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92026R

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 1 History 2026

92026 Demonstrate understanding of historical concepts in contexts of significance to Aotearoa New Zealand

Credits: Five

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for History 92026.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–6 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

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CONTEXT: THE OTAGO GOLD RUSH IN THE 1860s

INTRODUCTION

Gabriel Read gained fame and fortune when he found gold near the Tuapeka River in Otago in 1861. Read's discovery of gold nuggets 'shining like the stars in Orion' sparked the country's first major gold rush.



By 1900, the romantic figure of the digger with pan and shovel was history – replaced by dredges[3] and underground mines.

[1.] diggings — mines or goldfields

[2.] sluicing — an extraction method that uses water to separate gold from gravel

[3.] dredges — floating barges, which scooped gravel off river bottoms, separated the gold on board, and dumped the waste rock

Sources (adapted): Manatū Taonga – Ministry for Culture and Heritage. (n.d.). *First major gold rush in Otago 23 May 1861*. Manatū Taonga – Ministry for Culture and Heritage. https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/first-major-gold-rush-otago-starts; McKinnon, M. (2009, August 18). *Otago region – Gold and development*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/otago-region/page-7; Walrond, C. (2009, March 2). *Gold and gold mining*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/gold-and-gold-mining

SOURCE A: The goldfields quickly spread

When two miners deposited a bag of gold weighing just under 40 kilograms on the Treasury desk in Dunedin in August 1862, the rush to Dunstan, around Cromwell in Central Otago, was on. A lucky few made a fortune. Many died in heavy snowfalls and winter floods. A diet of flour and tea meant that many developed scurvy[1]. At the peak of the Otago rush in 1863, the goldfields' population was estimated at 24,000. Other discoveries in Otago followed, and men moved from field to field.



Small towns sprang up in isolated areas, but companies moved on once most of the gold had been found, and today, only ghost towns remain.

[1] scurvy a disease caused by severe lack of vitamin C

Source (adapted): Walrond, C. (2009, March 2). *Gold and gold mining – Otago*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/gold-and-gold-mining/page-3

SOURCE B: Chinese miners in Otago



Chinese gold miners and Reverend Alexander Don (a missionary) on the far left, at the Kyeburn diggings, Otago.

Chinese miners first came to Otago in 1866 to rework the goldfields, when other miners had left in large numbers for the West Coast goldfields. By the end of the 1860s, some 2,000 Chinese were in Otago.

Their presence provoked significant racial intolerance, and several anti-Chinese laws were passed by the New Zealand government from the 1880s, with the discrimination lasting largely through to the 1950s.

[1] opium den — a place for opium (a heavy-scented addictive drug) smokers

Image: Unknown photographer. (*ca*. 1900). *Chinese gold miners and Reverend Alexander Don at the Kyeburn diggings, Otago*. [McNeur Collection: Photographs of Chinese goldminers who worked in Otago and Southland goldfields. Ref: 1/2-019156-F.] Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22883508

Sources (adapted): McKinnon, M. (2009, August 18). *Otago region – Gold and development*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/22650/chinese-miners-at-upper-kyeburn; Lawrence Chinese Camp. (n.d.). https://www.lawrencechinesecamp.co.nz/history-of-the-camp; Spoonley, P. (2011, February 17). *Ethinic and religious intolerance – Intolerance towards Asians*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/ethnic-and-religious-intolerance/page-3

SOURCE C: The growth of Dunedin



Princes Street, Dunedin, in 1861.

In 1861, Princes Street in Dunedin was little more than a dirt track lined with small wooden shops. But the wealth generated by the Otago gold rushes would soon transform the street.



Princes Street, Dunedin, in 1870.



Princes Street became the city's financial district. The substantial three-storey buildings (shown above) are the banks of New South Wales and Otago. The structure with the clock tower is the Exchange Building, which housed the post office and the stock exchange.

Sources (adapted) and images: Thorns, D. & Schrader, B. (2010, April 15). *City history and people – Towns to cities*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/23503/princes-street-dunedin-1861 and https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/23504/princes-street-dunedin-around-1870

SOURCE D: Law and order



The gold escort prepares to leave Clyde in Central Otago for Dunedin.

When gold was extracted from the ground and held in mining camps in the very early gold rush days, there was little law and order.

In 1863, the job went to Cobb and Co coaches, who offered a passenger and freight service to and from the fields. Armed police would accompany the coach to ensure the gold got to Dunedin safely.

Sources (adapted) and image: The Coach House Museum. (2021, December 5). *Our Vehicles – Gold Escort Buggy*. https://coachhousemuseum.nz/articles/our-vehicles/gold-escort-buggy; Hill, R. S. (2012, June 8). *Police – Provinces, war and gold, 1850s to 1870s*. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/33846/otago-gold-escort-1860s; Lakes District Museum & Gallery Arrowtown. (n.d.). *Lifestyle on the Goldfields – Everyday life on the goldfields.* https://www.lakesdistrictmuseum.nz/education/student-area/everyday-life-on-the-goldfields/