



**Gold Fever Lesson Plan**

**Film Summary:** Gold Rushes attracted people from around the world to British Columbia. As this film suggests, hopes were high, but very few struck it rich.

**Curriculum Application**  
Social Studies 10

**The Essential Question:** How did the Gold Rush affect the development of British Columbia?

**Summary of the Lesson Activities**

1. Focus questions for the vignette provide a short lesson option (15 Minutes)
2. Discussion questions
3. Photographic interpretation

**Learning Objectives**

1. To examine the challenges, opportunities, risks, and rewards of British Columbia's early prospectors and independent gold miners
2. To examine how the colonial government of British Columbia responded to the influx of a diversity of gold seekers and opportunists
3. To explore the construction of the Cariboo Road as a means to provide access to the gold fields, and also to establish colonial power and authority over the region
4. To examine written and visual primary sources from the 1860's Gold Rush period of early British Columbia, and analyze them for a critical understanding of who was it that actually benefitted the most from the Cariboo Gold Rush.

### Materials and Resources Provided

- [Gold Fever: Working People: A History of Labour in British Columbia](#)
- Extension Activity 1
- Extension Activity 2
- Extension Activity 2a – 1 set of Photographs per 3 /4 students
- Photographic Analysis sheet (Document 1)

### Additional Suggested Materials

- [The Labour Movement in British Columbia 1840-1914](#)
- [The Edge of the World: BC's Early Years: Dreams of Gold](#)
- [The Edge of the World: BC's Early Years:Barkerville](#)

### Vignette Questions

1. What problems did the Gold Miners face in their search for Gold in BC?
2. How did the Colonial Government of British Columbia help the development of the Gold Rush?
3. Explain the quote in the film; ‘the vast wealth in the Gold Rush was not by the Miners but from the miners’
4. How did the changing nature of mining operations in BC change the lives of Gold Miners?

### Lesson Activities

1. Extension Activities #1 Questions for further investigation.

Suggested Instructional Strategy: Provide Library and/or computer lab time for students to investigate the questions in this lesson extension. Students could work in pairs or groups of 3 to investigate information relating to 1, 2, or 3 of the questions. Provide a copy of Extension Activity #1 questions for the students to follow in this task.

Students can report their findings back to the class at the start of the next class.

2. Extension Activity #2 Photographic Analysis

Suggested Instructional Strategy: Review the photographic analysis sheet with the class prior to the start of the activity if the students have not had previous experience in working with historical photographs. Divide class into small groups of 3-4 and provide each group with a set of the photographs. (Extension Activity 2a) A projected view of each of the photographs may be helpful in seeing detail not easily seen in photocopied images. Provide a copy of Extension Activity #2 questions for the students to follow in this task.

Credit: Teaching Activities and Lesson Plan developed by Gavin Hainsworth

## Lesson: Gold Fever

### Extension Activity 1-Questions for Further Investigation

1. What are the reasons that people at this time would choose to leave their homelands to search for gold?
2. What were the challenges, opportunities, risks, and rewards of British Columbia's early prospectors and independent gold miners?
3. What was the impact of mass gold-rush based settlement upon the Indigenous peoples in the countries where it occurred?
4. Why did governments and business interests encourage prospectors in their countries?
5. How did they respond to the large number of gold seekers to serve their own needs, and not those of the gold seekers themselves?
6. How did the gold rushes of British Columbia change the area from frontier fur trading to crown colony?
7. What was different about the type of mining done in B.C. compared to the prospecting and mining in California and Australia?
8. How did the Cariboo Road construction both "open up" the province to settlement and employment opportunities?
9. Why was it primarily men who came to seek the gold, and how did the absence of gender balance affect the men? What employment opportunities did this provide to enterprising service industries?
10. How did the "boom" and "bust" nature of gold rush prosperity affect the towns supporting the mining fields, and the people who lived and worked in them?

## Lesson: Gold Fever

### **Extension Activity 2-** Photographic Analysis

1. Why did the photographer take a picture of this image? What were the photographer's point of view and what message was being conveyed?
2. Was it 'staged' for effect or was this a spontaneous (candid) shot?
3. What is missing, or was omitted? What lies outside the frame of the photograph?
4. Is there an event taking place? Describe, but do not interpret, what you see.
5. How does the visual make you feel? Describe your personal feelings and judgments about the image, based on what you have seen.

# Working People: A History of Labour in BC

## Lesson: Gold Fever

## Extension Activity 2a- Photos



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Title: Interior of Miner's Cabin; White and Chinese Miners ...

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Title: Thompson Indians, Interior Salish, "Placer mining ...

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# Working People: A History of Labour in BC

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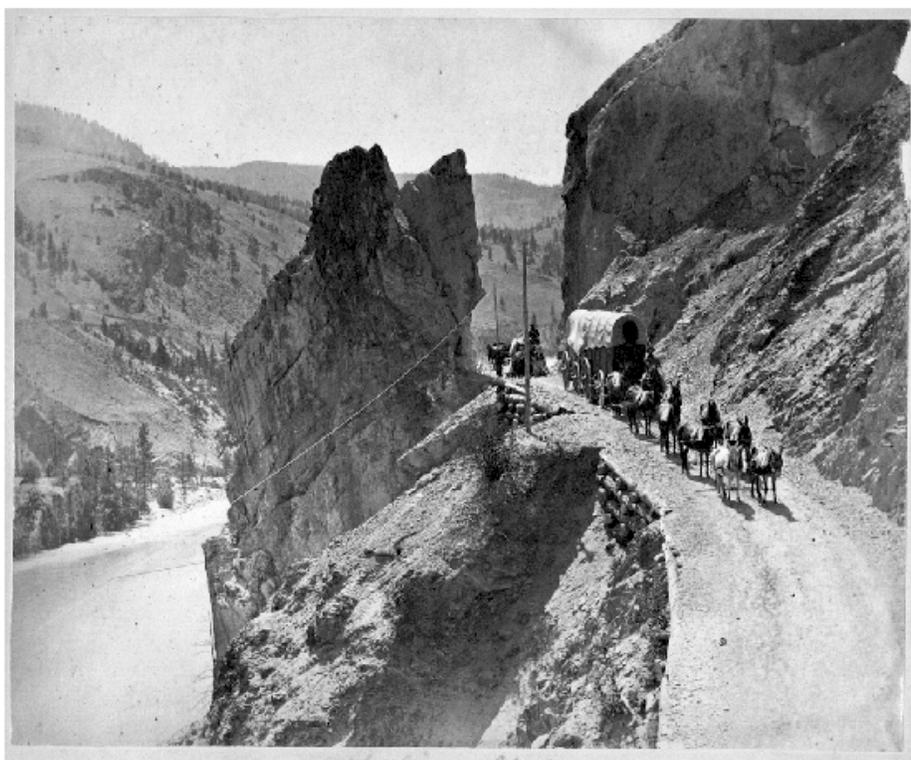


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**Title: Mining for gold by hand.**



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**Title: Freight wagons at Eight Mile Bluff, Thompson River, ...**

## Document 1:-Photographic Analysis Sheet

### **Interpreting Photographs**

Like political cartoons, photographs must be carefully analyzed. Many people think that photographs have no bias because the image is a snapshot of an exact moment in time. However, there are many factors to consider when analyzing photographs. The photographer has bias, and can influence the outcome of the snapshot. It is important to remember that a photographer can influence, mislead, misrepresent, or dramatize; just as other artists can, using their distinct medium.

### **General questions to consider**

- Who took the picture?
- What was the purpose of the photograph?
- Why did the photographer take a picture of this image?
- What were the photographer's point of view and what message was being conveyed?
- Was it 'staged' for effect or was this a spontaneous (candid) shot?
- Was there an interest group who paid to have the image taken?
- Was it created for propaganda, as a record of family history, or even as a joke?
- What is missing, or was omitted?
- What lies outside the frame of the photograph?
- Is there a caption, and, if so, does this influence your reaction to and meaning of the photograph?

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