



The California Gold Rush

HISTORY
IN A
NUTSHELL
QUIZ





**This quiz will test your knowledge on the history of the
California Gold Rush.**

Think you know your history? Let's find out!

Ready?

Here We Go!

Question 1: True/False: The California Gold Rush was the first gold rush in American history.

True

False



The correct answer is...

False. The first gold rush in American history occurred in North Carolina in 1799 – fifty years before the discovery of gold in California!

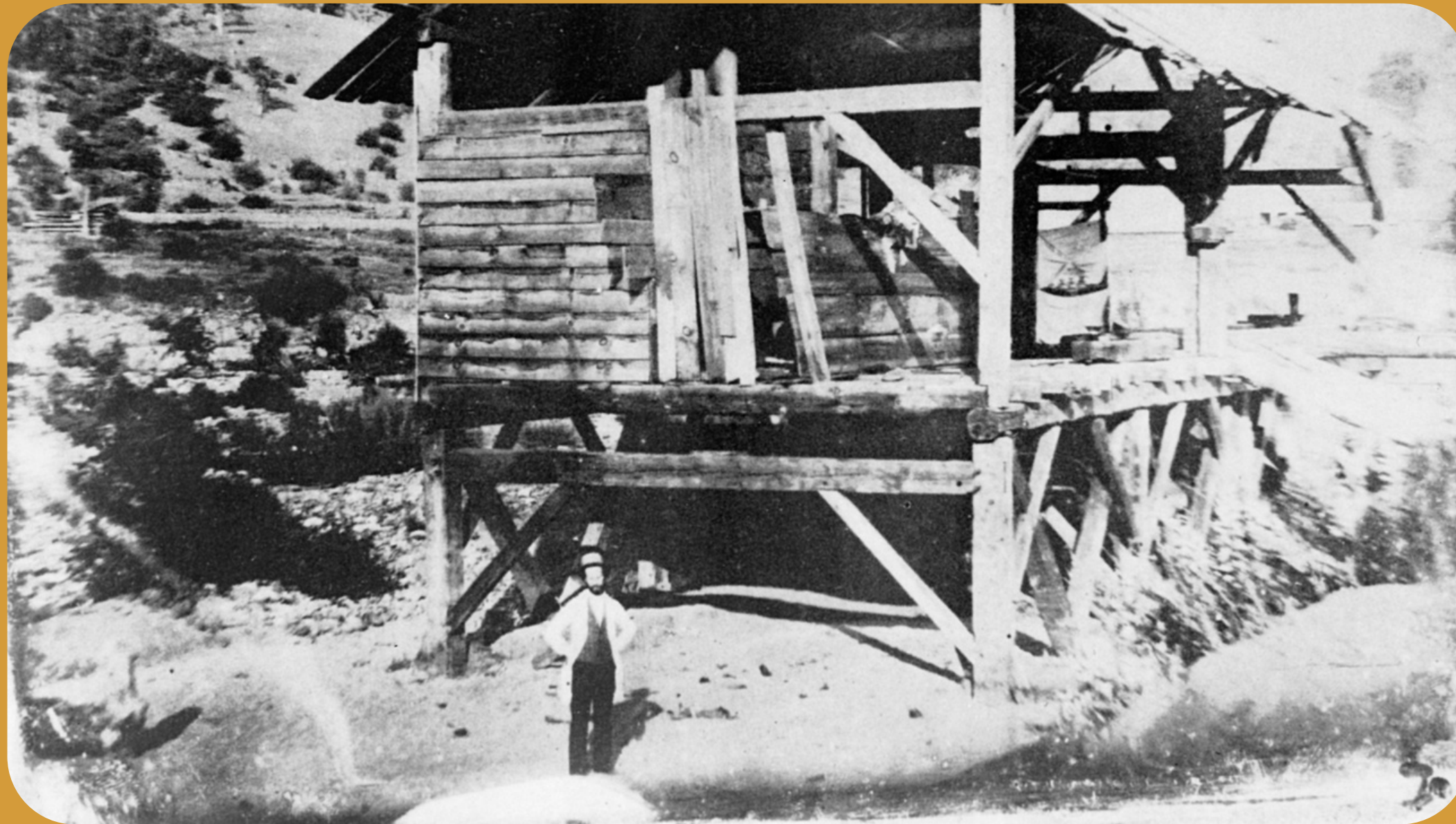
Question 2: What was James Marshall building for John Sutter in Coloma, California when he found gold?

A. Railroad

B. Sawmill

C. Saloon

D. Warehouse



The correct answer is...

B. Sawmill. James Marshall was a carpenter commissioned by John Augustus Sutter to construct a water powered sawmill. While digging a channel for this sawmill, Marshall looked down and saw gold flakes and nuggets in the water below him.

Question 3: Out of all the foreign ethnic groups to journey to California during the Gold Rush, which group was the largest?

A. French

B. Mexican

C. Chinese

D. German



The correct answer is...

C. The Chinese was the largest foreign ethnic group in California during the Gold Rush. Many Chinese immigrants desired a fresh start in the U.S. Why is this? To escape from the economic and political instability of the ruling Qing government, as well as the destruction from the Taiping Rebellion – the deadliest civil war in human history!

Question 4: Traditionally, if someone found gold, what food dish would be ordered to commemorate the find?

A. Omelette

B. Cheeseburger

C. Steak

D. Pancakes



The correct answer is...

A. Omelette! But not just any omelette... A “Hangtown Fry”! According to Ancestry.com: “An unusual delicacy emerged out of the gold rush: an omelette cooked in bacon fat and topped with fried oysters. This is supposedly what one lucky miner ordered when he sauntered into an eatery and realized he could order absolutely anything on the menu. The name came from its town of origin, known for its frontier–style justice. You can still find the dish at restaurants in San Francisco.”

Question 5: Which famous brand of blue jeans got its start during the California Gold Rush?

A. Lee

B. JNCO

C. Wrangler

D. Levi Strauss



The correct answer is...

D. Levi Strauss. In 1853, Levi Strauss, an immigrant from Bavaria, opened a dry goods company in San Francisco at the height of the California Gold Rush. While he was working, he recognized a need among hardworking people: clothes built to endure anything. He and tailor Jacob Davis combined copper rivet reinforcements with tough denim, leading to the first manufactured waist overalls in 1873. Today, we call them "blue jeans."

Question 6: What toxic chemical was used in hydraulic mining to separate gold from sand and gravel during the Gold Rush?

A. Cyanide

B. Mercury

C. Lead

D. Sulfuric Acid



The correct answer is...

B. Mercury. Mercury was used to draw in fine gold particles from sand and gravel to form an alloy called amalgam. Mine workers would gather the gold–mercury amalgams and put them through a heating process that vaporized the mercury and left the gold behind. Gold dissolves in mercury similar to the way salt dissolves in water. So much mercury was used during the California Gold Rush that bodies of water surrounding the Sierra Nevada mountain range will remain contaminated for around 10,000 years!

How well
did you do?

