

After the Rush

Scenario:

If you don't get rich mining for gold in California, what are ten great career opportunities to consider? It's 1855 and California is experiencing a lot of financial and political turmoil. Part of the issue is that thousands of miners that came to seek their fortune panning for gold are now broke and out of work. One possible solution to help the miners is to provide them with career guidance. You run a career guidance agency and you have the unique idea of getting the government to hire your firm to do career counseling with the miners. You should include in your presentation your top ten career recommendations, background on the miners, and the turmoil that will happen if the problem is not addressed.

Possible topics to cover (these are only suggestions and are not a requirement for a superior presentation):

1. List the career opportunities in California during this era.
2. What background do the miners come from prior to coming to California?
3. Discuss the issue of migrants and the vigilante movement.
4. How will the miners' previous work experience affect what careers you recommend for them?
5. How would a miner's country of origin and religious affiliation affect their career choices?
6. What are some selling points about California that would encourage miners to stay rather than return to their former homes?
7. What kind of training would each career require?
8. Does the new career require money to get started?
9. Will the new career require the miner to move to a specific part of the state?
10. How will the careers you recommend benefit California?

Possible Sources

History textbook, historians, librarians, museums, online sources for California Gold Rush + economy, alternative occupations, life, etc.

The World Rushed In, by J.S. Holliday

ERS Portal sources: Facts on File, United Streaming, California Streaming, World Book Online, Associate Press Extensive Photo Archive and Thinkfinity: <http://www.erslibrary.org>

Internet websites:

The Sacramento Bee: <http://www.calgoldrush.com/mainframe.html>

PBS, The Gold Rush: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/goldrush/peoplevents/p_wilson.html

PBS Kids: The Gold Rush: http://pbskids.org/wayback/goldrush/peopletoknow_armour.html

Wikipedia, Levi Strauss: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levi_Strauss

Library of Congress, America's Story: http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/reform/gold_1

Bibliography

Be sure to have a printed bibliography to hand to the judges before you begin your presentation. You are encouraged to cite all of your sources including graphics. A simple web tool to organize your bibliography can be found at <http://citationmachine.net/>.