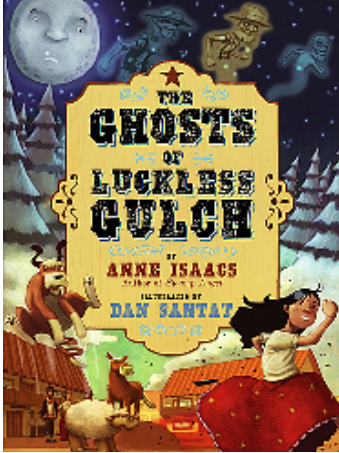


# The Ghosts of Luckless Gulch - Teacher Activities



These teaching activities are related to the lives and contributions of Hispanic Californians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Creative writing exercise

Write a paragraph telling the story of one of the first immigrants in your family—your own story, if you are an immigrant. Describe one challenge in the new environment that the pioneer faced, and how that person overcame it.

## Diaries. Write a diary entry describing one day in the life of:

- 1) A Californio starting a rancho on wild land, with 200 cows and 5 untrained ranch hands.
- 2) A child of same age as your students, living on a well-established rancho far away from any town or other rancho, getting ready for a visiting family from another rancho.
- 3) An Indian working in a Rancho house as candle-maker or leather tanner/cobbler.
- 4) A gold miner (a yankee, recent arrival in California) on his first day in the diggings.

## Candle making, using molds or strings.

Supplies are available at crafts stores such as Michael's.

You can combine with the Diary lesson above. Have students write by candle-light on a dark winter day.

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## Flags

- 1) After telling students the true story of the Bear Flag Revolt, ask them if they think the “bear flag” is a good symbol for our State?
- 2) Ask students to design a California State Flag that represents the State today. What symbols could depict California’s natural environment or California’s unique social and cultural contributions? Display flags around school.

## Name the State

California was the name of an imaginary island in a fantasy novel written about 1500. The name was used for California because the first sea explorers thought California was an island; California was so beautiful and full of rich life that it seemed straight out of a fantasy.

- 1) In this activity, have students rename California as if they were the first explorers.
- 2) Students can make ‘travel posters’ advertising the wonders to be seen in California in 1500, 1800, or any other date in history, using their newly chosen name.

## Food-related activities

- 1) Make and eat meals that might have been eaten by Texas cowboys, California rancheros, or miners. If possible try to use period ingredients. Compare who had the tastiest food?
- 2) Take a field trip to cattle ranch or dairy

# The Ghosts of Luckless Gulch - Teacher Activities

## Food Activities for Grades K-4:

Students can learn about Charles Goodnight's invention of the chuck wagon. Many cowboys served in the Civil War and were already accustomed to crude outdoor cooking. Many were former slaves and were used to simple fare made with cheap ingredients. Canned goods proliferated during the Civil War and were frequently used by cowboy cooks.

### Suggested Menu:

A simple chili (canned beans, canned tomatoes & spices), pork & beans (Van De Camps is period-correct), beef stew (canned or fresh) with buttermilk biscuits and apple pie for dessert is fine.

For drinks: decaf coffee, root beer, birch beer or sarsaparilla (period-correct and non-alcoholic). Buy them in bottles at your local supermarket (bottles are period-correct, cans are not).

## Variations for older students:

Make chili or stew from dried beans, tomatoes and spices, corn dodgers or muffins from scratch, biscuits, beef jerky and apple pie baked at school.

Older students can study health/nutrition and cultural perspectives.

1) What is the nutrition content of each meal? Were these meals balanced? See a nutrition handbook for information and compare to contemporary RDAs. Identify possible health problems (scurvy, rickets etc.)

2) Study the history of canning & baking soda/powder and regional ingredients that were available. Did the cowboys in Montana eat the same things as the cowboys in California?