

“His Death Avenged!”

Empowering Students as Historians to Understand the Chinese Experience in the American West”

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This lesson was created for “The Richest Hills: Mining in the Far West, 1865–1920,” sponsored by the Montana Historical Society and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture: Workshops for Schoolteachers.

Background for Teachers: For a detailed background of the history needed to teach this lesson and the progress of the lesson itself, see Mark Johnson, ““His Death Avenged!”: Empowering Students as Historians on a Global Scale,” *Organization of American Historians Magazine of History*, Vol. 26, Issue 3, pp. 25-32 (available online at <http://maghis.oxfordjournals.org/content/26/3/25.full>).

Grade Level: Grades 11-12

Subject(s): American History/Advanced Placement U.S. History

Description: I believe that the ultimate goal of history education should not be memorization and fact-based recall, but rather using historical inquiry to promote critical thinking, problem solving, and synthesis. This mini-unit uses an inquiry-based approach, empowering students as historians by giving them access to a myriad of primary sources, asking them to analyze and interpret these sources, and develop interpretive hypotheses supported by historical evidence. With students engaged as historians, contextual knowledge of the time period will be more immediately relevant to their understanding, thus more applicable and memorable.

This lesson is designed to do two things. First, by using an engaging murder-mystery from 1870, students will use an inquiry-based approach to develop and use critical thinking, problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills to:

- Analyze primary and secondary sources;
- Formulate historical questions;
- Interrogate historical data;
- Develop hypotheses about the events of the past supported by historical evidence and analysis.

Second, by analyzing the broader context of the American West, students will deepen their understanding of topics including:

- American migration policies and the various factors that influence governmental policy (pages 11-12);
- The Gold Rush (page 13);
- The Transcontinental Railroad (page 13);
- American Foreign Policy in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century (page 13).

The lessons can be separated with students only completing the inquiry-based analysis, or combining both the inquiry-based approach with the more traditional lessons to develop content understanding.

Enduring Understanding: Students will practice the historian’s craft by analyzing and interpreting varied sources and multiple perspectives, seeking to understand the diversity of the American West and how diverse communities interacted on the American Frontier.

Essential Questions:

- How did the diversity of the American West develop and how did these diverse communities interact?
- How can different sources on the same topic vary and how can we determine which sources are most helpful in interpreting the past?

Duration: Either 1-2 60 minute periods if only the inquiry-based approach is used, or 3-4 60 minute periods if the inquiry approach is combined with developing a broader contextual understanding of the Chinese experience in American history.

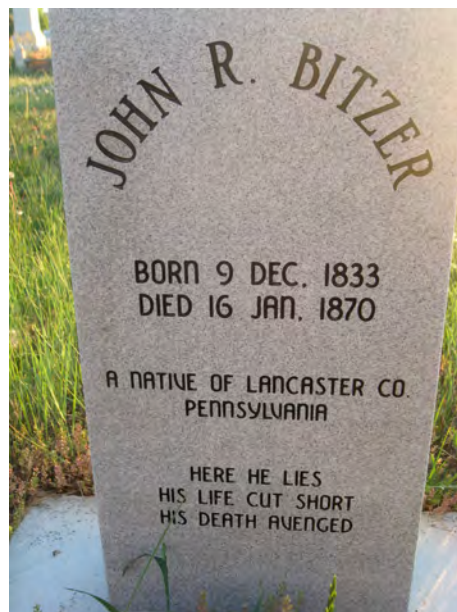
Materials: This mini-unit relies on primary sources obtained from the Montana Historical Society. All sources are submitted along with the lesson description. These sources include:

- Image of John R. Bitzer tombstone;
- Newspaper accounts from the time including articles about Bitzer and Ah Chow, rewards issued for Ah Chow, and a description of Ah Chow to aid in his capture;
- Sanborn Fire Insurances maps of Helena to help students reconstruct the locations involved in the event;
- Bird's Eye view map of Helena to aid students in spatial understanding of the events;
- Numerous photos of Helena during the 1870s, including photos of the specific locations crucial to the Bitzer-Ah Chow story;
- Census records from 1870 and 1880;
- *Montana Post* newspaper, digitized, searchable, and available online at <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> which will help students understand the events in Montana as they relate to the Chinese in Montana;
- Secondary Source: Zhu, Liping. "No Need to Rush: The Chinese, Placer Mining, and the Western Environment." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Autumn 1999, 43-57. (accessible at <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/cirguides/goldzhu.asp>).
- Excerpts of the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Procedure in Detail: The "hook" to pique students' interest in this mini-unit is the text of a tombstone found in the Benton Avenue cemetery in Helena, Montana. The tombstone reads:

"John R. Bitzer, Born 9 Dec. 1833. Died 16 Jan. 1870.
A Native of Lancaster Co. Pennsylvania
Here He Lies,
His Life Cut Short,
His Death Avenged."

Viewing a photo of the tombstone and using the engaging cryptic epitaph, the students then conduct research using primary and secondary sources attempting to reconstruct the events of Bitzer's death. Specifically, students use GoogleBooks to access Frederick Allen's book, *A Decent and Orderly Lynching: The Montana Vigilantes*. Upon reading excerpts of this book, students find that Bitzer was killed during an altercation with a Chinese man named Ah Chow. Allen's book gives a basic outline of events as follows:



"A miner named John R. Bitzer was walking home one Saturday night when he passed Ah Chow's cabin and heard the sounds of a struggle. Rushing inside, he found Ah Chow beating a woman and tried to intervene. Ah Chow pulled a pistol and shot Bitzer in the groin, fatally wounding him. Or so Bitzer told several witnesses before he died. A rival version suggested that Ah Chow had happened upon Bitzer already inside his cabin dallying with his woman, perhaps forcibly, and reacted accordingly."

Ah Chow disappeared, attempting to evade the vigilante justice that Montana was known for at the time. Two separate rewards were issued for his apprehension—one reward issued by the Chinese merchants of Helena—and six days later, famed vigilante X. Beidler caught Ah Chow, delivering him to a mob to be hanged on Helena's "Hanging Tree," the site of many such hangings. As the students discover, the newspapers at the time differed in their opinions on the lynching, with some arguing that Ah Chow got what he deserved and others arguing that, since a functioning justice system existed, lynch-mob rule was no longer needed and in fact illegal. Additionally, people at the time speculated that Bitzer was not merely being a good citizen trying to intervene to stop a domestic disturbance, but was in fact in the wrong and Ah Chow was defending his home.

\$300 REWARD!

The above reward will be paid to any person delivering to us the body of Ah Chow, (the murderer of John R. Bitzer,) dead or alive.

SAMPSON & McCOMB,
International Hotel.

HELENA, M. T., Jan 22, 1870.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MURDERER.

Ah Chow, commonly called "Jo," used to drive a team of horses, hauling fire wood about town and drifting timbers up the gulch; was about 35 years of age, short and rather stout, cheek bones very prominent, and face uncommonly broad between the cheek bones; was affected with rheumatism, and had one arm in a sling; he also limped from the same cause; his arm was probably permanently affected. Is said to have a large sore on shoulder blade, or between the shoulders, made by a hatchet. One noticeable peculiarity, when speaking he had the habit of working his tongue from one side of his mouth to the other. He spoke English fluently. [d&w1w-jan22]

Armed with this controversial case, students use primary and secondary sources obtained from the Montana Historical Society to more fully understand the circumstances of the events, the context of Helena, Montana, and the West at the time, and to hypothesize about the motivations of the individuals involved.

Students use the primary sources to engage in the story, re-constructing the events, and to develop questions to answer. These questions might include the following:

- How prevalent were the vigilantes? How many did they hang? Were there patterns to who they targeted? How much support did they have?
- Was Bitzer simply acting as a good Samaritan, or was he in the cabin for other reasons?
- What locations are key to understanding the story? Where did Bitzer live? Where was Ah Chow's cabin? Was there a Chinese section of town? Where was the Kiyus Saloon (where Bitzer went after the shooting)? Where was the International Hotel (where Bitzer died & where one reward was issued)? Where was the Hanging Tree?
- How did the community respond to news of Ah Chow's execution?
- Why would the Chinese community offer rewards for Ah Chow? What more can be known about the Chinese merchants who issued the reward? *For an enrichment extension activity to develop analytical and historical thinking skills, see page 15-16.*
- How many Chinese were in Helena (or the region)? Why did they come? How were they treated? Was the woman in question Chinese? *For an enrichment extension activity to develop analytical and historical thinking skills, see pages 17-18.*
- Why were the rewards and the description of the murderer in the same newspaper as news of Ah Chow's lynching?

\$150 Reward.

We, the undersigned Chinese merchants of Helena, offer to pay the above sum (\$150) as a reward to any person or persons who may arrest and deliver to the authorities the person of Ah Chow, who recently killed John R. Bitzer, or give some information as may lead to his arrest.

**DUCK OW,
YE WAN,
TONG HING.**

Helena, M. T., Jan. 21, 1870. [d&w1w-jan22]

For homework, the students read the following article and answer the attached questions:

- Zhu, Liping. “No Need to Rush: The Chinese, Placer Mining, and the Western Environment.” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Autumn 1999, 43-57.
- The article and accompanying questions can be found at <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/cirguides/goldzhu.asp>

Having developed a broader understanding of the Chinese experience on the American Frontier, students take this knowledge into their analysis of the Bitzer-Ah Chow case with the goals to:

- Analyze primary and secondary sources;
- Formulate historical questions;
- Interrogate historical data;
- Develop hypotheses about the past supported by historical evidence and analysis.

One suggested approach is to present the students with the tombstone and the basics of the Bitzer-Ah Chow case on the first day, generate questions as a class, and give the article by Liping Zhu for homework. Then over the next 3-4 days, give two or three more primary sources to students each night to analyze for homework, with the beginning of the next class period used to discuss the findings, assimilate the new knowledge, develop new questions, and develop/refine hypotheses based on the evidence analyzed.

The second goal of this lesson is to provide greater context to the Chinese experience in America during the late-nineteenth century. By using the experiences of the Chinese community in Montana in the 1870s as the starting point, students will examine broader trends in American history relating to the Chinese experience (this approach is particularly useful for AP US History in order to prepare the students for content that will be tested. See pages 9-12 for these activities). These themes include:

1. Chinese Immigration: From the Burlingame Treaty to Chinese Exclusion Act;
2. The Gold Rush & Railroads;
3. American Foreign Policy in Asia: The Boxer Rebellion and the Open Door Policy.

Each of these lessons is designed to be completed by students working in small groups within 45 minutes. As the small groups work to acquire information on the topics listed above, the teacher circulates and discusses on a more individual basis each student's thoughts and theories on the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident, assessing for understanding and evidence of critical thinking during the conversations.

Assessment: Basic understanding will be assessed throughout the unit by the teacher collecting and assessing the questions related to the Liping Zhu article and the questions for each station activity (Immigration, Gold Rush & Railroads, & American Foreign Policy). Additionally, as the students work in their small groups to complete the extension activities, the teacher circulates and discusses their individual findings in the primary sources related to the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident. With this mini-unit being used in an AP US History class, multiple choice questions on the Gold Rush, Transcontinental Railroad, American immigration policy, the growth of labor unions and their influence on American immigration policy, and American foreign relations with China will test student mastery of the content.

Finally, students will choose a number of creative assessments to prove mastery of the content of the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident. These creative projects are designed to help achieve differentiated instruction, while helping students achieve the Historical Thinking Standards described in the lesson plans. In groups of 2-4, students choose one of the following:

- ❖ A 4-6 minute documentary film explaining the events of the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident, utilizing the primary sources used during the project. The film must not only focus on the Bitzer-Ah Chow events, but also describe the diversity of the American frontier.
- ❖ A website explaining the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident. Pages must include:
 - A description of the discovery of gold in Montana
 - A description of the Vigilante activities in Montana
 - A specific timeline of the events central to the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident—starting with the Saturday night shooting and going through Ah Chow’s lynching
 - Two separate pages devoted to telling the differing perspectives:
 - One supporting the view that Bitzer was acting as a good Samaritan
 - One supporting the view that Bitzer was in the cabin for less than honorable motives and Ah Chow was defending himself and the woman.
- ❖ A script for a play about the Bitzer-Ah Chow event (including dialogue, stage directions, and description of three locations central to the incident to be staged).
- ❖ A “pitch” to a movie studio executive about why the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident would make a good Hollywood feature film. Students must include the following:
 - Two-page pitch highlighting the events and drama of the incident
 - Casting for the main characters
 - A 15-second movie trailer
- ❖ Mapping the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident: Students create two maps. The first is a world map, locating the global sites central to understanding the broader context of the Bitzer-Ah Chow event. These sites must include, but are not limited to:
 - Bitzer’s place of birth (Lancaster County, PA)
 - Bitzer’s route to Montana (PA to NY to Nicaragua with William Walker to CA to MT)
 - The point of origin of most of the Chinese who came to America during the Gold Rush & the route to the gold fields of Montana
 - The second is an interactive, digital map of Helena (using either the Sanborn maps, the Bird’s Eye View map, or a student-generated map) that locates and describes the key locations central to the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident. Locations must include:
 - The Kiyus Saloon
 - The International Hotel
 - The Hanging Tree
 - Orofino Gulch (site of Bitzer’s cabin)
 - Chinatown & a likely location of Ah Chow’s cabin

A general rubric can be used to evaluate each of these projects (see page 19) or can be adjusted to suit the needs of each project.

Standards: Adapted from the National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA
(<http://nchs.ucla.edu/>)

Historical Thinking Standards:

Historical Thinking Standard 2: The student comprehends a variety of historical sources: Therefore, the student is able to:

- **Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage** by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.
- **Identify the central question(s)** the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.
- **Differentiate between historical facts & historical interpretations** but acknowledge that the two are related; that the facts the historian reports are selected and reflect therefore the historian's judgment of what is most significant about the past.
- **Draw upon data in historical maps** in order to obtain or clarify information on the geographic setting in which the historical event occurred, its relative and absolute location, the distances and directions involved, the natural and man-made features of the place, and critical relationships in the spatial distributions of those features and the historical event occurring there.
- **Draw upon the visual sources including:** (a) photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings;

Historical Thinking Standard 3: The student engages in historical analysis & interpretation: Therefore, the student is able to:

- **Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas**, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions by identifying likenesses and differences.
- **Consider multiple perspectives** of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes, and fears.
- **Analyze cause-and-effect relationships** bearing in mind **multiple causation** including (a) **the importance of the individual** in history; (b) **the influence of ideas**, human interests, and beliefs; and (c) the role of chance, the accidental and the irrational.
- **Distinguish between unsupported expressions of opinion & informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence.**
- **Compare competing historical narratives.**
- **Hold interpretations of history as tentative**, subject to changes as new information is uncovered, new voices heard, and new interpretations broached.
- **Hypothesize the influence of the past**, including both the limitations and opportunities made possible by past decisions.

Historical Thinking Standard 4: The student conducts historical research: Therefore, the student is able to

- **Formulate historical questions** from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.
- **Obtain historical data** from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.
- **Interrogate historical data** by uncovering the social, political, and economic context in which it was created; testing the data source for its credibility, authority, authenticity, internal consistency and completeness; and detecting and evaluating bias, distortion, and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts.

- **Identify the gaps in the available records and marshal contextual knowledge and perspectives of the time and place** in order to elaborate imaginatively upon the evidence, fill in the gaps deductively, and construct a sound historical interpretation.
- **Employ quantitative analysis** in order to explore such topics as changes in family size and composition, migration patterns, wealth distribution, and changes in the economy.
- **Support interpretations with historical evidence** in order to construct closely reasoned arguments rather than facile opinions.

Content Area Standards:

U.S. Era 6: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900):

Standard 1: How the rise of corporations, heavy industry, and mechanized farming transformed the American people.

Standard 1C The student understands how agriculture, mining, & ranching were transformed. Therefore, the student is able to:

- Explain the conflicts that arose during the settlement of the “last frontier” among farmers, ranchers, and miners.
- Explain the gender composition and ethnic diversity of farmers, miners, and ranchers and analyze how this affected the development of the West.

Standard 2: Massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity.

Standard 2A The student understands the sources and experiences of the new immigrants. Therefore, the student is able to:

- Trace patterns of immigrant settlement in different regions of the country & how new immigrants helped produce a composite American culture that transcended group boundaries.
- Assess the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of different immigrant groups.

Standard 2B The student understands “scientific racism,” race relations, and the struggle for equal rights. Therefore, the student is able to:

- Explain the rising racial conflict in different regions, including the anti-Chinese movement in the West and the rise of lynching in the South.

Standard 3: The rise of American labor movements and how political issues reflected social and economic changes:

Standard 3B The student understands the rise of national labor unions and the role of state and federal governments in labor conflicts. Therefore, the student is able to:

- Explain the ways management in different regions & industries responded to labor organizing workers.
- Analyze the causes and effects of escalating labor conflicts.
- Explain the response of management and government at different levels to labor strife in different regions of the country.

U.S. Era 7: The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)

Standard 2: The changing role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 2A The student understands how the American role in the world changed in the early 20th century. Therefore, the student is able to:

- Analyze the reasons for the Open Door Policy.

“His Death Avenged!” Empowering Students as Historians to Understand the Chinese Experience in the American West

Following the introduction to the Bitzer-Ah Chow case through the tombstone, reading excerpts from Frederick Allen’s *A Decent and Orderly Lynching*, and a development of the basics of the events, student will develop an understanding of the broader context of the Chinese experience in the American West to contextualize their research into the Bitzer-Ah Chow case. The article by Liping Zhu helps students develop this understanding.

Procedure:

1. Engage students with the “hook” of the Bitzer tombstone;
2. Read excerpts from Frederick Allen’s *A Decent and Orderly Lynching*, (go to <http://books.google.com> and search Frederick Allen John R. Bitzer);
3. Students access and analyze the *Helena Daily Herald* January 25, 1870 (attached) taking note of four specific pieces of information related to the Bitzer-Ah Chow case;
4. Students begin to generate questions about the case;
5. Students read the article by Liping Zhu to develop a deeper contextual understanding of the Chinese experience in the American West;
6. Students access the remaining primary sources (newspapers, maps, photos of Helena in the 1870s, census records from 1870 & 1880) to develop hypotheses about the case.

This portion of the lesson is from the Montana Historical Society found at <http://montanahistoricalsociety.org/education/cirguides/goldzhu.asp>

“No Need to Rush: The Chinese, Placer Mining, and the Western Environment”

By Liping Zhu (accessible at <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/cirguides/goldzhu.asp>)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- ❖ The boom-and-bust situations that mining produced
- ❖ Ethnic & racial groups in the American West-- then and now Push & Pull factors in human migration

QUESTIONS

1. What two gold discoveries does the author use as bookends for the gold rush time period?
2. According to the author, what was so significant about the Chinese versus other ethnic group prospectors?
3. How & why did Australia learn of the California gold discovery before the news reached the East Coast of the U.S.?
4. What event in China prompted people to leave their homeland for the California gold fields?
5. As early as the 1500s, Chinese ventured to foreign lands in search of economic opportunities. Where did they go?

6. Describe the natural process that releases gold from igneous rock.
7. What are the differences between placer mining and hard-rock mining?
8. What were some of the benefits of forming a mining company?
9. How did the Chinese fare when it came to adapting to frontier conditions? What made them succeed or fail?
10. What causes scurvy? How did the Chinese prevent it?
11. Explain the traditional medical practices that the Chinese used to treat illness and injury.
12. Describe in detail the Chinese relationship with water. Why did they know so much about it? How did their use of it in China differ from their use in America? How did they benefit from their knowledge?
13. How were Chinese miners able to take a mining claim that white Americans believed was played out & make it prosperous?
14. Why did the shift from placer to lode mining lead to a decline in the number of Chinese miners?
15. Why were Chinese immigrants so skilled at building? What techniques did they employ when encountered with a dearth of timber?
16. Why were Chinese miners so quick to exploit and destroy America's natural resources?
17. How are the Chinese acknowledged for helping change the western landscape, both positively and negatively?

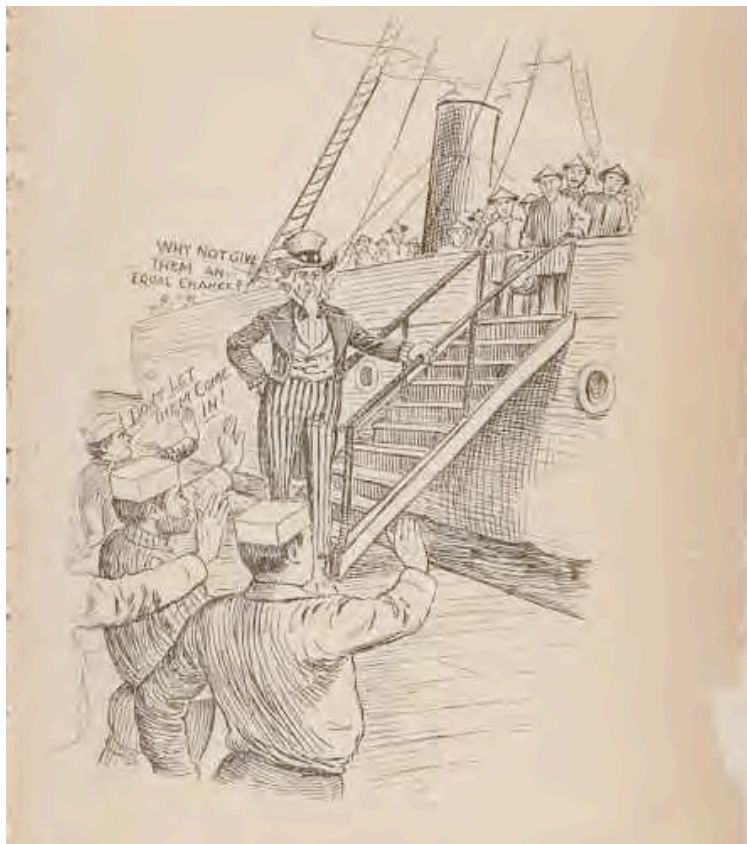
Vocabulary:

Canton	Diaspora	Acupuncture
Taiping Rebellion	Arable	Alluvial
Placer Mining	Igneous Rock	
Lode Mining	Chinese Exclusion Act	

1. Chinese Immigration: From the Burlingame Treaty to Chinese Exclusion Act

Topics include: the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and the eventual repeal of the Exclusion Act in 1943.

Students will work with documents and answer questions such as: What were the factors leading to the migration of Chinese in the mid to late nineteenth century (this will include both an examination of factors in southern China—the push, and factors on the west coast of the U.S.—the pull)?; Why were the intentions of the Burlingame Treaty and the Exclusion Act so radically different? What had changed during the intervening fourteen years—economically, socially, politically, internationally? Were any other nationalities specifically targeted with policies such as the Chinese Exclusion Act? Why/why not? Why was the Chinese Exclusion Act repealed in 1943?



“Truth Versus Fiction.”
Photo Courtesy of the
Bancroft Library, University
of California, Berkeley.
[xF870 C5 C51 v. 2:1]

1. After the brief writing exercise (5 minutes) in which students consider the multiple perspectives expressed in the political cartoon regarding Chinese immigration, students briefly share their views.
2. Read the excerpt of the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and the excerpt of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. How is the intent of these two documents different?
3. Goal: Answer the overall question: **American immigration policy with regard to China witnessed a direct reversal from 1868 to 1882; what factors (domestically and internationally) led to the dramatic shift of this policy from the 1860s to the 1880s?**

Questions for the students to consider as they explore events/trends in America and China that led to the shift include:

1. Who was Anson Burlingame?

2. What had been happening in China and America during the 1850s and 1860s that prompted China to push for passage of the Burlingame Treaty?
3. What motivation did the U.S. have to sign the Burlingame Treaty?
4. Who in America would have been in favor of the Burlingame Treaty? Why?
5. Who in America would have been opposed to the Burlingame Treaty? Why?
6. By 1882 with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act the American position directly reversed. What had been happening in China and America during the 1870s and early 1880s that prompted groups within America to push for passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act?
7. Who in America would have been in favor of the Chinese Exclusion Act? Why?
8. Who in America would have been opposed to the Chinese Exclusion Act? Why?
9. Were any other nationalities or ethnicities specifically targeted with similar acts of legislation?
10. When was the Chinese Exclusion Act repealed? Why?

Excerpt from the Burlingame Treaty 1868 "The United States of America and the Emperor of China cordially recognize the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance and also the mutual advantage of the free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects, respectively from the one country to the other, for the purpose of curiosity or trade or as permanent residents. . . . Chinese subjects visiting or residing in the United States, shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities, and exemptions in respect to travel or residence, as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation." (Source: University of California, Berkeley, <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/brk5022>)

Excerpt from the Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882

Forty-Seventh Congress. Session I. 1882

Chapter 126.-An act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese.

Preamble. Whereas, in the opinion of the Government of the United States the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof:

Therefore, Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and until the expiration of ten years next after the passage of this act, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States be, and the same is hereby, suspended; and during such suspension it shall not be lawful for any Chinese laborer to come, or, having so come after the expiration of said ninety days, to remain within the United States. . . .

SEC. 13. That this act shall not apply to diplomatic and other officers of the Chinese Government traveling upon the business of that government, whose credentials shall be taken as equivalent to the certificate in this act mentioned, and shall exempt them and their body and household servants from the provisions of this act as to other Chinese persons.

SEC. 14. That hereafter no State court or court of the United States shall admit Chinese to citizenship; and all laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 15. That the words "Chinese laborers", whenever used in this act, shall be construed to mean both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining.

Approved, May 6, 1882.

(Source: Mount Holyoke College, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/chinex.htm>)

2. The Gold Rush & the Development of a Transcontinental Railroad

First, students access the online resources found at:

<http://www.hippocampus.org/AP%20US%20History%20I>

Under “Territorial Expansion & Sectional Issues, 1820-1860,” click on “California Gold;”

a. <http://www.hippocampus.org/AP%20US%20History%20II>

b. Under “Changing Landscape,” click on “Building & Influence of the Railroads.”

After developing a basic understanding of the California Gold Rush and the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, students will deepen their understanding of these topics using the internet, library resources, and their textbooks, students will research details about the Gold Rush and Transcontinental Railroad such as:

Gold Rush Related Questions:

1. When and where was gold discovered on the west coast?
2. What different routes were available to get to the gold fields of California?
3. What groups of people came to the area during the Gold Rush? Why?
3. How many Chinese came to California? Did they intend to stay or return to China?
4. How were the Chinese treated throughout the gold rush era?
5. What was the Foreign Miners’ Tax?
6. How did the rapid population boom in California complicate political issues on a national level (Compromise of 1850)?
7. Where else was gold (and other precious metals) found and when?

Transcontinental Railroad Related Questions:

1. What two companies built the Transcontinental Railroad? Where?
2. What groups formed the main labor force for each branch?
3. What hardships did each branch face?
4. What was the economic impact of the completion of the Railroad on the United States?
5. How did expanding and contracting needs for a labor force contribute to America’s immigration policies during the time period?

3. American Foreign Policy in Asia: The Boxer Rebellion & the Open Door Policy

Students access the resource found at:

<http://www.hippocampus.org/AP%20US%20History%20II>

Under the heading “Imperialism,” click on “China.” Using their textbook, library resources, and the internet, students will deepen their understanding of the topics under consideration, researching the basic information about the Boxer Rebellion and the Open Door Notes. To demonstrate understanding, students will answer the following questions:









Questions Related to the Boxer Rebellion:

1. Why was America more interested and involved in East Asia at the turn of the century?
2. Who were the Boxer’s and what were their goals? What motivated the Boxer’s?
3. How were the Boxer’s stopped? At what cost?
4. What was the response of Americans to the events of the Boxer Rebellion?

Questions Related to the Open Door Notes:

1. What are spheres of influence as related to outside control of China during the late nineteenth century? Which major powers had influence in China?
2. Who was John Hay?
3. What was the basic idea expressed in the Open Door Notes?
4. Why would American want this? Why would other non-Chinese powers agree?
5. What was the role of the Qing Dynasty in this process?

Resources Needed for “His Death Avenged!” The Chinese Experience in the American West”

John R. Bitzer Tombstone	Montana Newspapers from Jan. 1870	Historic Photos from Helena, MT in the 1870s	Maps of Helena, MT
<p>Photo of John R. Bitzer Tombstone found in Benton Ave. Cemetery, July 2010 (the cryptic epitaph starts the inquiry-based portion of the lesson with students tasked to find out as much as possible about the event).</p>	<p>These newspapers report relevant details about the Bitzer murder, the rewards for Ah Chow's capture, the description of the murderer, and the discussion in the Helena community about the necessity or illegality of vigilante activities.</p>	<p>These photos help students in their attempt to recreate & hypothesize about the events in the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident. Photos include: Panoramic view of Helena; view of Kiyus Saloon, & Last Use of Hanging Tree.</p>	<p>These maps include the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of Helena from 1884 & the Bird's Eye View map of Helena from 1875. These help students understand the geographic layout of Helena, the sites specific to the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident.</p>
			
<p>File attached with Lesson</p>	<p>File attached with Lesson</p>	<p>File attached with Lesson</p>	<p>File attached with Lesson</p>
Montana Census of 1870 & 1880	Montana Post newspaper	“No Need To Rush: The Chinese, Placer Mining, & The Western Environment,” by Liping Zhu	Hippocampus Website Resources to Help Develop Contextual Understanding
<p>The census records from 1870 & 1880, although taken after the Bitzer-Ah Chow event, will help students understand details about the Chinese population in Montana.</p>	<p>Montana Post newspaper, digitized, searchable, & available online, which will help students understand the events in Montana in the late 1860s related to the Chinese in Montana; students can find some information about the Chinese woman involved in the incident & some details about Bitzer's arrival to MT.</p>	<p>This article, to be read as homework after the beginning of the inquiry portion of the assignment, gives useful context to understand the Chinese in the American West.</p>	<p>The Hippocampus website helps students gain a general understanding of the topics of the California Gold Rush, the Building of the Transcontinental Railroads, and American Foreign Policy relating to China in the late-19th early 20th century period.</p>
			
<p>File attached with Lesson</p>	<p>http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov</p>	<p>http://mhs.mt.gov/education/cirguides/goldzhu.asp</p>	<p>http://www.hippocampus.org/US%20History</p>

Extension Activities: Tong Hing's Role in Helena's Chinese Community

Connecting the dots . . . What do we know and what can we know about the leaders of the Chinese community in Helena?

- Given that there was considerable disagreement about the circumstances of Ah Chow's shooting of John Bitzer, why did the Chinese merchants of Helena aid in the hunt for Ah Chow?
- How large was the Chinese community at the time?
- Research Chinese New Year. What is it? How important is it for the Chinese community? Was it celebrated in Helena, Montana? When was Chinese New Year in 1870? How does this connect to the Bitzer-Ah Chow incident?
- Use the documents to build a hypothesis about Tong Hing's role in the Chinese community.

From Robert R. Swartout, Jr.,
"Kwangtung to Big Sky: The Chinese
in Montana, 1864-1900." *Montana:
The Magazine of Western History*, Vol.
38, No. 1 (Winter, 1988), 42-53.

By 1870, census surveyors counted 1,949 Chinese in the first official census taken for the territory of Montana. This may not appear to be an impressive figure, but those 1,949 Chinese represented approximately 10 per cent of Montana's official population in 1870. Moreover, because census records were often notorious for underestimating the Chinese population in any given community, the actual Chinese population may have been much higher—by perhaps 50 per cent or more. In 1880, the official figure for the Chinese population in Montana dipped to 1,765; but by 1890 it was back up to 2,532. From that point on, the number of Chinese in the state, and in the United States as a whole, steadily declined. This decline was due partly to local factors as well as to the passage of various Chinese exclusion acts passed by the U.S. Congress during the 1880s and 1890s.

Rocky Mountain Gazette, January 21 1870.

"SEARCH FOR THE MURDERER,--Ever since the death of John R. Bitzer, who was shot on Saturday night last by the Chinaman, Ah Chow, a party have been searching their holes and dens for the murderer, to no purpose. On Wednesday evening, we are informed, some of the principal Chinamen of the town held a meeting, and resolved to give their aid in securing the arrest of the murderer. Chinese runners have been sent to the neighboring camps to look him up; but we would advise the friends of the deceased not to place their entire reliance in the proffered aid of the Mongolians, but at the same time to do all that they can to keep up the hunt and catch the murderer. The sheriffs and officers of justice in other counties and contiguous States and Territories should be warned and no effort spared to effect the capture."

Helena Daily Herald, Jan.
25 1870

\$150 Reward.
We, the undersigned Chinese merchants of Helena, offer to pay the above sum (\$150) as a reward to any person or persons who may arrest and deliver to the authorities the person of Ah Chow, who recently killed John R. Bitzer, or give some information as may lead to his arrest.
**DUCK OW,
YE WAN,
TONG HING.**
Helena, M. T., Jan. 21, 1870. [dawlwan]

Tong Hing's Role Continued:

Helena Weekly Herald, Feb. 15, 1872

Helena Weekly Herald, Jan. 21, 1875

The Chinese New Year.
One of the most interesting days which we have ever spent in the Territory was on yesterday, during a visit which we made to Chinatown. When we went there, we put ourselves under the care of Tong Hing, and Tong, with his usual urbanity and courtesy, put us through among the more prominent of the Celestials. With such an indorsement our *entree* was certain among the elite of the almond-eyed Heavenly ites. In one article we cannot do justice to the wonders and curiosities to be seen on such a day as yesterday or to day, but we will give some idea of what we saw in one or two of the houses which we visited. The proverbial modesty of the Chinese ladies is well known to all of our Montana readers. Their doors we found to be locked, and had it not have been that Tong Hing was with us, we think that we could not have gained admittance. His phiz, though, put us through. A sample of one

"All the Same Pickles."
Tong Hing, the big chief of the Chinese in this city, says he has paid one of our hardware merchants \$1,000 for zinc coffins in which to ship the remains of his dead countrymen to the sacred soil of China. The tariff on a corpse from here to San Francisco was, thought Tong Hing, too steep, and he pulled his queue in troubled thought over the matter until he hit upon a plan whereby he could fool the freighters and railroad men, and send them as ordinary freight. Thereupon he stowed the corpses in barrels, marked them "All the Same Pickles," and started them off. He was successful in the deception for some time, but soon a sharp agent at Corinne "smelt a mite" instead of pickles, and the old rates were charged upon the barrels. Tong has abandoned the barrel business now, and is cogitating upon the practicability of cremation.

The five sources given in relation to Tong Hing may seem somewhat unrelated, but the historians' task is to take disparate bits of information and to make sense of them using prior knowledge, contextual information, analysis, and synthesis. This is now your task.

- ❖ Write a thesis making a strong assertion about Tong Hing's role in Helena's Chinese community and why he cooperated with the efforts to catch Ah Chow.

Extension Activity: The Woman in Question

Connecting the dots . . . What do we know and what can we know about the woman in question and her relationship with Ah Chow?

- What do we know and what can we know about the woman in question and her relationship with Ah Chow?
- Helena's Chinatown bordered the "red light" district. Was the woman in question a prostitute? What was her relationship to Bitzer? To Ah Chow?
- Use the following documents to build a hypothesis about the woman in question.

33. Normal male-female relations were skewed even further because an unusually large percentage of the Chinese women in the American West in the nineteenth century were employed as prostitutes. See Lucie Cheng, "Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Labor Immigration Under Capitalism*, ed. Cheng and Bonacich, 402-434.

From Robert R. Swartout, Jr., "Kwangtung to Big Sky: The Chinese in Montana, 1864-1900."

Arrivals and Departures During the Week.—Arrived.		
J M Lewis	I Lock	M Schwerin
A Pollock	P Link	J Y Greene
G W Miller	M G Dow	R Guiberson
W Flores	J Burgess	C Baker
Miss A Rogers	Miss M Boyce	R W Mimms
Prof Eaton	Prof Doughty	H Ellis
W Evans	R Ruf	G Easel
C Sanders	F Sharwitz	P K McGinty.
D W Tilton	E S Barry	wife and child
A T Beach	Col Postlewaite	H Miller
Mrs McCormack	Mrs O'Neal	W Kyte
W Brice	E M Pollinger	P Rourke
F Gigray	Mr Winsell	Mr Smith
U M Signott	J Murphy	Mrs Ah Chow
T P Geusler	F C Deimling	J Farbes
J J Fracy	W H Taylor	W Donifelser
A J McCay	L McCay	R Robb
Departed.		

The Montana Post, Feb. 16, 1867.

"Broadwater County Pioneer Recalls Early-Day Hangings" *Helena Daily News Inserts*, Sept. 5, 1938

Grim tales of hangings he witnessed in the '70s in Helena were recounted by W.T. (Tommy) Thompson of Broadwater county who was in attendance at the recent Pioneers' convention at Helena, and who, as a school boy in Last Chance gulch, saw at first hand how the grim law of the early west operated.

Mr. Thompson, who now owns a 350-acre farm near Townsend, saw the hanging of "Peg Leg" Murphy in 1870 but recalls more distinctly the hanging of a Chinaman from famous old Hangman's Tree late in 1870.

He can't recall the name of the unfortunate Oriental but he does remember the body hung there for three days, "and it drew quite a crowd, too."

“This Chinaman,” Mr. Thompson said, “killed a white man in a brawl in Chinatown and was taken to Hangman’s Tree and ‘strung up.’

“I was just a kid going to school then but I remember the Chinaman’s wife used to bring food every day and place in his mouth. I guess she was feeding his spirit.

“The body remained hanging for three days as a lesson to the other Chinese of the city. Hundreds of people drove out to Hangman’s Tree every evening in their carriages to see the body. No one seemed to think it was particularly horrible.

“On the fourth day they cut down the body and gave it burial. The wife placed a lot of food on the grave which was quickly eaten by some of the youngsters around town.”

The three sources given in relation to the woman in question may seem somewhat unrelated, but the historians’ task is to take disparate bits of information and to make sense of them using prior knowledge, contextual information, analysis, and synthesis. This is now your task.

- ❖ **In your opinion, was the woman in question Ah Chow’s wife or a prostitute?
Support your assertion:**

Rubric for “His Death Avenged!”: Empowering Students as Historians to Understand the Chinese Experience in the American West

	Exceptional	Admirable	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Content Mastery (40%)	The subtlety & nuance of the content is expertly & accurately transmitted. Relevant anecdotes & details enrich the central theme. Relevant, telling quality details give the audience important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable. The product shows clear, deep understanding of the complexity of life on the American West.	The product contains accurate information in a clear & focused manner. The answer is narrow & manageable. Reasonably accurate details are present to support the main ideas. The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience; the ideas are fresh & original. Accurate & thorough coverage of the content related to the American West.	The writer’s presentation is still basic or general. Support is attempted, but doesn’t go far enough yet in fleshing out the key issues or story line. Ideas are reasonably clear, though they may not be detailed, personalized, & accurate or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose. The audience is left with questions.	The product has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning from the product, the audience must make inferences based on incomplete details. The idea is a simple restatement of the topic or an answer to the question with little attention to detail. Everything seems as important as everything else; the reader has a hard time sifting out what is important.
Analysis & Interpretation (40%)	Exceptional analysis of the topic through a well-developed sophisticated thesis. Clear evidence of higher order thinking. A true analytical approach to a complex topic.	Admirable analysis of the topic, but lacking in truly interpretive & original insight into the topic. Strong thesis, but may lack reconnection to the thesis throughout the body of the product.	Some evidence of analysis, but the thesis is not supported through thorough interpretation. The product is too descriptive & does not show enough evidence of moving past description to higher order analytical skills.	The product is far too descriptive. The thesis does not take a stance or is too simplistic. Very little evidence of analytical skills.
Creativity/Flow/Technical Aspects (20%)	Exceptional creativity & originality. The human element is emphasized, providing a dramatic, authentic connection to the people being described. Creative details are used with great effectiveness. Images, maps, etc. are clear, visually appealing & connect directly to the topic. Text is well written, creative, & compelling. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Flawless, consistent, creative use of technology to support the thesis & tell the story.	The writing/design has moments of creativity & originality, but lacks consistency in this regard. Descriptive details are present, but underdeveloped. In general, the piece is interesting, but lacks the spark of an authentic connection to the human element. Use of images, maps, etc relate to the topic. Admirable use of technology to support thesis & tell the story. Technical glitches are absent, or do not affect the overall quality of the product.	The assignment is done, but only minimal effort is given to the creative details & original ideas. The writing/design is mundane, common, or simple. The connection to the people of the history is underdeveloped &/or boring. Flow & transitions are not clear. Images, maps, etc. connect to topic, but some may seem out of place. Technological aspects are uncoordinated, indicating a lack of group cohesion. Considerable flaws are present.	Writing/design was not creative or original. Very little evidence of striving to capture the human element of the history. Images, maps, etc. do not relate directly to the topic. Use of technology is erratic & ineffective in supporting the thesis & advancing the telling of the story.

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