

The Gold Rush Musical! Instructional Resources

The Gold Rush Musical! provides resources to integrate music, drama, and literacy skills into the history/social studies grade 4 content standards. Please note that some resources are essential for a great performance, and others are optional. Teachers are busy and have more to teach than The Gold Rush Musical!

Instructional Resource Essentials to Prepare for The Gold Rush Musical!

Start preparing sooner than later! About two weeks prior to The Gold Rush Musical! layer in these three essentials to ensure a great performance.

Bronco Charlie Rides the Pony Express Video: Introduce the historical character that Mark Pennington will portray in The Gold Rush Musical! The song and accompanying digital comic book, “Bronco Charlie Rides Again” tells Bronco Charlie’s true and tall tale story. (3 minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-Lg_74Easc

Gold Rush Song Videos: Play the 12 authentic California Gold Rush song videos with lyrics two or three times to familiarize students with the songs. Bronco Charlie will sing the verses, and your students should be able to sing along with the choruses. Students enjoy the performance much more when they know the tunes! Play only a few of the songs at a time. (33 minutes total)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luv_Bc2IyEc

Readers’ Theater: Print copies of the 7-page script, and rehearse two or three times in advance of the performance. The script (see separate PDF attachment) is packed with history, stories, journal entries, and humor. Please read the instructions about how to teach and set up the readers’ theater on page 32. (20-25 minutes script read for your students)

Instructional Resource Options

Reading Fluency: Song lyrics with word counts, fluency norms, and timing sheet.

Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension: Key vocabulary, song lyrics, 5 embedded comprehension questions per song, featuring the S.C.R.I.P. Comprehension Cues. Answers.

Songwriters’ Workshop: A lesson designed to teach meter and rhyme schemes featured in the Gold Rush Songs and a writing exercise in which students compose a verse to one of the songs. Complete the lesson on page 33, and send me your best five sets of lyrics. I will sing and record your students’ Gold Rush song and send you the song video. Your students are published songwriters!

Reading Fluency

Increased fluency rate and accuracy are highly correlated with increased reading comprehension. With a solid foundation in the alphabetic code, students can increase their fluency levels by practicing repeated choral readings along with modeled readings.

Modeled readings can also include songs. Authors Iwasaki, Rasinski, Yildirim, and Zimmerman comment:

We think that singing (while simultaneously having a visual display of the words in the songs) could be a very useful instructional tool to teach reading to beginning readers. A growing body of research and scholarly thought suggests that singing has potential for improving reading (Biggs, Homan, Dedrick, & Rasinski, 2008; Fisher, 2001; Harp, 1988; Hines, 2010; Miller & Coen, 1994; Smith, 2000).

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How to Use the Modeled Reading Fluency Songs

1. Pass out colored pencils and the Reading Fluency Songs Timing Sheet to each student.
2. Copy and pass out one of the Reading Fluency Songs (includes word counts in the left margin) to each student.
3. Say, “Each of you will read out loud in *six-inch voices* for one minute. Read at your own pace—not with another student. Don’t skip any words, and sound out any words that you don’t know. Pause at commas and stop at periods. During the timing, don’t stop reading. Ready, read.”
4. After one minute say, “Stop. Point your finger under the last word you read and keep it there. To figure out how many words you read in one minute, look at the number listed in the left margin. Begin with that number and add how many words you read on that line up to and including your finger. Watch how I do it on the display.”
5. “Now we are going to use a bar graph on the Reading Fluency Songs Timing Sheet to show how many words we read per minute. Look at the display to see how to do this. The first column after the numbers is colored blue at the bottom because it is the “cold” unpracticed timing. The red on top will be the “hot” practiced timing. Now shade in your “cold” timing.
6. Play the video of the selected song and encourage students to sing along with the lyrics. If students resist singing, ask them to read the lyrics out loud.
7. Repeat the video sing-alongs until most students can accurately pronounce nearly all words, have a basic feel for the prosody (the pattern of rhythm and sound), and attend to the punctuation of the song lyrics. Have students take and record their “hot” timings.

Reading Fluency Song Timing Sheet

Name _____

Reading Fluency Songs	Words Read per Minute													
			180											
			175											
			170											
			165											
			160											
			155											
			150											
			145											
			140											
			135											
			130											
			125											
			120											
			115											
			110											
			105											
			100											
			95											
			90											
			85											
			80											
Blue = First Timing Red = Last Timing														
Example														
Oh! California														
Days of '49														
Clementine														
Sweet Betsy from Pike														
Seeing the Elephant														
Joe Bowers														
Bronco Charlie														
Ho! For California														
Big Jean Clair														
A Rippin' Trip														
Life in California														
Skip to My Lou														

Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

In addition to the **Reading Fluency** practice, each of the 12 Gold Rush songs includes **Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension** instruction and practice.

Teachers will find that the songs provide “gold mines” for both literary and historical analysis. The colorful figures of speech, vocabulary, and use of literary elements (metaphor, simile, personification, etc.) will provoke rich class discussion, as will the “tall tales” interwoven in some of the song lyrics.

Although some of the “rough and ready” realities of violence, criminal actions, and vices (drunkenness and gambling) are included in these songs, they are not the focus. The author has carefully selected songs which do not include racist or sexist lyrics although the accompanying historical background does contextualize these prejudices in age-appropriate explanations.

Analyzing the Gold Rush songs as primary source documents and comparing lyrical statements and facts with those learned in the students’ textbook and articles will help students understand the nature of history and the role of historians in determining what did happen, to whom, and by whom during this time historical period.

How to Use the Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension Worksheets

Pre-teach the bolded vocabulary, so that students will be able to reference these words as they read the songs. Read the background information and help students analyze the photographs.

The SCRIP acronym stands for Summarize, Connect, Re-think, Interpret, and Predict. Each Gold Rush song includes five questions, featuring each of these five cueing strategies. Teachers may wish to use these cues to develop questions for accompanying expository texts.

Determine whether students should answer the five comprehension questions independently or in pairs and review the answers in class discussion. Answers follow.

“Oh! California” Reading Fluency

	I sailed from Salem City with my washbowl on my knee. 11 I'm going to California—the gold dust for to see. 21 It rained all night the day I left; the weather, it was dry. 34 The sun so hot, I froze to death oh brothers don't you cry. 47 Oh! California, that's the land for me! 54 I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee. 65 I jumped aboard the Liza ship and traveled on the sea, 76 and every time I thought of home I wished it wasn't me. 88 The vessel reared like any horse, that had of oats and wealth. 100 I found it wouldn't throw me, so I thought I'd throw myself. 112 Oh! California, that's the land for me! 119 I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee. 130 I soon shall be in Frisco and there I'll look around, 141 and when I find the gold lumps there, I'll pick them off the ground. 155 I'll scrape the mountains clean, my boys; I'll drain the rivers dry. 167 A pocket full of rocks bring home, oh brothers don't you cry. 179 Oh! California, that's the land for me! 186 I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee. 197 I thought of all the pleasant times we've had together here. 208 I thought I ought to cry a bit but couldn't find a tear. 221 The pilot's bread was in my mouth, the gold dust in my eye. 234 And though I'm going far away dear brothers don't you cry. 245 Oh! California, that's the land for me! 252 I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee. 263		
	 		
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
	- Total Number of Errors	- Total Number of Errors	
	= Total Number of Correct Words	= Total Number of Correct Words	

“Oh! California” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

washbowl	A pan used with water to wash out rock and soil, leaving the heavier gold
vessel	A ship or large boat
pilot bread	A cracker that does not spoil

I sailed from Salem City with my **washbowl** on my knee.
I'm going to California—the gold dust for to see.
It rained all night the day I left; the weather, it was dry.
The sun so hot, I froze to death oh brothers don't you cry.

Oh! California, that's the land for me!
I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee.

I jumped aboard the Liza ship and traveled on the sea,
and every time I thought of home I wished it wasn't me.
The **vessel** reared like any horse, that had of oats and wealth.
I found it wouldn't throw me, so I thought I'd throw myself.

Oh! California, that's the land for me!
I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee.

I soon shall be in Frisco and there I'll look around,
and when I find the gold lumps there, I'll pick them off the ground.
I'll scrape the mountains clean, my boys; I'll drain the rivers dry.
A pocket full of rocks bring home, oh brothers don't you cry.

Oh! California, that's the land for me!
I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee.

I thought of all the pleasant times we've had together here.
I thought I ought to cry a bit but couldn't find a tear.
The **pilot's bread** was in my mouth, the gold dust in my eye.
And though I'm going far away dear brothers don't you cry.

Oh! California, that's the land for me!
I'm going to San Francisco with my washbowl on my knee.

Melody: Stephen Foster, 1848 “Oh! Susanna”

Lyrics: Traditional

Background: These lyrics by an unknown author were written to a popular tune of the as the author sailed into San Francisco Bay in 1849. Miners set off to Sutter's Fort in Sacramento for supplies and then to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada to mine for gold.

(1) **Interpret** what the character means by “I wished it wasn't me.”

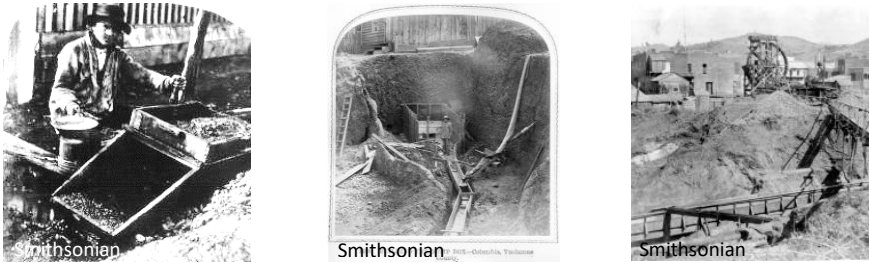
(2) **Re-think** what the weather opposites mean.

(3) **Connect** the two lyrics about crying.

(4) **Predict** how the character's expectations will match reality.

(5) **Summarize** the character's feelings about his voyage to California.

"The Days of '49" Reading Fluency

	I'm old Tom Moore from the bummers' shore in the good old golden days. 14 They call me a bummer and a ginsot too, but what cares I for praise? 29 I wander around from town to town just like a roving sign, 41 and all the people say, "There goes Tom Moore in the days of '49." 55 My comrades they all loved me well, a jolly saucy crew. 66 A few hard cases I will recall though they all were brave and true. 80 Whatever the pitch, they never would flinch, they never would fret or whine. 93 Like good old bricks, they stood the kicks in the days of '49. 106 In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I repine 120 for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49. 136 There was Poker Joe, one of the boys, who was always in a game. 150 Whether he lost or whether he won, to him it was always the same. 164 He would ante up and draw his cards and call a hatful blind. 177 In the game with death, he lost his breath in the days of '49. 191 There was Ragshag Bill from Buffalo; I never will forget. 201 He'd roar all day and roar all night, and I guess he's roaring yet. 215 One day he fell in a prospect hole in a roaring bad design, 228 and in that hole he roared out his soul in the days of '49. 242 In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I repine 256 for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49. 272 Of all the comrades I have had, there's none that's left to boast. 285 I'm left alone in my misery like some poor wandering ghost. 296 And I pass by from town to town, they call me a rambling sign. 310 "There goes Tom Moore, from the bummers' shore in the days of '49." 323 In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I repine 337 for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49. 353		
			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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"The Days of '49" Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

ginsot	A drunkard		
comrades	Friends	saucy	Rude and disrespectful
repine	To complain	hatful blind	An "all-in" poker bet

I'm old Tom Moore from the bummers' shore in the good old golden days. They call me a bummer and a **ginsot** too, but what cares I for praise?

I wander around from town to town just like a roving sign, and all the people say, "There goes Tom Moore in the days of '49."

My **comrades** they all loved me well, a jolly **saucy** crew. A few hard cases I will recall though they all were brave and true. Whatever the pitch, they never would flinch, they never would fret or whine. Like good old bricks, they stood the kicks in the days of '49.

In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I **repine** for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49.

There was Poker Joe, one of the boys, who was always in a game. Whether he lost or whether he won, to him it was always the same. He would ante up and draw his cards and call a **hatful blind**. In the game with death, he lost his breath in the days of '49.

There was Ragshag Bill from Buffalo; I never will forget. He'd roar all day and roar all night, and I guess he's roaring yet. One day he fell in a prospect hole in a roaring bad design, and in that hole he roared out his soul in the days of '49.

In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I repine for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49.

Of all the comrades I have had, there's none that's left to boast. I'm left alone in my misery like some poor wandering ghost. And I pass by from town to town, they call me a rambling sign. "There goes Tom Moore, from the bummers' shore in the days of '49."

In the days of old, in the days of gold, how oft'times I repine for the days of old when we dug up the gold in the days of '49.

(1) Re-think "the good old golden days."

(2) Interpret the description of friends as "hard cases."

(3) Connect what happens to Joe and Bill.

(4) Predict the results of a "roaring bad design."

(5) Summarize the character's feelings about his Gold Rush experience.

“Clementine” Reading Fluency

10	In a cavern, in a canyon, excavating for a mine, dwelt a miner, forty-niner, and his daughter, Clementine.		
18	Light she was and like a fairy, and her shoes were number nine.		
31	Herring boxes, without topses, sandals were for Clementine.		
39	Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,		
49	You are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.		
58	Drove she ducklings to the water every morning just at nine,		
69	hit her foot against a splinter, fell into the foaming brine.		
80	Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,		
90	you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.		
99	Ruby lips above the water, blowing bubbles soft and fine,		
109	but, alas, I was no swimmer, so I lost my Clementine.		
120	Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,		
130	you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.		
139	How I missed her! How I missed her, how I missed my Clementine,		
152	but I kissed her little sister; I forgot my Clementine.		
162	Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,		
172	you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.		
181	Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,		
191	you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.		
200			
			
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	= Total Number of Correct Words	= Total Number of Correct Words	

“Clementine” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

cavern	A cave
herring boxes	Fish boxes used as sandals for big feet
dreadful	Sadly or awfully
brine	Salt water

In a **cavern**, in a canyon, excavating for a mine,
dwelt a miner, forty-niner, and his daughter, Clementine.

Light she was and like a fairy, and her shoes were number
nine.

Herring boxes, without toposes, sandals were for Clementine.

Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,
you are lost and gone forever—**dreadful** sorry, Clementine.

Drove she ducklings to the water every morning just at
nine,

hit her foot against a splinter, fell into the foaming **brine**.

Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,
You are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.

Ruby lips above the water, blowing bubbles soft and fine,
but, alas, I was no swimmer, so I lost my Clementine.

Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,
you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.

How I missed her! How I missed her, how I missed my
Clementine,

but I kissed her little sister; I forgot my Clementine.

Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,
you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.

Oh my darling, oh my darling, oh my darling, Clementine,
you are lost and gone forever—dreadful sorry, Clementine.

After miners took most of the gold from the rivers,
they began digging to find more. Much of the gold
found in California was attached to quartz. Quartz is
a clear mineral that forms lines within rock. These
lines were called *veins* or lodes. Their abundance in
the foothills of the Sierra Nevada were called the
Mother Lode.

(1) Re-think “light she was”
and “her shoes were
number nine.”

(2) Predict what “lost and
gone forever” will mean.

(3) Connect the two
sections about feet.

(4) Interpret why the
Miner “forgot my
Clementine.”

(5) Summarize the
accident and the father’s
reaction.

“Sweet Betsy from Pike” Reading Fluency

	Oh, don't you remember Sweet Betsy from Pike?		
8	She crossed the wide mountains with her lover Ike		
17	with two yoke of oxen and a big yeller dog,		
27	a tall Shanghai rooster and one spotted hog.		
35	One evening quite early they camped on the flat,		
44	down by the road on a green shady mat		
53	where Betsy got tired and laid down to repose		
62	and Ike, he just gazed at his Pike County rose.		
72	They soon reached the desert where Betsy gave out,		
81	and down in the sand she lay rolling about.		
90	Ike in great terror looked on in surprise		
98	saying, "Betsy get up. You'll get sand in your eyes."		
108	The Shanghai ran off, and the cattle all died.		
117	The last piece of bacon that morning was fried.		
126	Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad.		
133	The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderfully sad.		
142	One morning they climbed up a very high hill		
151	and looked with great wonder at old Placerville.		
159	Ike, he then said as he cast his eyes down,		
169	"Sweet Betsy, my love, won't you come to Hangtown?"		
178	Now, Ike and sweet Betsy attended a dance.		
186	Ike wore a pair of his Pike County pants.		
195	Sweet Betsy was covered with ribbons and rings.		
203	Said Ike, "You're an angel, but where are your wings?"		
213	Ike and sweet Betsy got married of course,		
221	but Ike, getting jealous, obtained a divorce.		
228	And Betsy was pleased and so she did shout,		
237	"Goodbye, you big lummo; I'm glad you backed out."		
246			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
	- Total Number of Errors	- Total Number of Errors	
	= Total Number of Correct Words	= Total Number of Correct Words	

“Sweet Betsy from Pike” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

repose To sleep peacefully
lummox A clumsy or awkward person

Oh, don't you remember Sweet Betsy from Pike?
She crossed the wide mountains with her lover Ike
with two yoke of oxen and a big yeller dog,
a tall Shanghai rooster and one spotted hog.

One evening quite early they camped on the flat,
down by the road on a green shady mat
where Betsy got tired and laid down to **repose**
and Ike, he just gazed at his Pike County rose.

They soon reached the desert where Betsy gave out,
and down in the sand she lay rolling about.
Ike in great terror looked on in surprise
saying, "Betsy get up. You'll get sand in your eyes."

The Shanghai ran off, and the cattle all died.
The last piece of bacon that morning was fried.
Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad.
The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderfully sad.

One morning they climbed up a very high hill
and looked with great wonder at old Placerville.
Ike, he then said as he cast his eyes down,
"Sweet Betsy, my love, won't you come to Hangtown?"

Now, Ike and sweet Betsy attended a dance.
Ike wore a pair of his Pike County pants.
Sweet Betsy was covered with ribbons and rings.
Said Ike, "You're an angel, but where are your wings?"

Ike and sweet Betsy got married of course,
but Ike, getting jealous, obtained a divorce.
And Betsy was pleased and so she did shout,
"Goodbye, you big **lummox**; I'm glad you backed out."

Most Americans from the Eastern states journeyed to California over the Overland Trail. This trail split into many other trails west of the Rocky Mountains. The Conestoga wagons provided more room for supplies than could be taken aboard ships.

(1) Interpret why Betsy and Ike brought animals on their trip to California.

(2) Re-think "You'll get sand in your eyes."

(3) Predict what will happen to Betsy and Ike.

(4) Connect the challenges of traveling the Overland Trail described in this song.

(5) Summarize the relationship between Betsy and Ike.

“Seeing the Elephant” Reading Fluency

12	When I left the States for gold, everything I had I sold: A stove and a bed, a fat old sow, sixteen chickens, and a cow.		
26	Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.		
35	Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.		
49	Being brave, I cut and carved on the desert nearly starved.		
60	My old mule lay down and died. I had no blanket, so I took his hide.		
76	A poor coyote stole my meat, and I had naught but bread to eat.		
90	It was not long 'til that gave out. Then how I cursed the Truckee route.		
105	Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.		
114	Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.		
128	Because I would not pay my bill, they kicked me out of Downeyville.		
141	I stole on a mule and lost the trail, and then fetched up in Hangtown jail.		
157	Canvas roof and paper walls, twenty horse thieves in the stalls.		
168	I did as I had done before, coyoteed out from beneath the floor.		
181	Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.		
190	Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.		
204	The people threatened hard my life, because I stole a miner's wife.		
216	They showed me a rope to give me signs, and off I went to the southern mines.		
233	Fell in love with a California girl, her eyes were gray and her hair did curl,		
249	her nose turned up to get rid of her chin. Says she, "You're a miner; you can't		
266	come in!"		
268	Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.		
277	Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.		
291	When the elephant I had seen, darned if I thought I was green.		
304	Others say both night and morn, they saw him comin' 'round the Horn.		
317	Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.		
326	Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.		
340			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Seeing the Elephant” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

sow	A female pig		
naught	Nothing		
coyoteed	Dug out	green	Inexperienced

When I left the States for gold, everything I had I sold:
A stove and a bed, a fat old **sow**, sixteen chickens, and a cow.
Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.
Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.
Being brave, I cut and carved on the desert nearly starved.
My old mule lay down and died. I had no blanket, so I took his hide.
A poor coyote stole my meat, and I had **naught** but bread to eat.
It was not long 'til that gave out. Then how I cursed the Truckee route.

Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.
Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.

Because I would not pay my bill, they kicked me out of
Downeyville. I stole on a mule and lost the trail, and then
fetched up in Hangtown jail. Canvas roof and paper walls,
twenty horse thieves in the stalls. I did as I had done before,
coyoteed out from beneath the floor.

Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.
Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.

The people threatened hard my life, because I stole a miner's
wife. They showed me a rope to give me signs, and off I went to
the southern mines. Fell in love with a California girl, her eyes
were gray and her hair did curl, her nose turned up to get rid
of her chin. Says she, "You're a miner; you can't come in!"

Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.
Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.

When the elephant I had seen, darned if I thought I was **green**.
Others say both night and morn, they saw him comin' 'round the
Horn.

Leave, you miners, leave. Oh, leave, you miners, leave.
Take my advice, kill off your lice, or else go up on the mountain.

(1) **Predict** why he sold everything he owned.

(2) **Re-think** what is meant by "naught but bread."

(3) **Connect** the examples of how the miner was caught stealing.

(4) **Interpret** "showed me a rope to give me signs."

(5) **Summarize** how people felt about miners in this song.

“Joe Bowers” Reading Fluency

	My name, it is Joe Bowers; I've got a brother Ike. 11 I'm just here from Missouri and all the way from Pike. 22 I'll tell you why I left there and why I came to roam 35 and leave my aged parents so far away from home. 45 I used to court a girl there; her name was Sally Black. 57 I asked her if she'd marry; she said it was a whack. 69 She says to me, "Joe Bowers, before we're hitched for life, 80 you ought to get a little home to keep your little wife." 92 "Oh, my dearest Sally, oh Sally, for your sake, 101 I'll go to California and try and raise a stake." 111 Says she to me, "Joe Bowers, you're just the one to win." 123 She gave me a kiss to seal the deal and throwed a dozen in. 137 When I got to this country, I nary had a red. 148 I had such wolfish feelings, I wished myself most dead. 158 But the thought of my dear Sally soon made this feeling git 170 and whispered hope to Bowers; Lord, I wish I had 'em yet. 182 At last I went to mining, put in my biggest licks. 193 Came down upon the boulders just like a thousand bricks. 203 I worked both late and early, in rain, in sun, and snow. 215 I was working for my Sally, 'twas all the same to Joe. 227 One day I got a letter from my dear brother Ike. 238 It came from old Missouri all the way from Pike. 248 It taught me the darndest news that ever you did hear. 259 My heart, it is a-breaking, so please excuse this tear. 269 It said that Sal was false to me, that her love for me had fled, 284 that she had married a butcher whose hair was awful red. 295 It told me more than that; it's enough to make me swear, 307 that Sal had had a baby and the baby had red hair. 319		
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Joe Bowers” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

court	To date	whack	An agreement
hitched	Married		
licks	Efforts		

(1) Interpret why much of the grammar is poor throughout this song.

My name, it is Joe Bowers; I've got a brother Ike.
I'm just here from Missouri and all the way from Pike.
I'll tell you why I left there and why I came to roam
and leave my aged parents so far away from home.

I used to **court** a girl there; her name was Sally Black.
I asked her if she'd marry; she said it was a **whack**.
She says to me, "Joe Bowers, before we're **hitched** for life,
you ought to get a little home to keep your little wife."

(2) Re-think Sally's condition for marriage.

"Oh, my dearest Sally, oh Sally, for your sake,
I'll go to California and try and raise a stake."
Says she to me, "Joe Bowers, you're just the one to win."
She gave me a kiss to seal the deal and throwed a dozen in.

(3) Connect how Sally felt about Joe at the beginning and end of the song.

When I got to this country, I nary had a red.
I had such wolfish feelings, I wished myself most dead.
But the thought of my dear Sally soon made this feeling git
and whispered hope to Bowers; Lord, I wish I had 'em yet.

At last I went to mining, put in my biggest **licks**.
Came down upon the boulders just like a thousand bricks.
I worked both late and early, in rain, in sun, and snow.
I was working for my Sally, 'twas all the same to Joe.

(4) Predict why the letter would be from Ike, and not Sally.

One day I got a letter from my dear brother Ike.
It came from old Missouri all the way from Pike.
It taught me the darndest news that ever you did hear.
My heart, it is a-breaking, so please excuse this tear.

It said that Sal was false to me, that her love for me had fled,
that she had married a butcher whose hair was awful red.
It told me more than that; it's enough to make me swear,
that Sal had had a baby and the baby had red hair.

(5) Summarize Joe and Sally's relationship.

Few women traveled to California during the early Gold Rush. The miners often wrote letters to wives and girlfriends back home. Many of the Gold Rush songs use "Pike" as a general place name for home.

“Bronco Charlie” Reading Fluency

	Well, they call me “Bronco Charlie,” and I have a story to tell.		
13	Now, some of it’s a tall tale, but some is true, as well.		
26	Way back in 1861, I was eleven years old		
35	when a pony with no rider raced into Sacramento.		
44	That pony was carrying mail, sent by the Pony Express,		
54	in locked mochila pouches to join the East and West.		
64	“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;”		
74	It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”		
86	When the station keeper caught the reins, a crowd around him grew.		
98	He said, “I have no rider to take the mail on through.”		
110	But, the Pony Express motto is “The mail must go through.”		
121	So I shouted, “Give me half a chance to show what I can do.”		
135	“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;”		
145	It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”		
157	“I’ve ridden the route to Hangtown; I know the Placerville trail.”		
168	“No, you’re much too young,” said some in the crowd, “to carry the U.S. mail.”		
183	The station keeper had no choice, so he saddled me up to go,		
196	off to ride the 45 miles east from Sacramento.		
205	“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;”		
215	It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”		
227	I rode all day and through the night, got lost, then found the station.		
241	A new rider strapped on the mail to a fresh pony waiting.		
253	The next day at the station, the eastern rider arrived,		
263	but he couldn’t finish up his route with an arrow in his side.		
276	“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;”		
286	It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”		
298	Then the station keeper told me, “Now you work for the Pony Express,”		
311	so I took the oath and delivered the mail in record time, no less.		
325	As the youngest of hundreds of riders, I rode 5 months, but then		
338	the telegraph was completed, and the Pony Express did end.		
348	“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;”		
358	It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”		
370			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Bronco Charlie” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

bronco	A wild or half-tamed horse
mochila	A bag with pockets hanging over both sides of a saddle

(1) **Re-think** what is meant by “some of it’s a tall tale.”

Well, they call me “**Bronco** Charlie,” and I have a story to tell. Now, some of it’s a tall tale, but some is true, as well.

Way back in 1861, I was eleven years old when a pony with no rider raced into Sacramento. That pony was carrying mail, sent by the Pony Express, in locked **mochila** pouches to join the East and West.

“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;” It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”

When the station keeper caught the reins, a crowd around him grew. He said, “I have no rider to take the mail on through.” But, the Pony Express motto is “The mail must go through.” So I shouted, “Give me half a chance to show what I can do.”

“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;” It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”

“I’ve ridden the route to Hangtown; I know the Placerville trail. “No, you’re much too young,” said some in the crowd, “to carry the U.S. mail.” The station keeper had no choice, so he saddled me up to go, off to ride the 45 miles east from Sacramento.

“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;” It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”

I rode all day and through the night, got lost, then found the station. A new rider strapped on the mail to a fresh pony waiting. The next day at the station, the eastern rider arrived, but he couldn’t finish up his route with an arrow in his side.

“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;” It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”

Then the station keeper told me, “Now you work for the Pony Express,” so I took the oath and delivered the mail in record time, no less.

As the youngest of hundreds of riders, I rode 5 months, but then the telegraph was completed, and the Pony Express did end.

“The mail must go through;” “The mail must go through;” It’s the motto of the Pony Express: “The mail must go through.”

(2) **Interpret** the meaning of the Pony Express motto.

(3) **Predict** what the station keeper will do.

(4) **Connect** the station keepers’ decisions to let “Bronco Charlie” ride.

(5) **Summarize** how “Bronco Charlie” became a Pony Express rider.

“Ho! For California” Reading Fluency

10	We've formed our band and are well-manned to journey afar		
24	to the promised land, where the golden ore is rich in store on the		
28	banks of the Sacramento.		
40	Oh! don't you cry, nor heave a sigh, for we'll come back		
51	bye-and-bye. Don't breathe a fear, nor shed a tear, but patiently		
55	wait about two years.		
66	Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There's plenty of gold,		
76	so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.		
90	As the gold is thar, most any whar, they dig it out with an		
104	iron bar, and where 'tis thick, with a spade or pick, they can take		
110	out lumps as heavy as brick.		
122	As we explore the distant shore, we'll fill our pockets with the		
135	shining ore, and how 'twill sound, as the word goes round, of our		
142	picking up gold by the dozen pound.		
153	Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There's plenty of gold,		
163	so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.		
174	We expect our share of the coarsest fare and sometimes sleep		
187	in the open air. Upon the cold ground we all sleep sound except		
193	when the wolves are howling around.		
206	As off we roam over the dark sea foam, we'll never forget our		
217	friends at home. Our memories will bring to mind the thoughts		
222	of those we leave behind.		
233	Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There's plenty of gold,		
243	so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.		
257	In the days of old, the Prophets told of the city to come, all		
268	framed in gold, when they foresaw the day to come, now		
271	dawning in California.		
285	Oh! the land we'll save, for the bold and brave in a land where		
298	never will breathe a slave. Let foes recoil, for the sons of toil		
304	shall make California God's FREE SOIL.		
315	Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There's plenty of gold,		
325	so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.		
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Ho! For California” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

heave	To produce or bring
coarsest fare	Poor quality food
free soil	A state with no slavery

We’ve formed our band and are well-manned to journey afar to the promised land, where the golden ore is rich in store on the banks of the Sacramento.

Oh! don’t you cry, nor **heave** a sigh, for we’ll come back bye-and-bye. Don’t breathe a fear, nor shed a tear, but patiently wait about two years.

Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There’s plenty of gold, so I’ve been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.

As the gold is thar, most any whar, they dig it out with an iron bar, and where ’tis thick, with a spade or pick, they can take out lumps as heavy as brick.

As we explore the distant shore, we’ll fill our pockets with the shining ore, and how ’twill sound, as the word goes round, of our picking up gold by the dozen pound.

Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There’s plenty of gold, so I’ve been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.

We expect our share of the **coarsest fare** and sometimes sleep in the open air. Upon the cold ground we all sleep sound except when the wolves are howling around.

As off we roam over the dark sea foam, we’ll never forget our friends at home. Our memories will bring to mind the thoughts of those we leave behind.

Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There’s plenty of gold, so I’ve been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.

In the days of old, the Prophets told of the city to come, all framed in gold, when they foresaw the day to come, now dawning in California.

Oh! the land we’ll save, for the bold and brave in a land where never will breathe a slave. Let foes recoil, for the sons of toil shall make California God’s **FREE SOIL**.

Then, ho! Brothers ho! To California go. There’s plenty of gold, so I’ve been told, on the banks of the Sacramento.

NOTE: Little gold was found in or around the Sacramento River.

(1) Interpret what is meant by a “well-manned” “band.”

(2) Re-think what is meant by “so I’ve been told.”

(3) Predict how accurate the claims will be about the gold in California.

(4) Summarize the character’s expectations.

(5) Connect the lyric about “free soil” to slavery.

“Big Jean Clair” Reading Fluency

12	Jean Luc Clair was 'a trappin' somewhere up in Canada in forty-nine,		
26	but when he heard tell of the Gold Rush, well, he set off for		
29	the southern mines.		
37	He was five-foot ten, nearly three hundred pounds—		
42	wider than tall they'd say.		
54	From Mariposa, Coulterville, to Poker Flat, no one got in his way.		
65	They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear.		
76	Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines.		
84	He was the terror of the southern mines.		
97	Well, Clair had no fear of God, nor man. He was a bully		
101	and a murderin' thief.		
116	He'd take your stake, steal your claim, and eat up all your beans and beef.		
127	They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear.		
138	Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines.		
146	He was the terror of the southern mines.		
156	Joaquin Murietta road into camp with his sidekick Three-Finger Jack.		
165	Claire lassoed those sons, took their money and guns;		
170	those outlaws never came back.		
181	They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear.		
192	Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines.		
200	He was the terror of the southern mines.		
212	One day a painter strolled into camp and created quite a hullabaloo.		
225	When the cat crept closer, Clair threw his ax and sliced that painter's		
228	head in two.		
239	They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear.		
250	Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines.		
258	He was the terror of the southern mines.		
272	The miners stage a fight 'tween a bull and a bear in a deep,		
276	wide pit they dug.		
291	But the bull never showed, so Clair jumped in and won himself a bearskin rug.		
302	They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear.		
313	Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines.		
321	He was the terror of the southern mines.		
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Big Jean Clair” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

stake	Someone’s money or gold
claim	A section of a river, stream, or land registered to a miner for his use only
sidekick	A partner with less authority
painter	A mountain lion hullabaloo excitement

Jean Luc Clair was ‘a trappin’ somewhere up in Canada in forty-nine, but when he heard tell of the Gold Rush, well, he set off for the southern mines.

He was five-foot ten, nearly three hundred pounds—wider than tall they’d say. From Mariposa, Coulterville, to Poker Flat, no one got in his way.

They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear. Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines. He was the terror of the southern mines.

Well, Clair had no fear of God, nor man. He was a bully and a murderin’ thief. He’d take your **stake**, steal your **claim**, and eat up all your beans and beef.

They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear. Meaner than a wolverine and the terror of the southern mines. He was the terror of the southern mines.

Joaquin Murietta road into camp with his **sidekick** Three-Finger Jack. Claire lassoed those sons, took their money and guns; those outlaws never came back.

They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear. Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines. He was the terror of the southern mines.

One day a **painter** strolled into camp and created quite a **hullabaloo**. When the cat crept closer, Clair threw his ax and sliced that painter’s head in two.

They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear. Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines. He was the terror of the southern mines.

The miners stage a fight ‘tween a bull and a bear in a deep, wide pit they dug. But the bull never showed, so Clair jumped in and won himself a bearskin rug.

They called him “Big Jean Clair”—stronger than a grizzly bear. Meaner than the wolverines and the terror of the southern mines. He was the terror of the southern mines.

(1) **Re-think** why Jean Luc Clair left Canada.

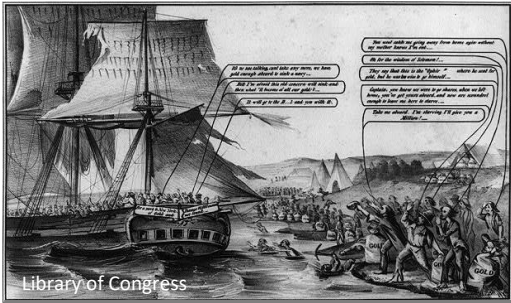
(2) **Connect** Jean Luc Clair’s size to his actions.

(3) **Interpret** why Jean Luc Clair was “the terror of the southern mines.”

(4) **Predict** how Jean Luc Clair would react to the painter.

(5) **Summarize** the good and bad actions of Jean Luc Clair in this song.

"A Rippin' Trip" Reading Fluency

11	You go aboard a leaky boat and sail for San Francisco.		
24	You've got to pump to keep her afloat; you have that, by jingo!		
36	The engine soon begins to squeak, nary a thing to oil her.		
45	Impossible to stop the leak. Rip, goes the boiler.		
53	The captain on the promenade, looking very savage;		
62	Steward and the cabin maid, fightin' 'bout the cabbage.		
70	All about the cabin floor passengers are sea-sick;		
79	Steamer bound to go ashore. Rip, goes the physic.		
89	Pork and beans they can't afford for second cabin passage.		
98	The cook has tumbled overboard, much to our advantage.		
108	The engineer's a little tight, draggin' on the main line.		
117	Finally gets in a fight. Rip goes the engine.		
127	Cholera begins to rage; a few have got the scurvy.		
134	Chickens dying in their cage; steerage topsy-turvy.		
143	You finally get to Panama; boatman want a back-load.		
151	Officers begin to jaw. Rip goes the railroad.		
163	When home you'll tell an awful tale and always will be thinking		
177	how long you had to pump and bail to keep the tub from sinking.		
188	You came back from Californ' with less than you had takin'.		
199	Some city sharp will rope you in. Rip goes the money.		
			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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"A Rippin' Trip" Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

by jingo	For sure	nary	Nothing
savage	Mean	physic	Medicine
tight	Drunk	steerage	Passengers
back-load	Return cargo	city sharp	A cheat

You go aboard a leaky boat and sail for San Francisco. You've got to pump to keep her afloat; you have that, **by jingo**!

The engine soon begins to squeak, **nary** a thing to oil her. Impossible to stop the leak. Rip, goes the boiler.

The captain on the promenade, looking very **savage**; Steward and the cabin maid, fightin' 'bout the cabbage. All about the cabin floor passengers are sea-sick; Steamer bound to go ashore. Rip, goes the **physic**.

Pork and beans they can't afford for second cabin passage. The cook has tumbled overboard, much to our advantage. The engineer's a little **tight**, draggin' on the main line. Finally gets in a fight. Rip goes the engine.

Cholera begins to rage; a few have got the scurvy. Chickens dying in their cage; **steerage** topsy-turvy. You finally get to Panama; boatman want a **back-load**. Officers begin to jaw. Rip goes the railroad.

When home you'll tell an awful tale and always will be thinking how long you had to pump and bail to keep the tub from sinking. You came back from Californ' with less than you had takin'. Some **city sharp** will rope you in. Rip goes the money.

Two sea routes from the Eastern states brought miners to San Francisco on steamships and large sailboats, known as *clipper ships*. The ships went around Cape Horn in South America or to Panama, where a train took miners to another ship waiting at the Pacific Ocean.

(1) Predict what will happen to the "leaky boat."

(2) Connect the attitudes of the captain, steward, cabin maid, and engineer.

(3) Interpret what is meant by "much to our advantage."

(4) Re-think why the railroad goes "rip."

(5) Summarize the character's experiences on the sea voyage.

“Life in California” Reading Fluency

12	I lived way up in Maine, where I heard about the diggings, so I shipped aboard a boat, commanded by Joe Higgins.		
21	I sold my little farm, from wife and children parted,		
32	and off to California sailed and left 'em broken-hearted.		
41	When I got to San Francisco, I saw heap of money,		
52	and the way the folks at monte played, I thought the game quite funny.		
66	So I took my little pile, and on the table tossed it,		
78	and the chap who dealt me out the cards, says, "My friend you have lost it!"		
94	Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.		
103	And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.		
116	I got into a steamboat and started up the river,		
126	where I thought the mosquitos would have taken out my liver.		
137	When I got to Sacramento, I buckled on this rigging,		
147	and soon I found a decent place, and so I went to digging.		
160	Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.		
169	And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.		
182	I got into the water; the "fever-n-ager" took me,		
191	and after I was froze to death, it turned around and shook me.		
204	But still I kept to work, a hopin' 'twould be better,		
215	but the water wouldn't fall a bit and kept a gettin' wetter.		
227	Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.		
236	And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.		
249	I'd got up to the "Woodcock" to see if Tom will stake me,		
262	for Tom has got too good a heart, I'm sure, to try to bust me.		
277	But if they don't know me there, or say I can't be trusted,		
290	why then, kind friends, without your help, this poor old miner's busted.		
302	Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.		
311	And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.		
324			
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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"Life in California" Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

monte	A three-card game of chance
chap	A man
rigging	Ropes to support a ship's mast and sails

I lived way up in Maine, where I heard about the diggings,
so I shipped aboard a boat, commanded by Joe Higgins.
I sold my little farm, from wife and children parted,
and off to California sailed and left 'em broken-hearted.

When I got to San Francisco, I saw heap of money,
and the way the folks at **monte** played, I thought the
game quite funny.

So I took my little pile, and on the table tossed it,
and the **chap** who dealt me out the cards, says, "My friend
you have lost it!"

Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.
And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.

I got into a steamboat and started up the river,
where I thought the mosquitos would have taken out my liver.
When I got to Sacramento, I buckled on this **rigging**,
and soon I found a decent place, and so I went to digging.

Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.
And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.

I got into the water; the "fever-n-ager" took me,
and after I was froze to death, it turned around and shook me.
But still I kept to work, a hopin' 'twould be better,
but the water wouldn't fall a bit and kept a gettin' wetter.

Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.
And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.

I'd got up to the "Woodcock" to see if Tom will stake me,
for Tom has got too good a heart, I'm sure, to try to bust me.
But if they don't know me there, or say I can't be trusted,
why then, kind friends, without your help, this poor old
miner's busted.

Well, I'm a used-up man, a perfect used-up man.
And if ever I get home again, I'll stay there if I can.

(1) Interpret why the
character left his family.

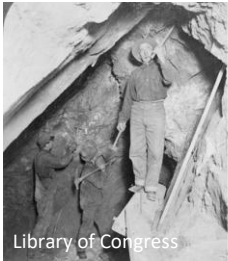
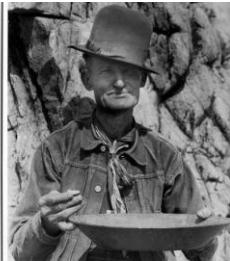
(2) Connect what is meant
by "quite funny" and "you
have lost it!"

(3) Re-think what is meant
by "I'll stay there if I can."

(4) Predict if his "hopin'
'twould be better" will
come true.

(5) Summarize how the
character becomes "a
used-up man."

“Skip to My Lou” Reading Fluency

	Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou. 12 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling. 24 Lost my partner, what'll I do? Lost my partner, what'll I do? 36 Lost my partner, what'll I do? Skip to my Lou, my darling. 48 She's gone again, skip to my lou. She's gone again, 58 skip to my lou. 62 She's gone again, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling. 75 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou. 87 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling 99 I'll get another one, pretty and new. I'll get another one, 110 pretty and new. 113 I'll get another one, pretty and new. Skip to my lou, 124 my darling. 126 Little red wagon painted blue. Little red wagon painted blue. 136 Little red wagon painted blue. Skip to my lou, my darling. 147 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou. 159 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling 171 Flies in the buttermilk, two by two. Flies in the buttermilk, 174 two by two. 185 Flies in the buttermilk, two by two. Skip to my lou, my darling. 198 Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! Flies in the sugar 210 bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! 214 Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! Skip to my lou, 226 my darling. 228 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou. 240 Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling. 252		
	  		
	Total Number of Words Read	Total Number of Words Read	
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“Skip to My Lou” Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

skip	Trade
buttermilk	Sour liquid left after butter has been churned from milk or cream

Lou, lou, **skip** to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Lost my partner, what'll I do? Lost my partner, what'll I do?

Lost my partner, what'll I do? Skip to my Lou, my darling.

She's gone again, skip to my lou. She's gone again, skip to my lou. She's gone again, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling

I'll get another one, pretty and new. I'll get another one, pretty and new. I'll get another one, pretty and new. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Little red wagon painted blue. Little red wagon painted blue

Little red wagon painted blue. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling

Flies in the **buttermilk**, two by two. Flies in the **buttermilk**, two by two. Flies in the buttermilk, two by two. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo! Skip to my lou, my darling.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Lou, lou, skip to my lou.

Lou, lou, skip to my lou. Skip to my lou, my darling.

Lou is the American spelling for the Scottish word *loo*, which means *love*. In the “Skip to My Lou” dance, a single miner would stand in a circle of miners, dancing as partners. He would shout, “Lost my partner, what'll I do?” and select “another one, pretty and new” to dance with from the circle.

(1) Predict what the dancer will do when he has “Lost my partner.”

(2) Re-think what the trading of partners means.

(3) Interpret “little red wagon painted blue.”

(4) Connect how the flies relate to trading partners.

(5) Summarize the character’s attitude about the problems he faces.

Reading Comprehension Answers

“Oh! California”

1. The traveler sometimes regrets leaving his home.
2. The traveler experienced a variety of weather conditions on his trip.
3. He urges “brothers don’t you cry,” but he can’t “shed a tear.” Perhaps they won’t cry because they will succeed in California.
4. Answers will vary. The traveler probably won’t bring home a “pocket full of rocks.”
5. The traveler was hopeful about his success in the gold fields.

“Days of ’49”

1. The “golden days” refers to the Gold Rush, and it also refers to the “best of times.” However, as the song will show, the “golden days” were not so golden for Tom Moore.
2. His comrades were brave and true. They handled trouble well and didn’t complain.
3. Both Joe and Bill suffer loss. Joe loses his money and his life; Bill loses his life by falling in a prospect hole.
4. A “roaring bad design” of an underground mine might lead to a cave-in and danger for a miner.
5. Tom Moore had good friends during the Gold Rush, but Tom complained about the disappointing and dangerous life of a Gold Rush miner.

“Clementine”

1. Although Clementine did not weigh much, she had extremely large feet.
2. Clementine will die.
3. Clementine’s big feet may have caused her to trip on a splinter and fall into the water.
4. After the death of his daughter, Clementine, the miner focused on mining and his other daughter.
5. Clementine tripped, fell into the water, and drowned. Her father couldn’t swim, so he couldn’t save Clementine. The father was sad, but moved on with his life.

“Sweet Betsy from Pike”

1. Betsy and Ike planned to use the animals in California.
2. “Sand in your eyes” might mean that she would die and be buried in the desert sand.
3. Betsy and Ike might get married, and they might become miners.
4. The mountains, deserts, and distance of their travels, along with the deaths of animals would be challenging for the travelers.
5. The couple went through a lot together and eventually married. However, they wound up divorcing each other.

Reading Comprehension Answers

“Seeing the Elephant”

1. The traveler won't be able to take all his possessions on the Overland Trail and probably will sell what we owned to finance his trip to California.
2. The traveler ran out of food and was starving like the poor coyote who stole his meat.
3. He stole from people in Downeyville by not paying his bills; he stole a mule; and he stole a miner's wife.
4. The people threatened to hang him for stealing a miner's wife if he didn't leave.
5. The townspeople thought miners were infested with lice and perhaps thieves like the main character. They did not want miners in their towns.

“Joe Bowers”

1. The sentence fragments and run-ons are how people talk sometimes. Words such as “threwed” probably tell us that the songwriter or Joe Bowers character had little education.
2. Sally Black wanted the security of a home before getting married.
3. Sally planned to marry Joe, but in the end when Joe had not returned from California, she married someone else.
4. Sally was embarrassed to write to Joe about her unfaithfulness, her marriage, and her baby.
5. Joe Bowers seemed more committed to Sally Black than she was to him. Joe was willing to go to California to earn enough money for marriage, but Sally was not willing to wait for his return.

“Bronco Charlie” Music and Lyrics by Mark Pennington © 2023

1. Some details of the story to be shared are fictional and some are true.
2. No matter the obstacles, the mail had to be delivered by the Pony Express riders.
3. The station keeper will let “Bronco Charlie” ride the route with the mail because there is no one else to do so.
4. Both the Sacramento and Placerville station keepers had no riders to carry the mail. In both instances, “Bronco Charlie” was available and given the job of carrying the Pony Express mail.
5. He had “ridden the route to Hangtown,” and “knew the Placerville trail, and he was willing to ride. In Placerville, the station keeper made him an official Pony Express rider because he had proven his ability to deliver the mail and because there was no one else to ride.

“Ho! For California”

1. The wagon train has enough travelers for safety and support on the Overland Trail journey.
2. The traveler has heard many reports about plenty of gold on the banks of the Sacramento, but appears not to have firmly established facts, such as newspaper accounts or government reports, that this is true.
3. It is doubtful that there will be “plenty of gold” with “lumps as heavy as a brick.”
4. The character expects to become rich after working patiently for “about two years.”
5. California had free soil to mine and should not have enslaved people to mine it.

Reading Comprehension Answers

“Big Jean Clair” Music and Lyrics by Mark Pennington © 2023

1. Jean Luc Clair left Canada because he wanted to get rich in the California Gold Rush. Perhaps the trapping in Canada was not going as well as hoped.
2. Clair’s size probably allowed him to bully and take advantage of others.
3. Clair was a bully, a murderer, and a thief. He was also incredibly big and strong, so that all feared him.
4. Clair won’t run away from the painter and will fight if necessary.
5. Clair saved the mining camp from the raid by Joaquin Murietta and Three-Finder Jack. He also saved the miners from the painter (mountain lion).

“A Rippin’ Trip”

1. Answers will vary. The “leaky boat” will cause problems on the voyage or may even sink.
2. Their attitudes are unprofessional and not positive for the passengers.
3. The cook’s cooking was horrible. It was better eating without his cooking.
4. Answers will vary. “Rip” means that something is taken away or can’t be used. Apparently, the travelers couldn’t use the railroad to cross Panama to the Pacific Ocean and had to walk because officers couldn’t agree about the back-load.
5. The sea voyage was filled with conflict and sickness. Additionally, the condition of the boat made the trip extremely challenging.

“Life in California”

1. The character left his family to get rich or to have an adventure.
2. The monte game was “rigged.” In other words, the monte card dealer was a cheat and so the character lost his bets.
3. The character says he is “a used-up man.” He has lost money, caught a fever, and has not found the riches that he expected to find.
4. Answers will vary. From his past experience and the fact that he considers himself to be “a used-up man,” his “hopin’ ‘twould be better” probably will not come true.
5. Answers will vary. Due to his money, sickness, and mining failures, the character now must be dependent upon his friends and wants to return home for good.

“Skip to My Lou”

1. He will stop dancing or look for another partner to continue dancing.
2. Answers will vary. This dance requires partners to switch, such as in a square dance.
3. Perhaps it means that things change from what they should be to something else.
4. The flies are unwanted in the buttermilk and sugar bowl. Perhaps some of the trading partners in the dance are unwanted like flies.
5. The character seems to be flexible, knowing that the dance will go on with the promise of new partners.

The Gold Rush Musical! Readers' Theater Directions

The Gold Rush Musical! features the historically-based **Readers' Theater** to tell the story of the California Gold Rush in an interactive speaking and musical performance. Readers' Theater is a dramatic presentation in which dialogue is emphasized more than costumes, stage decorations, and props.

How to Set Up and Teach the Gold Rush Musical! Readers' Theater

Select and rehearse five students to serve as stage readers, using a microphone. With multiple classes, teachers may choose to switch the five readers midway through the script. These five readers sit in chairs in front of their classmates, who sit on the floor. Parents, younger siblings, grandparents, caregivers, admin, and staff are seated in chairs at the rear of your classes.

If not serving as stage readers, students participate as members of two teacher-led choral groups. The choral groups read along (silently) with the script and speak out loud in unison with their teacher to add comment throughout the play. Every child performs in The Gold Rush Musical!

Teach your students to clap after each Bronco Charlie song and to laugh at all the jokes!

Benefits of Readers' Theater

Readers' theater is fun! Additionally, this instructional tool provides a means for teaching public speaking, practicing reading fluency, and learning historical content. In their 2023 meta-analyses of 23 studies regarding the use of readers' theater with students ages 6–12, researchers Mastrothanasis, Kladaki, and Andreou summarized the research findings in the International Journal of Educational Research Open [Volume 4](#), 2023, 100243:

[Readers' Theater] contributes positively to the development of the students' reading skills, along with the creation of positive attitudes towards reading and the development of incentive for the learning of reading within linguistic environments of either the mother tongue or a foreign language. Moreover, based on the meta-analysis results of 11 studies with similar research hypotheses and design, it was discovered that Readers' Theatre contributes considerably to the improvement of the students' reading skills and has a large effect size indeed.

Gold Rush Musical! Readers' Theater Historical List of Works

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/goldrush-samuel-brannan/>
http://www.ledger.news/roots/vestiges-of-amador-panning-the-gold-rush---humorous/article_9843d0be-8387-11e7-a437-b35236336c79.html)
<http://ports.parks.ca.gov/pages/22922/files/worksheet-goldrushprices.pdf>
<https://www.historynet.com/chasing-elusive-joaquin-murrieta.html>)
<https://nationalponyexpress.org/>
<https://www.grunge.com/101262/bizarre-things-happened-gold-rush/>

Songwriters Workshop: Gold Rush Song Rhyme Schemes

The Gold Rush songs use *verses* to tell a story, explain a character's feelings, or describe different events. In some of the songs, repeated *choruses* state the main idea of the song. Both verses and choruses feature rhymes at the end of each line. The pattern of these rhymes is called a *rhyme scheme*.

We use capital letters to identify the rhyme scheme. The first set of rhyme sounds in a song is labeled A. The next set is labeled B, and so on. Listen to the rhyme scheme from this verse from "Life in California."

I lived way up in Maine, where I heard about the diggings,	A
so I shipped aboard a boat, commanded by Joe Higgins.	A
I sold my little farm, from wife and children parted,	B
and off to California sailed and left 'em broken-hearted.	B

Label the rhyme scheme in this verse from "Sweet Betsy from Pike."

Oh, don't you remember Sweet Betsy from Pike?	_____
She crossed the wide mountains with her lover Ike	_____
with two yoke of oxen and a big yeller dog,	_____
a tall Shanghai rooster and one spotted hog.	_____

Add your own verse.

Write a four-line AABB verse to add to the song, "Oh! California." Share what you plan to do in California during the Gold Rush.
