[Click Here to read more!!](#)

All of the activities (except the books and timeline cards) come in color and black and white.