

California Gold Rush!
Alignment with 5th Grade Educational Standards

Students play as Wilson Derby, a fictionalized soldier. Derby has just fought in the California theater of the Mexican-American War under John Fremont, the famed explorer and future presidential candidate. Deciding to stay in California, Derby witnesses and participates in the most crucial events of the California Gold Rush, including the discovery of gold, the global migration of people, changing technologies and business practices, and environmental consequences of advanced extraction techniques like hydraulic mining. Along the way, Derby meets a diverse cast of historical figures and learns about the role that U.S. westward expansion played in the buildup to the Civil War.

Topics Covered

- The Mexican-American War (1846-1848)
- Bear Flag Revolt (1846), California Independence, and the Road to Statehood
- Discovery of Gold in California (1848)
- National and Global Migration to California
- Evolution of Mining Technology, Business, and Practices
- Environmental Consequences of Mining
- Impact of Gold Rush on Diverse Social Groups (e.g. Native Americans, Chinese and European Immigrants, Women)
- Politics, Slavery, and the Coming of the Civil War, including:
 - Compromise of 1850
 - Fugitive Slave Act (1850)
 - Publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)
 - Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854) and Bleeding Kansas (1855-1860)
 - Formation of Republican Party (1854)
 - Dred Scott Decision (1857)
 - John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry (1859)
 - Elections of 1856 and 1860
 - Secession of the Confederate States (1860-1861)

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (Early Grades)

Standard #	Standard Name
1	Culture
2	Time, Continuity, and Change
3	People, Places, and Environments
5	Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6	Power, Authority, and Governance



California History-Social Science Framework

Life in the Young Republic

- Immigration to the United States
- Contributions of Immigrants to the Country
- Westward Migration and the American Identity

The New Nation's Westward Expansion

- Implications for US Politics, Economy, Social Organization, and Identity
- Transformation of Indigenous Environments and Communities

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies

Standard #	Standard Name	Subject
4	Political, Economic, and Social Changes during the 19th Century	History
9	Adaptation and Modification of the Environment	Geography
11	Free Enterprise System	Economics
17	Symbols, Customs, Celebrations, and Landmarks that Represent American Beliefs and Principles	Citizenship
22	Contributions of People of Various Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Groups	Culture
23	Impact of Science and Technology on U.S. Society	Science, Technology, and Society
24	Critical-Thinking and Information Analysis	Social Studies Skills
26	Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	