

Golden Mountain Readers Theatre Script

Based on The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung by Laurence Yep

Benchmark Advance ELA text, 5th Grade, Unit 4–Gold County excerpt

Developed by Dr. Poole

1. Fortune smiles on Wong Ming-Chung and his family, his Uncle, Precious Stone went to Golden Mountain or America. To search for Golds

(Big smiles)

All: Gold, Gold, Gold,

2. In America they eat meat every day, not just once a year like in China.

3. Uncle wrote that big gold nuggets just lie on the ground waiting to be picked up.

5.. Even though he's only 12, Uncle wants Runt (Wong Ming-Chung) to come to Golden Mountain –America and help pick up the nuggets.

(Pick up Nuggets)

All Nugget nuggets nuggets

4 His mom and dad say no, but uncle is the elder and head of the family, and his parents have to obey. Wong Ming-Chung is going to America.

5. Wong Ming-Chung is at sea, for many many days, from Hong Kong, across the Pacific Ocean to First City of San Francisco.

(Wave motion with hands)

All Across the ocean, over the waves, to Golden Mountain.

6. San Francisco is a city of tall poles or the masts of ships. They jam the harbor like fish in our village pond (simile).

(Hand movement like fish swimming).

All: Fish in our village pond.

7. Have all the sailors left their ships to find gold?

8. Though it's summer, the air is as chilly here as winter in China.

9. Where is Wong Ming-Chung's Uncle? To Wong Ming-Chung, San Francisco is like a big pot of stew with everything mixed in. Where is China town?

(Hands on forehead looking around)

All: Where is China town? Where is China town?

10. San Francisco is also a big stew of people. Every country in the world has dumped someone into the pit. And most of them are hurrying to the Golden Mountain.

11. Even if the Golden Mountain is pure gold, can there really be enough for all these miners?

12. Wong Ming-Chung boards a small boat in search of his Uncle. They cross a broad bay and then a series of smaller ones to a river.

13. Suddenly, a fish leaps out of the water. Its sides shine in the sun and it looks like a silver arrow. It is so lovely it would be a shame to eat it.

14. Then Wong Ming-Chung realizes there is no Golden mountain! The gold is scattered all around the mountains instead. Some of it is in the ground. Some of it washes down the rivers. I feel so dumb. Golden Mountain is figurative language. It's not the literal truth.

(Arms out)

All: Figurative Language, Figurative Language, Figurative Language.

15. When Wong Ming-Chung found Uncle. Surprisingly, he wasn't picking up gold nuggets; he and other Chinese people were sawing down

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trees. The gold was gone. Now they were working to eat and make money to send back home to China.

(Hands like holding money)

All: Money for family in China, for family

16. Everything is new and strange. Many miners don't like the Chinese. They blame the Chinese for bad luck and low wages. Some of the people are bullies and thieves. They steal from the Chinese miners.

17. Wong Ming-Chung and Uncle decide to go off by themselves to dam up water for irrigation like they did in China.. They work hard and sleep in deserted cabins. Uncle feels frustrated and discouraged...Wong Ming-Chung writes, Uncle sat like a lump beside me. This is a simile for quiet and emotionless.

(Faces like a lump)

All: Figurative language–simile, sat like a lump....like a lump.

18. That night Wong Ming-Chung awoke from a terrible nightmare and discovered "little dots of light" on the floor of the shack. He let his curiosity get the better of his fear and he got up and investigated the glittering floor.

19. To his great surprise–Wong Ming-Chung discovered gold dust scattered about on the dirt floor of the shack.

(Gesture looking for gold dust on the floor)

All: Gold dust, gold dust, gold dust scattered over the floor.

20. Uncle showed Wong Ming-Chung how to build a gold rocker using lumber from a wall of the shack. The shoved soil from the floor into the rocker. When they poured water in

and gently swayed the rocker. Gold clung to the cleats in the rocker. They collected the gold and hid it until they were ready to sell it.

21. Wong Ming-Chung and Uncle were called the "crazy Chinese" as they traveled from one abandoned claim to another gathering gold dust.

22. When they had collected a large basket-full of gold, they covered the basket in mud and Wong Ming-Chung sat on the dirty old basket. No one suspected the two dirty, raggedy Chinese immigrants would be transporting gold in a dirty old basket.

(Holding a heavy, large basket)

All: A dirty basket full of gold. Full of gold.

23. Uncle's luck had changed from bad luck to luck as big as a mountain.

(Arms forming shape of a mountain)

All: Simile– Luck as big as a mountain.

24. Wong-Ming-Chung and Uncle set out to find gold in order to better themselves and their family members. With hard work and endurance, that is just what they did. They were rich and could send money back to China to help their relatives.

All: Hard work and endurance won out at the end. Endurance

(All bow)

From The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner, California, 1852

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