8th Grade American Studies

Unit 8: Westward Expansion

The California Gold Rush
WS 8.8
(pp. 364-369)
Discovery of Gold Brings Settlers
What body of water marked the start of the California Trail?

*SNAKE RIVER*

Why did most settlers and travelers follow the California Trail?

*TO TRADE EASTERN MANUFACTURED GOODS FOR NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS GOLD, SILVER, & ANIMAL SKINS*

Before the Mexican-American War, what groups of people made up most of California’s population?

*NATIVE AMERICANS & MEXICANS*
Who was John Sutter?

SWISS IMMIGRANT WHO WAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO ESTABLISHED A COLONY IN CALIFORNIA IN 1839

What was the Donner Party?

GROUP OF WESTERN TRAVELLERS WHO WENT TO CALIFORNIA BUT WERE STRANDED IN THE SIERRA NEVADA DURING THE WINTER OF 1846-47. 42 / 87 MEMBERS OF THE GROUPS DIED (SURVIVORS RESORTED TO CANNIBALISM)
What was the significance of Sutter’s Mill?

*While building a sawmill, gold was discovered by James Marshall in a nearby river*

How did the federal government have an impact of the discovery of gold in California?

*James K. Polk confirmed the discovery in his fairwell address*

Who were the “forty-niners?” (Glossary)

*A gold-seeker who moved to California during the gold rush*
What types of people participated in the California Gold Rush?

**EASTERNERS, MIDWESTERNERS, EUROPEANS, CHINESE, MOSTLY MEN, SMALL PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN**

What city served as the “starting point” for many of forty-niners once they reached California?

**SAN FRANCISCO**

Who was able to “stake a claim?”

**THE FIRST PERSON TO ARRIVE AT A SITE**
Why was the lack of a court system a problem in the early days of the gold rush?

*DISPUTES BETWEEN PEOPLE OR GROUPS OFTEN RESULTED IN CONFLICT & VIOLENCE*

By 1853, what was California’s yearly gold production?

*$60 MILLION*

How profitable was the gold rush for MOST miners?

*NOT VERY*
What percentage of gold rush immigrants were women, and what opportunities did the gold rush provide them?

**AROUND 5%; MOST WOMEN MADE MONEY BY WASHING CLOTHES, COOKING MEALS, RUNNING BOARDING HOUSES**

What types of work did people do in the mining camps?

**SOME RAN SUPPLY STORES, OPERATED BOARDING HOUSES, LAWYERS, MEDICINE**
How did attitudes toward slavery in California benefit Biddy Mason?

*THE MASON FAMILY WAS GIVEN THEIR FREEDOM, THEN THEY WERE ABLE TO PURCHASE PROPERTY WHICH INCREASED IN VALUE OVER TIME*

Why did many Chinese immigrants go to California during the gold rush?

*ESCAPE FAMINE AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS*

What did the California government do in 1852 to discourage immigration?

*PLACED A HIGH MONTHLY TAX ON ALL FOREIGN MINERS*
Impact on California
What was the effect of the California’s population explosion in 1849-50?

**CALIFORNIA BECAME ELIGIBLE FOR STATEHOOD IN ONLY TWO YEARS**

When did California become a state?

*1850 (31\textsuperscript{st} STATE)*
What type of effect did the gold rush have on the Californios & Native American population in California?

**NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES – THEY WERE PUSHED OFF OF THEIR LANDS / TREATED AS SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS, FACED DISCRIMINATION**

How did some people hope to solve the problem of California’s isolation from the rest of the country?

**BUILD A TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD THAT WOULD STRETCH ALL THE WAY TO CA**