

California Gold Rush

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Grade Level	5
Duration	1 class period

Arizona Social Studies Standards	Other Arizona Standards
<p>Strand 1: American History Concept 1: Research Skills for History PO 1. Use the following to interpret historical data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">timelines – B.C.E. and B.C.; C.E. and A.D.graphs, tables, charts, and maps <p>Concept 5: Westward Expansion PO 1. Describe the following events of 19th century presidencies of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Thomas Jefferson – Louisiana Purchase; explorations of Lewis and ClarkJames Madison – War of 1812James Monroe – The Monroe DoctrineAndrew Jackson – Nationalism and Sectionalism; Trail of TearsJames Polk – Mexican-American War; discovery of gold in California <p>Strand 4: Geography Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms PO 1. Interpret information from a variety of maps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">contourpopulation densitynatural resourcehistorical maps	<p>Reading Strand 3: Comprehending Informational Text Concept 1: Expository Text PO 6. Interpret information from graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, tables, timelines) in expository text.</p> <p>Writing Strand 3: Writing Applications Concept 2: Expository PO 2. Write an expository paragraph that contains:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a topic sentencesupporting detailsrelevant information

Overview

Students will engage in a hands-on activity using GPS technology in the context of the California Gold Rush.

Purpose

Students will understand the role that the Gold Rush played in westward expansion.

Materials

- GPS units – 1 for each group of 4 students
- *eTrex Legend Quick Reference Guide* – 1 for each group of 4 students
- California Gold Rush Map - 1 per student
- California Gold Rush Waypoint Worksheet – 1 copy to be cut apart
- Clipboards, journals/writing paper, pencils - 1 per student
- 4 plastic boxes
- A Checklist of My Work – 1 per student

Objectives

Students will:

- Find waypoints using a GPS unit
- Identify locations on a map
- Transcribe information into a journal
- Write a summary paragraph about the Gold Rush

Lesson Components

Prerequisite skills: Students will have knowledge about the California Gold Rush and know how to use a GPS unit.

Prior to the lesson: The teacher will determine and program the location of the waypoints by degrees, minutes, and seconds into the GPS units. One copy of the California Gold Rush Waypoint Worksheet will be cut up so each waypoint is a separate slip of paper. A plastic case containing one slip of paper about the gold strike will be left at each waypoint.

1. Divide students into groups of four.
2. Provide the *eTrex Legend Quick Reference Guide* and a GPS unit for each group.
3. Review the features of the GPS unit and how to navigate to the waypoints.
4. Instruct the students to take turns completing the following tasks.
The shared tasks are:
 - (1) using the GPS unit to find the correct location
 - (2) being responsible for opening and replacing the plastic box just as it was found
 - (3) reading aloud the information on the slip of paper found in the plastic box
 - (4) locating the city on the Gold Rush map**All students will:**
 - (1) write the information found in the plastic box in their journal
 - (2) circle the city on their Gold Rush map
5. Pass out a clipboard, California Gold Rush Map, journal, and pencil to each student.
6. At each waypoint a student will read the slip of paper that they find in the plastic box. A student will locate the location of the gold strike on the map. All students will circle the location of the gold strike on their map and then write the fact in their journal. They should rotate group tasks until everyone has taken a turn.
7. After completing all of the waypoints the students will return to class.
8. Students will write a summary of the information about the Gold Rush collected at the waypoints using the information from their maps and journal.
9. Hand out the student writing checklist to the students. The summary should include the map locations where gold was found, who the important people associated with the events were, who was President at this time, and the value of the gold collected.

The summary should have a good introduction, accurate supporting details, and a conclusion.

10. Collect student summary for assessment.

Assessment

The summary can be graded for Ideas and Organization using the Student Checklist. 14 points are possible. 12 points is mastery.

Extensions

Virtual Trip: Plan a trip to California Gold Country. Use Google Maps to plan a trip from your home to Sacramento, California, then into the gold mining areas.

In this lesson, GPS technology has been used to locate plastic boxes. How could GPS have been used during the California Gold Rush?

Sources

PBS American Experience-The Gold Rush map:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/goldrush/index.html>

Google Earth: <http://earth.google.com/>

Name _____

A Checklist for My Work

My summary includes:

Ideas – these are your supporting details

_____ the names of the 4 locations where gold was found in California (4 points)

_____ the names of **at least** one person associated with the finding of gold in those locations (4 possible)

_____ the name of the President of the United States at the time of the Gold Rush (1 point)

_____ a statement about how valuable the gold was during the time of the Gold Rush (1 point)

Organization

_____ I have a good introduction. – 2 points

_____ I have included **at least** 10 supporting details. – 10 points (for Ideas)

_____ I have a good conclusion. – 2 points

Total points possible – 14 points

Total points - _____

California Gold Rush Waypoint Worksheet

WAYPOINT 1: Sutter's Mill/Coloma - January 24, 1848

During the time when James Polk was President, a man named James Marshall started the California gold rush when he spotted some pea-sized bits of gold. The news brought thousands of prospectors (people looking for gold) to the area, but neither Marshall nor his employer, John Sutter, got rich from the find.

WAYPOINT 2: Bidwell's Bar - July 4, 1848

John Bidwell, an employee of Sutter's, made his own gold strike farther north. The land there was so rich with gold that one miner later built a three-story mansion with his profits and still had enough gold left to bury \$100,000 (\$2.4 million in 2005 dollars) of it for safekeeping.

WAYPOINT 3: Murphy's – 1848

John and Daniel Murphy struck gold just a few days after arriving in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. By the end of the year, they had \$1.5 million dollars (\$37 million in 2005 dollars) worth of gold.

WAYPOINT 4: Mariposa –1849

John Fremont's property was at the southern edge of the gold fields. His workers regularly sent him buckskin bags filled with 100 pounds of gold.

California Gold Rush “Major Strikes”



Source: PBS: American Experience