



Name _____

Date _____

RACING TO THE GOLD

"There's gold in them thar hills!" James Marshall started a gold rush when he found the first piece of gold in California in 1849. People raced to northern California, hoping to make their fortune.

There were many ways to get to the gold sites. Miners traveled over land on foot or with a team of oxen. This trip could take as long as four months. The trail was long and dusty.

Travelers could sail on the ocean. It could take from four months to a year to arrive. Sailing cost a lot of money. Many sailing travelers never got to the mining sites at all.

Another way to travel was by air. A new machine that looked like a balloon flew miners to California. More than 200 people wanted to take a ride in the balloon. They paid money and signed up for the trip, but the balloons never got off the ground.

Wind wagons were another way some miners used to travel. A wind wagon looked like a wagon, but it had sails like a ship. It moved faster than a wagon by using the wind to move it along. However, they were dangerous and hard to drive. Many miners did not know how to steer it, so they often crashed.

Would-be miners made great efforts to cash in on the gold craze. Some were big winners. Others never found gold.

The San Francisco professional football team, the 49ers, is a tribute to the spirit of the brave people who took a chance.

STORY QUESTIONS

- When did the great gold rush of California begin?
 - 1776
 - 1849
 - 1944
 - None of the above.
- Another title for this passage could be . . .
 - "Miners of the Gold Rush."
 - "Mines of California."
 - "Getting to the Gold Rush."
 - "Leaving the Gold Rush."
- The balloons could never reach California because . . .
 - they couldn't get them to fly in the air.
 - they cost too much.
 - they were ugly.
 - All of the above.
- The San Francisco 49ers are a . . .
 - basketball team.
 - sewing group.
 - boy band.
 - football team.