



San Francisco Opera's Puccini's *THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST*

Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

SOCIAL STUDIES

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Self-Identity.

Family: Immediate & Extended. Caring brother and sister relationship.

Roles of family members in your life and the choices you make.

Time: Past, Present, Future.

Place: Neighborhood, City, State, Continent, World, Universe.

CIVICS

Social Hierarchy: Class, Status. Ex. Sheriff, immigrants.

Types of Government: frontier justice.

Social structure of mining camps.

Political events during Puccini's time.

Labor / Economics: What jobs and occupations were available to men and women in Gold Country? What did average workers in different positions earn? What did women earn compared to men? What were jobs done only by men that are done by women now? What was role of immigrants in labor force?

Role of bar as community meeting place.

GEOGRAPHY

Location of Puccini's birth. Where else did he live?

The Girl of the Golden West's setting: The time period and place of the original opera vs. current production.

Mapping Gold Country during time period of opera.

Map San Francisco then and now.

Map Mexico during time of Gold Rush. Measure the distance from Ramerrez's home in Mexico to Gold Country.

Measure distances from San Francisco to Gold Country; measure distances from homelands of miners to Gold Country.

Create a map that a miner would have been used to record locations of gold veins, other landmarks. Create symbols for landmarks.

Topography of Gold Country.

Study California rivers; where gold was found along rivers. Why is gold found in certain areas?

HISTORY

History & *The Girl of the Golden West*

- Biography of Giacomo Puccini.
- Biography of David Belasco.
- How did the history of California Gold Country influence the creation of *The Girl of the Golden West* and its source material?
- Learn about the time period when Giacomo Puccini lived. What are the differences and similarities to when Puccini lived in Europe and now?

History of California & the Gold Rush:

The California Dream

- Study manifest destiny; myth of the west, the final frontier.
- Research motivation of pioneers; routes they took to the West.
- Research history of property rights and gold claims.
- Research history of innovation in California, from Gold Rush to Silicon Valley.
- Research history of card games. How were games passed on? Compare to games played today.

Gender Roles & Cultural Diversity

- Where did people come from? How did people travel to Gold Rush? Where would they live once they got there? What was mix of cultures/ethnicities like?
- Explore the role of women during this specific time period and throughout history.
- What were roles for women in miners' camps during Gold Rush?
- Origins and evolution of romance and marriage; research marriage during Gold Rush.
- What were American Indian tribes living in Gold Country? What was role of American Indians during Gold Rush? How were they treated?
- Research stereotyping of American Indians in theater.
- Research history of relations between Mexico and California.

Occupations and Trade

- Research historical mining towns in California.
- Research mining technology.
- What kind of tools and supplies would have been available in mining camp?
- What was life like in a mining camp? How do miners' stories in Act I reflect plight of miners?
- What were qualifications for teachers at the time?
- What were schools like in Gold Country? What books would a teacher have used during Gold Rush?
- What was role of missionaries in Gold Country?
- History of fur trade.
- Research development of laws in mining country. What warranted death penalty? What were penalties for different crimes? What is vigilante justice?
- Research history of bandits in the West.
- History of gun/weaponry; history of right to bear arms, gun control.
- Research history of Wells Fargo Bank; role in Gold Rush. Visit Wells Fargo Building in downtown San Francisco.
- Research history of postal service, communication in general.

History of Opera

- How Opera began, history of San Francisco Opera, history of the Adler Fellow Program.

ACTIVITIES

Map settings in which play and opera take place.

Create a card game that would have been typical of the era.

Pick another time period in which to set *The Girl of the Golden West*. Research and design costumes and sets to reflect trends, society at that time.

Write a letter from one character to another using tools available at time of Gold Rush.

Create timelines of events in opera; Belasco's plays; Puccini's operas.

Create an organizational chart of the character relationships in *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Create a backstory for *The Girl of the Golden West*.