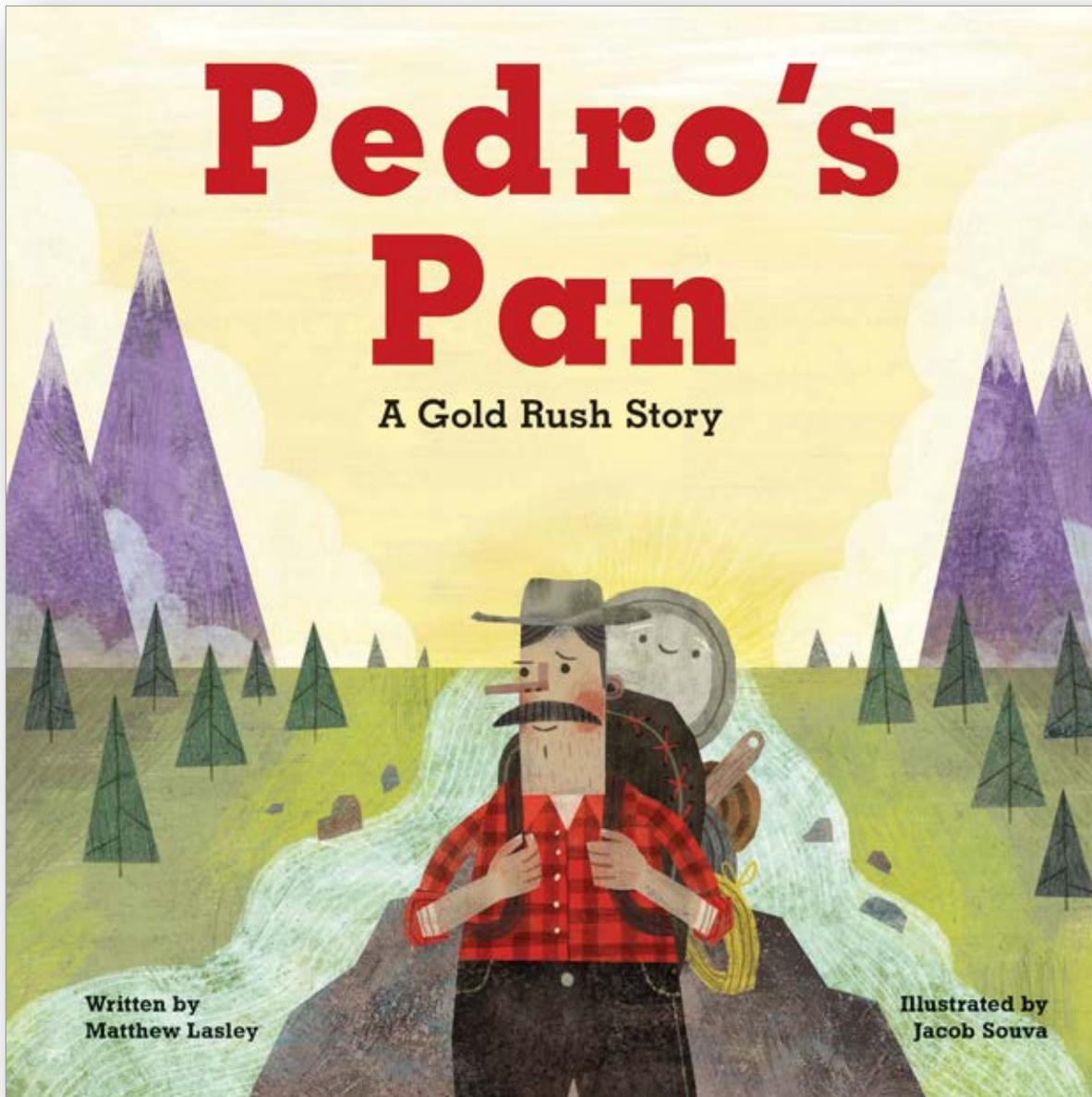




BOOK GUIDE FOR
Pedro's Pan
A Gold Rush Story

Written by Matthew Lasley
Illustrated by Jacob Souva



Fry Readability: 1

Lexile Measure: AD540L

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SUMMARY

Pedro and his best friend Pan are in search of gold. But as they hike over mountains and across streams, they don't seem to have any luck in finding the gold nuggets. Pan begins to worry if it's broken. But with patience and hard work, one day the two finally discover something shining in a creek bed, just waiting for them to find.

There have been several Gold Rushes throughout history, bringing people out to the West in the hopes of discovering riches. *Pedro's Pan* is the inspired story of just one person affected—Felice Pedroni, also known as Felix Pedro, an Italian immigrant prospector who discovered gold in Interior Alaska and launched the 1902 Fairbanks Gold Rush.



About the Author

Matthew Lasley is the son of a gold miner in Alaska and the Klondike, and has spent many hours hunched over a gold pan, even in some of the same creeks that Felix Pedro once prospected. He is now a writer and elementary school teacher, and lives in Anchorage.

For more information about *Pedro's Pan* and to learn more about school visits and online presentations, visit www.matthewlasley.com.



About the Illustrator

Jacob Souva is a New York-based illustrator and designer with a BFA in Illustration. He loves making art for children and has always wanted to visit Alaska. Visit him at www.twofishillustration.com.

DISCUSSION

Before Reading

For background and context, begin by discussing Gold Rushes and what they have meant in US history.

- In which states has gold been found? Do you live near the location of a Gold Rush?
- Why were people looking for gold?
- What happened when one person would find gold in the area?

Preloaded Vocabulary

Prospector: a person who searches for gold and other valuable minerals.

Gold Pan: a round, dish-like pan used to help separate gold from dirt.

Gold Rush: a time when many people try to find gold in an area at the same time.

After Reading

Encourage thinking and comprehension of the story.

- What is a gold pan?
- How do you use a gold pan to find gold?
HINT: Look on the second-to-last page of the book to learn how to pan for gold!
- How does a gold pan catch the gold?
HINT: Look at the gold facts in the back of the book to learn about how heavy gold is.
- What is iron pyrite, and what is it more commonly known as? How is it different from real gold?
- Where are some places prospectors like Pedro go to pan for gold? What are some hints to look for when looking for gold?

More Vocabulary

Black sand: Dark sands that are made from heavier minerals like iron and garnet. Indicates areas where heavy material like gold settles.

Quartz: A common white or clear rock that is often found with gold. Quartz can come in many colors, but white is the most common.

Rusty Quartz: Quartz rocks with red-colored stains showing that other heavy metals like iron are found in the same place.

Iron Pyrite: Also known as fool's gold, it is a gold-colored mineral that is lighter than gold but is often mistaken for gold.

Nugget: A chunky piece of gold.

Discussion continued

Critical Thinking

Identify other themes and discussion points in the book.

- Pedro and Pan together made a team to look for gold. Can you remember a time when you were part of a team? How did you and the other person (or people) work together to reach a goal?
- When Pedro and Pan found Fool's Gold, how did that make them feel? Why did Pan call itself a "Fool's Gold Pan"?
- At one point in the story, Pan thinks it's broken. Does Pedro feel the same way? Did the two stop panning for gold? Why or why not?
- Have you ever felt like you were not good at something? How did that make you feel? What did Pedro and Pan do to be successful even after failing to find gold so many times?



ACTIVITIES

Check your local museums to see if they have an exhibit on the gold rush or even have hands-on activities for gold panning.

Art

Make your own gold! Find some small rocks and use gold paint to make the rocks resemble gold nuggets. Alternatively, you can put glue on the rocks and roll them in gold glitter. Place the rocks on parchment paper or foil to dry.

Draw a treasure map. Make a list of things a prospector might need or look for when searching for gold. Draw a map guiding your prospector to the gold. Don't forget to draw dangers that your prospector will need to avoid and go around!

Science

Simulate what gold panning is like with a few rocks of different sizes and some sand.

1. First, you need gold. You can create your own gold nuggets by following the directions in *ART*; alternatively, you can buy some metal balls like BBs and paint them gold.
2. Hide the "gold" in a sandbox or a bucket of sand.
3. Find something to pan with. It would be best if you had access to a gold pan, but you can use a flour sifter or even kitchen colander and plastic toy shovels. You can also buy aluminum pie pans and drill small holes through them.
If using aluminum pie pans, be sure not to overload them as they will fold if they get too heavy.
4. Pour sand on your "pan." Swish and shake to find the hidden gold!
NOTE: You can create the same panning experience but with water! Just place the gold nuggets and the sand in a bucket of water in Step 2. It is important to discuss gravity and how "heavier" things tend to settle to the bottom.

Activities continued

Social Studies/Technology

Go online and do some research about the different gold rushes the United States went through. For example: California Gold Rush, Fairbanks Gold Rush, Colorado Gold Rush, Georgia Gold Rush. Then find answers to the following questions:

- When and where did this gold rush take place? Where was the actual location gold was found?
- Who were the people involved? Where were these people from?
- How did the change in population affect the area?
- What were some jobs that the gold rush created?
- Was there unpaid labor for some people? Who wasn't being treated well? Discuss some reasons why these people were taken advantage of during the gold rush.
- Gold rushes create a large effect the area's economy. In your research, what happened to prices of items sold where gold was found? Why?
- Can you find the value of gold at this time?
- Was it easy to find gold? Was everyone who mined for gold successful?
- What kind of tools did miners use to find gold?

- What happened to the environment where the gold was found? What are some other effects of the gold rush in terms of transportation, trade, and commerce?
- What did people use the gold for during the gold rushes? What do we use gold for today?



Word Search for *Pedro's Pan*

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

FELIX PEDRO
GOLD RUSH
GOLD PAN
ALASKA
FAIRBANKS
QUARTZ
FOOLS GOLD
PROSPECTOR
CREEK BED
NUGGET

Learn More

Find additional resources on *Pedro's Pan* at the author's website:

<https://www.matthewlasley.com/>

Learn more about Felix Pedro:

<https://alaskamininghalloffame.org/inductees/pedro.php>

Read another book that takes place during a Gold Rush: *Yao Bai and the Egg Pirates*, by Tim J. Myers and illustrated by Bonnie Pang <https://www.amazon.com/Yao-Bai-Egg-Pirates-Myers/dp/1513261444/>

Visit <https://www.brainpop.com/search/?keyword=Gold+Rush> for an educational video on the California Gold Rush and methods they used.