



THE AUSTRALIAN GOLD RUSH



Australia's Gold Fever

1. Why did the colonial governments hush up any talk of gold before 1851?
 - They thought that no one would be interested in it.
 - They couldn't be bothered looking for it.
 - They were worried that convicts would be hard to control if they knew about the gold.
2. Take a look at the pictures of the gold mining equipment below and draw a line to match them to their descriptions.



A mining license, giving a miner permission to dig for gold.



A gold pan, used to pan for alluvial gold in creeks and rivers.



A short handled pick for mining underground.

A portable scale, used to weigh gold finds on the goldfields.



A mining cradle, used to separate gold from dirt using water.

A candle spike, used to hold candles in underground mines.



Images are from National Museum Australia, State Library Victoria and Resources Victoria.

3. Talk with a conversation partner and discuss why gold was so valuable in the 1850s and still is today. Why do you think that Aboriginal peoples before European settlement didn't seem to place such a high value on gold?



4. Imagine you are a young person who has just arrived at the goldfields during the Australian Gold Rush. Write a diary entry or draw some pictures to explain what you see and how you feel.



5. In what ways did the gold rush affect Australian society? Write at least three dot points.







6. Talk to a friend and discuss how Australia might be different today if gold hadn't been discovered in the country?