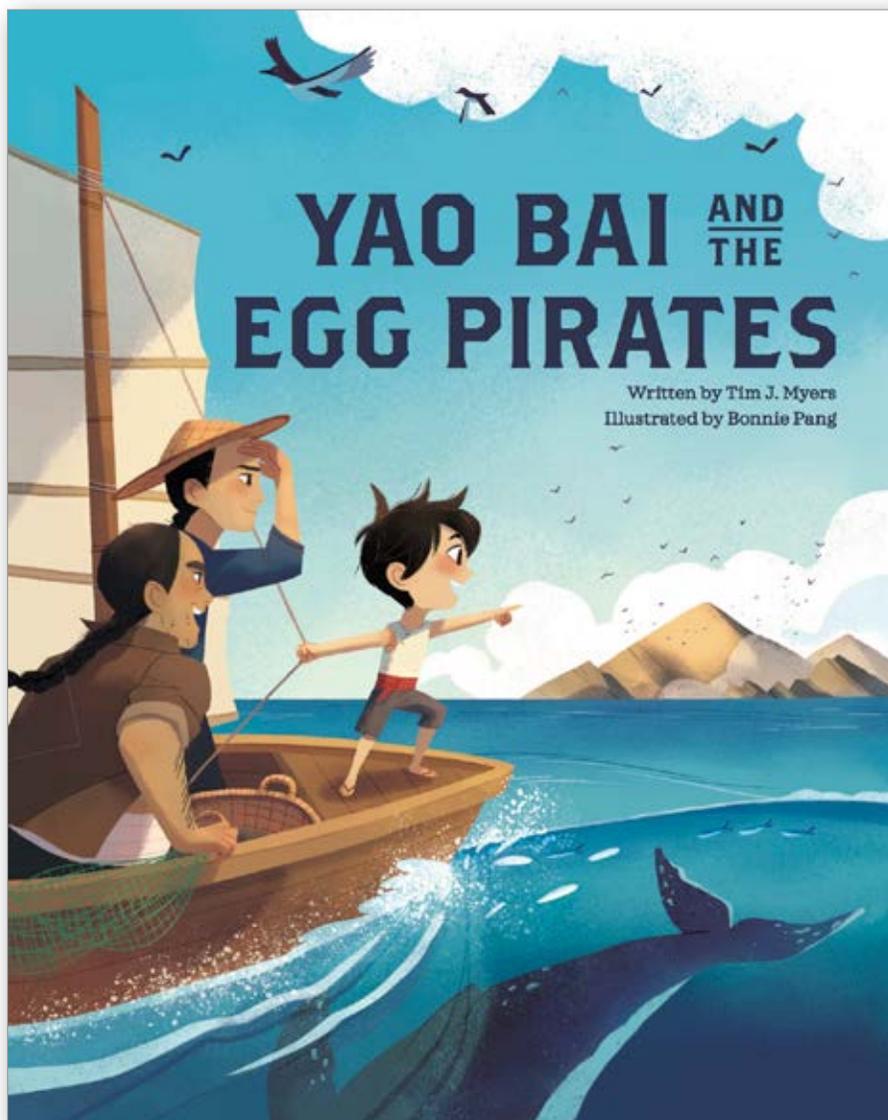




# BOOK GUIDE FOR *Yao Bai and the Egg Pirates*

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Fry Readability: 3

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## Dear Educators,

I was a classroom teacher for 14 years and a university teacher educator for 19—so I know what you're up against! Here are some easy-to-use suggestions for sharing *Yao Bai and the Egg Pirates* with your elementary or middle-grade students.

The book is a great student-centered way to teach or enrich lessons about American history, California history, story elements, cultural understanding, immigration, diversity in American history, and other topics. And it's a natural starting point to motivate student writing! For one thing, simply reading it aloud to your students at the beginning of one of these units will help motivate them, and situate them in the historical context of the Gold Rush.

These unit suggestions all operate at the highest Bloom's-taxonomy levels, meet many Common Core and other standards (see page 10), and are based on the Common Core principle of students interacting critically with rich, challenging texts. They can also be adjusted up or down for various grade levels, though the book is particularly suited for fourth-graders, including California fourth-graders studying state history.

Thanks for teaching America's young people!

Tim J. Myers



# GOLD RUSH SIMULATION

Experiential learning can be powerful, even if vicarious. For this unit on the Gold Rush (extending 3–5 days), the objective is for students to get a more detailed sense of the complex interplay of people and forces that made up the Gold Rush, since such complexities are the building blocks of history. Students will demonstrate mastery of this objective through various assessments after the scenario experience is finished. A strong combination here would be oral presentations from each team on how they did and what they learned about the complexities of the Gold Rush—then individual students writing fictionalized accounts of their characters’ experiences during the scenario activity, emphasizing the complexities.

## What You Need

To begin, you’ll need permission from your principal to temporarily bury a few small items, or “gold nuggets,” on school grounds, preferably in different places within a larger area. Make sure to use something small and bright for the gold nuggets, like cheap yellow ping-pong balls—and be sure to make a map so you’ll remember where the gold is buried! Student teams will then “mine” the nuggets and act out a competitive scenario around those efforts.

You’ll also need Monopoly money or some kind of paper money.

Cut slips of paper with the names of goods or services that the miners may buy with the paper money. These can include:

- Food
- Clothes
- Laundry costs
- Shovels
- Tents

*HINT* You could look up actual price lists from the Gold Rush from <http://ports.parks.ca.gov/pages/22922/files/worksheet-goldrushprices.pdf> or <http://www.michaellamarr.com/grprices.html>.

Make a list on the board or on a poster of these goods and services. Include a rate for gold paid by the distant banks; you will be acting as the bank and will exchange the gold the students for paper money. You’ll probably want to raise or lower the price of gold during the lesson, to show students that aspect of mining.

## Classroom Setup

Divide the class into three to five miner teams. Each team will be responsible for deciding what goods or services it chooses to buy. Randomly give teams different amounts of paper money at the beginning of the unit, to represent how wealth isn’t equally distributed throughout a society—and can affect mining success.

## Gold Rush Simulation continued

### Lesson Plan

Each day, each team must decide on which goods and services to buy with what money they have. If teams don't have all the necessary supplies, then they have less time to mine for the gold; if teams have all the necessary supplies, then they can mine for longer. You could stagger this: if your poster or blackboard list has five goods and services, such as the list above does, a team must pay for three of them to mine for 10 minutes, four for 15 minutes, or all five for 20 minutes. Whatever gold they find they can exchange it for paper money at the beginning of the next day.

You can also introduce random events to reflect the dynamic market and overall environment during the Gold Rush. These changes can include increased/decreased prices of goods and services, changes to availability of goods and services, new taxes, bad weather that prevents mining, etc. Different teams will be affected by these changes in different ways. Since you are acting as the only available "store," which sells all the miners need, you can change prices, availability, etc. as you see fit, affecting the miners' chances of success.

*HINT You could actually have a list of various events—price increases for various products, scarcity of some necessary tool, transportation problems, etc. You could then assign each event a number, and use some method to randomly choose, say, five of those events each day—like having students draw numbered slips out of a hat.*

So each day, the order of actions will look like this

1. Teams cash in their gold from the previous day
2. You announce random events/circumstances
3. Teams make their purchases
4. All students go to the "gold fields." Teams who met the threshold begin mining while you time them. Any team that must stop mining can group at the gold fields and discuss their plans for the following day.

Each team must keep both a diary of events and general records, so they'll have specifics for their end-of-unit assessments.

*HINT Like actual Gold Rush miners, the teams are competing. Some teams will do better than others, so to avoid over-competitiveness, at the end of the allotted days don't report on which team "won" (your students are likely to make that quite clear on their own anyway).*

## Gold Rush Simulation continued

### Reflection

Along with the teams' diaries, some questions from you could help the students meet the objective of understanding the complexities of the time period:

1. How well did your team work together? Did that affect how much money you made? How? How did your original amount of money affect your success?
2. What surprised you during this activity? Do you think real Gold Rush miners were surprised in similar ways? How did those surprises affect how much money you made?
3. Who do you think made more money during the Gold Rush, miners or suppliers?

*Just before these reports would be a good time for you as the teacher to mention that suppliers did much better than miners during the Gold Rush overall. Consider, for example, the life of Leland Stanford, who made a fortune selling supplies to miners, very few of whom ever became rich—and who then built a famous university. See the Profits section here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California\\_Gold\\_Rush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Gold_Rush)*

4. List different factors that could make miners successful or unsuccessful. Which do you think were more important and why?
5. What might you have done differently as miners? Why?

6. How did you feel during the activity? Frustrated? Happy? How do you think real Gold Rush miners would feel? How might that affect their chances of success?
7. What does *Yao Bai and the Egg Pirates* teach you about difficulties miners faced?
8. How did random events affect your team's work? What does this teach us about what it means to succeed in business, mining or otherwise?
9. Sometimes people think history is simpler than it really is. After this activity, do you think the Gold Rush was simple or complicated? Why?
10. Consider that there were actually several groups of miners: white American miners, Chinese miners, and other foreign miners. How would the Foreign Miner Tax or the Chinese Exclusion Act have impacted these miners? And was that fair?



# CHINESE/GOLD RUSH JIGSAW

The history of Chinese immigrants during the Gold Rush is a unique and motivating way to help students see broader historical forces and interactions concerning immigration and diversity. In this unit, students will be tackling the question “What is the value of immigration?” The objective is for students to explore the value of immigration to US society, focusing on specific benefits and challenges of immigration during the California Gold Rush, as evidenced by particular group contributions to an oral “jigsaw” activity and individual essays after the activity.

## Classroom Setup

Breaks the class up into small cooperative-learning groups (a class of 30, for example, could have six groups of five each). Each group will be responsible for researching one topic based on the question and presenting their findings to the class.

*HINT To help students work efficiently in groups, it’s usually best to give each member a particular job: discussion-leader; note-taker; oral presenter (though there can be more than one); “on-tasker” (keeps everyone on task AND makes sure all members of the group are heard); and devil’s advocate (who tries to make the main point stronger by bringing up opposing arguments).*

## Lesson Plan

Begin with the premise that some authority figure says students are wasting their time by studying Gold Rush immigration, especially Chinese immigration in early California, since it happened a long time ago and has nothing to do with life today. Ask each group to focus on a particular topic to show why it’s valuable to learn about this history and how it’s relevant today. Their reasons must be backed up with evidence from their research.



## ***Chinese/Gold Rush Jigsaw continued***

Here are some topic suggestions:

**1.** What do facts and figures tell us about Gold Rush immigration?

- How many people came to California during this time?
- Why did so many people come to California during the Gold Rush?
- What kinds of people came to California during this time? What countries did some of them come from?
- What did non-American, non-white people contribute to California when they came?
- What can you conclude from these facts and figures about immigration during that time?

**2.** What was it like for people at the time? What did it feel like?

Find personal stories, diaries, or other accounts about the different groups in California during the Gold Rush:

- Chinese immigrants
- white Americans
- non-white Americans
- people from other foreign countries
- women
- children

**3.** Conflict and discrimination during the Gold Rush

- What conflicts and bad feelings happened between different groups? Why did these conflicts happen?
- What laws were passed that affected non-Americans or non-whites? What were the effects of these laws?
- Where these laws ethical? Why or why not?
- Did violence break out between members of different groups? Why?
- How did white Americans keep other groups from having full freedom during the Gold Rush?
- How were women treated during the Gold Rush? Why?

## ***Chinese/Gold Rush Jigsaw continued***

### **4. Understanding and Learning about different cultures**

- Different cultures often have different ways of acting and thinking. What differences between cultures caused conflict during the Gold Rush, and why?
- What positive things did non-Americans bring to the US when they came during the Gold Rush and after?
- What are some things you like that came to the US from other cultures? (Examples: kinds of food, music, art, clothing, stories, ideas, etc.).
- Why do people from different cultures sometimes misunderstand each other?
- Give examples of such misunderstandings that happened during the Gold Rush.
- What is ethnocentrism, and why does it sometimes cause problems between cultures?

### **5. How Chinese immigrants changed California; America as a “nation of immigrants”**

- How would the US be different today if no one had immigrated to it after 1800?
- How did Chinese immigrants change life in California for the better?
- Name some famous and/or successful Chinese-Americans and tell how they helped make the US a better place
- What things from Chinese culture can you find today in California, or across America? (Examples: kinds of food, music, clothing, movies, sports, etc.)

### **Reflection**

The students will present their research orally as groups, each group acting as one piece of the final jigsaw puzzle. The group work and presentations will have provided them with lots of support and analysis that each student can then use in an essay defending the study of this history (or speaking against it).

# RACISM/ETHNOCENTRISM ANALYSIS

With current global problems as different kinds of people are interacting more closely, it's important to determine how and why such relationships can become negative. This unit combines psychology and research skills to help students better understand what causes such conflicts, and how to prevent them. The objective is for students to determine causes for racism and othering, and to suggest solutions

## What You Need

Begin by finding some age-appropriate research sources on racism, diversity, ethnocentrism, and multiculturalism. Visit the library for books similar to *Yao Bai and the Egg Pirates* by asking the librarian for help or finding books from these sites:

<https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=42>

<https://alimichael.org/early-childhood-books-for-diversity/>

<https://bouncebackparenting.com/resources-for-talking-to-kids-about-race-and-racism/>

<https://www.teachervision.com/subjects/social-studies-history/culture-diversity>

<http://www.chineseamericanfamily.com/best-childrens-books-about-chinese-american-history/>

Or you can do a search online and find virtual resources, like <http://www.racismnoway.com.au/teaching-resources/anti-racism-activities/>

<https://bouncebackparenting.com/resources-for-talking-to-kids-about-race-and-racism/>

## Classroom Setup

First introduce the students to the unit, which should include definitions of racism, diversity, ethnocentrism, and multiculturalism. Talk about what's at stake here, including the negative effects of racism and the positive effects of diversity. Then break the students into small cooperative-learning groups (for example, a class of 30 could end up with six groups of five each). If your students are diverse, make each group a mix of ethnicities and backgrounds.



## ***Racism/Ethnocentrism Analysis continued***

### **Lesson Plan**

Each group will then research a topic from the list below and develop a class presentation, in which they'll answer the question and provide evidence for their answers.

Here are some topic suggestions with guiding questions:

1. Ethnocentrism  
What is ethnocentrism? Why is it important? What's good about it, and what about it can create problems?
2. What have been the negative effects of racism and exclusion in the United States outside of California?
3. What have been the negative effects of racism and exclusion in California? (This should not include Chinese and Chinese-Americans, who are the focus of the next topic).
4. What have been the negative effects of racism/exclusion against Chinese and Chinese-Americans in California?
5. What is "othering," and how can it lead to negative interactions between different groups of people?
6. Who gets to tell which stories from history? Can it make a difference who tells the story? How might different groups during the Gold Rush have told the story of the Gold Rush in different ways? How can different versions of a historical event be negative or unfair?
7. What are some good ways for a society to work for racial and ethnic social harmony?

### **Reflection**

Each group will share their research with the class through some sort of medium: oral presentation, PowerPoint, video, student-made or student-written website, blog, or visual work like posters. Students might also keep personal logs throughout the unit to think about how some of these issues are playing out in American life today.

Students then write individual essays in which they discuss what they've learned and their reactions to it, again, focusing on how to improve race relations.

# STANDARDS MET

(Retrieved 2/19/16 <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/histsocscistnd.pdf>)

## History/social studies standards for first through

### fourth grade

- 1.1 Students describe the rights and individual responsibilities of citizenship.
  - 2 Understand the elements of fair play and good sportsmanship, respect for the rights and opinions of others, and respect for rules by which we live, including the meaning of the "Golden Rule."
- 1.2 Students compare and contrast the absolute and relative locations of places and people and describe the physical and/or human characteristics of places.
  - 4 Describe how location, weather, and physical environment affect the way people live, including the effects on their food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and recreation.
- 1.3 Students compare and contrast everyday life in different times and places around the world and recognize that some aspects of people, places, and things change over time while others stay the same.
  - 2 Study transportation methods of earlier days.
  - 3 Recognize similarities and differences of earlier generations in such areas as work (inside and outside the home), dress, manners, stories, games, and festivals, drawing from biographies, oral histories, and folklore.

Students describe the human characteristics of familiar places and the varied backgrounds of American citizens and residents in those places.

    1. Recognize the ways in which they are all part of the same community, sharing principles, goals, and traditions despite their varied ancestry; the forms of diversity in their school and community; and the benefits and challenges of a diverse population.
    2. Understand the ways in which American Indians and immigrants have helped define Californian and American culture.
    3. Compare the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, traditions, and social practices of the varied cultures, drawing from folklore.
  - 2.4 Students understand basic economic concepts and their individual roles in the economy and demonstrate basic economic reasoning skills.
    1. Describe food production and consumption long ago and today, including the roles of farmers, processors, distributors, weather, and land and water resources.
    2. Understand the role and interdependence of buyers (consumers) and sellers (producers) of goods and services.
    3. Understand how limits on resources affect production and consumption (what to produce and what to consume).
  - 2.5 Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others' lives
  - 3.1 Students describe the physical and human geography and use maps, tables, graphs, photographs, and charts to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.
    1. Identify geographical features in their local region (e.g., deserts, mountains, valleys, hills, coastal areas, oceans, lakes).
    2. Trace the ways in which people have used the resources of the local region and modified the physical environment (e.g., a dam constructed upstream changed a river or coastline).
  - 3.3 Students draw from historical and community resources to organize the sequence of local historical events and describe how each period of settlement left its mark on the land.
    1. Research the explorers who visited here, the newcomers who settled here, and the people who continue to come to the region, including their cultural and religious traditions and contributions.
    2. Describe the economies established by settlers and their influence on the present-day economy, with emphasis on the importance of private property and entrepreneurship.
    3. Trace why their community was established, how individuals and families contributed to its founding and development, and how the community has changed over time, drawing on maps, photographs, oral histories, letters, newspapers, and other primary sources.
  - 3.5 Students demonstrate basic economic reasoning skills and an understanding of the economy of the local region.
    1. Describe the ways in which local producers have used and are using natural resources, human resources, and capital resources to produce goods and services in the past and the present.
  - 4.4 Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power, tracing the transformation of the California economy and its political and cultural development since the 1850s.

5. Discuss immigration and migration to California between 1850 and 1900, including the diverse composition of those who came; the countries of origin and their relative locations; and conflicts and accords among the diverse groups (e.g., the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act).
- 4.3 Students explain the economic, social, and political life in California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush, and the granting of statehood.
  1. Compare how and why people traveled to California and the routes they traveled
  2. Analyze the effects of the Gold Rush on settlements, daily life, politics, and the physical environment (e.g., using biographies of John Sutter, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Louise Clapp).
- 4.4 Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power, tracing the transformation of

the California economy and its political and cultural development since the 1850s.

- 2--Explain how the Gold Rush transformed the economy of California, including the types of products produced and consumed, changes in towns (e.g., Sacramento, San Francisco), and economic conflicts between diverse groups of people.
- 4--Describe rapid American immigration, internal migration, settlement, and the growth of towns and cities (e.g., Los Angeles).

## Fourth-grade language arts standards met:

"...a critical transition from learning to read to reading to learn in subject-matter content... read and comprehend complex narrative and expository texts in such content areas as history–social science and science. An instructional priority for grades four through six is a continuing focus on ensuring that all students are able to read fluently and accurately."

"Students in the fourth grade will continue to learn about fundamental elements of literature..."

"Using literature...of manageable length to allow students to comprehend and understand the target element."

"The elements of story grammar (e.g., plot, setting, characters, motivation) continue to be a priority."

"Make connections between the main events of the plot, their causes, and the influence of each event on future actions."

"Answer questions about their knowledge of the situation and setting and of a character's traits and motivations to determine the causes of the character's actions."

