

Title: Biographies/Pushes & Pulls

Objectives: To learn about historical characters who participated in the Klondike gold rush; To introduce the concept of “pushes and pulls.”

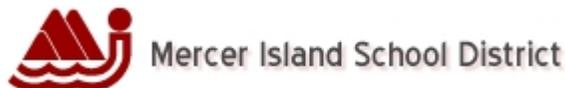
Materials:

Collect a variety of biographies of Klondikers and mount on poster board (example biographies are attached)
Chart paper title “Pushes and Pulls”

Time: 1 hour

Lesson Description:

This lesson provides background information and introduces students to the migration concept of “pushes and pulls,” the reasons people leave their homes for new lands (pushes) and the reasons they go to a particular destination (pulls). By learning about real Stampeders students will be better prepared to create their own Stampeder.



1. Begin as a whole group to share with the children some stories of true Stampeders. To begin the discussion ask students what kind of people they thought went up to the Yukon. Then, share the following excerpt from Gold! The Klondike Adventure describing some peoples' experiences.

The Klondike gold rush was on. 'THE POPULATION IS PREPARING TO MOVE TO THE KLONDIKE' shouted the newspaper headlines. 'EVERY MAN SEEMS TO HAVE CAUGHT THE KLONDIKE FEVER!' Within hours after the gold ships had sailed into harbor, many men and women were quitting their jobs and preparing to head north. Seattle streetcar workers abandoned their trolleys on the track. Nuns left their churches, and a quarter of the police force resigned. Even the mayor announced his resignation and promptly bought a steamboat for carrying passengers to the Klondike. Firemen, store clerks, school teachers, lawyers, and doctors decided to trade their regular paychecks for picks and shovels. But the West Coast of the United States was not the only region to be turned upside down by the Yukon discoveries. "Klondike fever" had spread to cities and towns throughout the country--- and throughout the world. In New York, 2,000 people tried to buy tickets for the Klondike before the news of the gold strikes was one day old. Soon, groups of fortune hunters from Australia, Scotland, England, France, Italy, and other countries were also making their way toward the Yukon. (p. 20, Ray)

2. At this point have students break-up into pairs and read the attached biography documents. Put a few of the biographies at each station (table group) for students to rotate through and read. Bring the group back together at some point to discuss what they learned about the Stampeders. Next, discuss the pushes and pulls that motivated the Stampeders to leave their homes and journey north to the Yukon. Read the following excerpt to begin the discussion:

In Seattle the excitement had reached a state of frenzy...the reason for this wild excitement was simple: The Klondike gold ships arrived during a time of terrible poverty for the United States. Thousands of businesses were closing and millions of people had lost their jobs. It was not unusual to see a man die of hunger in the streets or a family pushed out of its home because of unpaid bills. This period of hardship, known as an economic depression, had lasted for several years and it seemed that it would never end. (p. 20, Ray)

3. Discuss with the students the concept of “pushes and pulls.” Explain that although many people across the United States were pushed away from their desperate situations and pulled to the Yukon goldfields to seek their fortune, each individual Stampeders had their own reason for joining the rush to the goldfields. Finish with a discussion of the biographies and have students analyze why people left their homes (pushes) and why they decided to go to the Klondike (pulls). Ask students to reflect on the biographies they read and chart (as a class) what pushed and pulled the different Stampeders to the goldfields.

TEACHER NOTES: Mount a copy of each biography on card stock or poster board and laminate to preserve for future use.

Consider reading levels when pairing students to read biographies. You may want to group better readers with struggling readers to help ensure comprehension of content.

Divide up the chart paper into two columns – one side titled “PUSHES” and the other side titled “PULLS.”

THE KLONDIKE WEEKLY

Dawson City, Yukon Territory

May 1, 1998

American Heroes of the Klondike Gold Rush

Listed by their native State

Arizona:

Ed Schieffelin - As the world buzzed with news of gold in the Klondike, one of the area's first prospectors died. His name was Ed Schieffelin. In earlier years, he had discovered a mountain of silver and founded the town of Tombstone, Arizona. When he embarked on his gold-seeking trek to the Yukon he was already worth one million dollars. But his appearance belied his wealth. His beard and his glossy black hair hung long. His gray ghost-eyes had the faraway look of the long-time prospector. In 1883, Schieffler prospected in the Yukon, where few white men had ever travelled. But after an arduous search he dismissed the Klondike as a frozen waste. He was still searching for gold in Oregon when a heart attack ended his life in 1897.

Arkansas:

Jim Hall - Hall had already been in the Yukon for ten years before he bought the claim that made him rich. When Hall made his fortune, he and his partner spent their gold on wine and women. At one point Hall fancied a woman and purchased her for twenty thousand dollars in gold dust. Hall did invest some of his money wisely when he built the Greentree Hotel in the most expensive section of Dawson. His investment was reduced to ashes a short time later when a dance-hall girl inadvertently started a fire that burned up half a million dollars of Dawson real estate.

California:

George Carmack - Carmack, the child of an earlier gold rush, co-discovered the gold on Bonanza Creek that would trigger the Klondike Gold Rush. At sixteen, he was dishwasher on an American man-of-war when he jumped ship at Juneau, Alaska. His life's ambition was to become chief of an Indian tribe. Toward that end, he married the daughter of the chief of the Tagish tribe and worked with other members of the tribe as a packer on the Chilkoot Pass. Dubbed "Lying George," Carmack would boast of various gold discoveries. While it was true he had discovered a seam of coal on the Yukon River, nobody took him seriously as a prospector, including Carmack himself. After having a strange vision of huge salmon with gold nuggets for eyes, Carmack and Indian relatives took up salmon fishing at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers. Here they heard of a gold strike nearby on a small tributary of the Klondike River. Carmack and his Indian relatives, Skookum Jim and Dawson Charlie struck gold on Rabbit or (as they re-named it) Bonanza Creek on August 17, 1896.

California:

Clarence Berry - Berry was one of the few truly sober, honest, hard-working men to hold claims on Eldorado and Bonanza creeks. Berry took a million and a half dollars out of the Klondike and,

unlike so many, died with his fortunes intact. After leaving the Klondike, he went on to own two professional baseball teams, the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco Giants. Berry was tending bar in a Fortymile saloon when he encountered an Austrian, Antone Stander, who needed a loan to work his prospect in the Klondike. Berry obliged, receiving half of Stander's Eldorado claim in return.

Colorado:

Jefferson Randolph "Soapy" Smith - Soapy Smith was king of the Denver underworld before leaving in 1892 for the new booming silver camp of Creede. This roaring community, entirely without government or police, served as a training ground for Smith's later criminal conquest of Skagway, Alaska. Smith joined the masses on their way to the Klondike in 1898 with one purpose in mind: to seize control of the Alaskan port of Skagway, key gateway to the Yukon gold fields. By April, his organization numbered between two and three hundred gangsters, prostitutes, pimps, gamblers and card cheaters who effectively ran the town. Smith orchestrated the crime, including numerous beatings and murders, all the while attempting to cultivate a public image as a man of "law and order."

Idaho:

"Swiftwater" Bill Gates - Gates earned his nickname by telling stories of his prowess in steering boats over rapids in the gold country of Idaho. He was, however, never taken seriously by early prospectors in the Klondike. After the first finds on Bonanza and Eldorado, Gates reluctantly took a lay on the thirteenth Eldorado claim, considered unlucky because of its number. It yielded a tremendous amount of gold and with his share, Gates purchased more claims and went on to become one of Dawson City's richest men. "Swiftwater" bathed in champagne and was notorious for lusting after dance hall girls. He often escorted them to his claim in groups, allowing them to help themselves to gold. Perhaps to ensure a ready supply of young women, he opened and co-owned the Monte Carlo dance hall. Gates continued his womanizing ways through two tangled marriages and a host of scandals with teenage girls before ending his days in Peru. There, he was supposed to have wangled a twenty-million acre silver mining concession before dying in 1935.

Illinois:

C.C. Perrin - Perrin was a detective from Chicago, Illinois who, to his amazement, found himself in the midst of the gold rush while pursuing his man. Perrin was hot on the trail of a murderer who had led him on a zigzag chase across the continent and finally up to the Canadian northwest. Perrin was forced to get extradition papers from the Canadian government before arresting the criminal in Dawson City. Both Perrin and his quarry could easily have been wealthy men, as they had arrived unwittingly in the gold-fields before the outside world knew of the strike. However, Perrin left town with his handcuffed prisoner without a glance back.

Illinois:

Lambertus Warmolts - Thousands left Chicago for the Yukon gold fields in 1897-98. One opportunist, Lambertus Warmolts, masqueraded as a veteran of the Mackenzie country and advertised himself in Chicago newspapers as a guide. Thirteen Chicago residents responded to his guarantee to deliver them to the Klondike. He charged them \$500 each and announced the journey would take six weeks flat. At Great Slave Lake, Warmolts abandoned camp with all their money and disappeared. The Chicago group pushed on to Destruction City in the Northwest

Territories of Canada where most of them died of scurvy. Only a few of them ever made it to Dawson City.

Illinois:

Martha Louise Black - Born in Detroit, Martha was abandoned by her first husband en route to the Klondike in 1898. She hiked over the Chilkoot Pass and sailed down the Yukon River to Dawson while pregnant, and then bore her child in a log cabin, raised money, bought a sawmill, bossed 16 men on a mining claim and later married George Black who became Yukon's Member of Parliament. When he became ill, she ran for, and won, his seat, becoming the Yukon's first, and Canada's second, female Member of Parliament. (More about [Martha Louise Black](#))

Iowa:

A.J. Goddard - Goddard was an engine designer from Iowa who saw an opportunity to cash in on the gold rush. With the help of his wife, Goddard planned to take two steamboats into the Yukon through the White Pass during the winter of 1897 so that they could take the first cargo down the river in the spring. Goddard discovered that this was not as easy as he thought. He and his wife were forced to move the vessels in bits and pieces across the narrow White Pass, a job that took the entire winter, forcing them to endure deathly cold and physical exhaustion. The Goddards' determination paid out in the end, as they established the first steamboat link between the gold fields and the Pacific coast.

Maine:

Leroy N. Jack McQuesten - Often called the "Father of the Yukon," some claim McQuesten was born in Litchfield, New Hampshire in 1836, while others report his birth in Maine two years later. Regardless, he prospected the Fraser River, then became involved in the fur trade and wound up in the Yukon River Valley. McQuesten set up Fort Reliance, six miles from what would be Dawson City. Later, he founded Circle City, Alaska, which enjoyed a gold-induced boom and lively history until its inhabitants left it overnight for Dawson City and the Klondike Gold Rush. The Father of the Yukon retired to San Francisco where he lived in comfort until his death in 1909.

Massachusetts:

Erastus Brainerd - This Harvard University graduate and former curator at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts played a huge role in spreading news of the Klondike gold rush from Seattle across North America. He was editor-in-chief of the Seattle Press-Times and then the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. His objective was to make Seattle the central starting point for stampedes. He out-advertised (by up to five times) Tacoma, Portland, San Francisco, Vancouver and Victoria. When the Seattle Post-Intelligencer published a special Klondike edition in the spring of 1898, Brainerd sent 70,000 copies to post offices, 6,000 to public libraries, 10,000 to the Great Northern Railway and another 5,000 to the Northern Pacific Railway. Without his advertising efforts, the Klondike gold rush might not have been what it was.

Michigan:

Frank Reid Frank Reid attended the University of Michigan, moved across the plains, fought Indians in Oregon, then settled there as a schoolteacher. He stamped north at the first news of

the Klondike gold rush, helped found Skagway and went on to become the town's engineer. But Reid became immortalized when he shot the gangster Soapy Smith. Reid himself died of injuries sustained during the gun fight with Smith.

Minnesota:

George Brackett Brackett was an ex-mayor of Minneapolis turned stamper. In 1897, he witnessed the carnage and horror of the White Pass trail. Scarcely a single horse survived of the three thousand that were used on the trail. Finally, it was closed to all and Brackett began to construct a wagon-road along the mountainsides. When it was completed, the stampers who followed in the winter were glad to pay a toll to use it, but each one who passed that way was haunted in some fashion by the ghosts of the pack animals that had died that fall.

Missouri:

James "Nigger Jim" Daughtery - Daughtery was a tall, blond Missourian who got his name from the spirituals he liked to sing while playing the banjo. His gold fortune allowed him to buy two dance halls and a saloon. Daughtery's generosity was legendary, and though he tried, he could neither spend nor give away his money as fast as he came by it. Daughtery was responsible for a second mini-gold rush, called the "Nigger Jim Stampede," that occurred in Dawson during January of 1899. During a bitter cold spell with temperatures dropping to sixty below, Daughtery led a small knot of frenzied men to a valley that was reported to be rich in gold. The men that survived the trek hammered in their stakes, only to ironically learn that it was quite worthless.

Montana:

Harry Woolrich - Woolrich was a big-time gambler from Montana who would often play cards for days, taking his meals at the table. Many believed that Woolrich had a magic touch with cards and so gave him their money to play with. If he lost, he lost nothing, but if he won, he took half. Woolrich ran the gambling concession at the famous Dawson City Monte Carlo Dance Hall and Saloon. One night, after winning sixty thousand dollars, Woolrich decided to renounce gambling, and bought a ticket out of the Yukon on a steam ship. Alas for Woolrich, the ship was delayed. Back he went to the gaming tables, and placed a half dollar down as a farewell bid. Twenty-four hours later, the boat long gone, Woolrich had lost his fortune and his ticket out of the Yukon.

Montana:

Pat Galvin- Galvin was a one-time town marshal from Helena, Montana who sought fame once he had found his fortune in gold. Galvin spent his gold freely on everyone, and it was said that he was good for two thousand dollars a night in the various Dawson saloons. The free-spending Galvin sunk the profits of his Bonanza claim into a steamboat company which failed miserably. An even heavier millstone around Galvin's neck was his financial manager, who embezzled forty thousand dollars and, when forgiven by Galvin, promptly forged a cheque and set out for South Africa. Upon learning of the defection, Galvin merely said "he was a good fellow."

Montana:

John Jerome Healy - Healy's illustrious career included more than a few occupations. He was hunter, trapper, soldier, prospector, whiskey-trader, editor, guide, Indian scout and sheriff. He ran the legendary Fort Whoop-Up, selling liquor to Indians in southern Alberta and along the

Montana-Canadian border. This brew consisted of whiskey, red pepper, Jamaican ginger and hot water. By 1893, Healy was in the Klondike, challenging the authority of "miner's meetings" which ruled in the absence of established law. As a result, the North West Mounted Police established a presence in the Yukon, led by Inspector Charles Constantine. Healy created the North American Trading and Transportation Company with trading posts in Fortymile and, later, Dawson City. His financial success was well-known to stampeders during the gold rush. He and Swiftwater Bill Gates (a man who never drank champagne but bathed in it) lost five thousand dollars between them in a single bet over a stud poker game. Healy died a rich man.

New York:

Arthur Harper - Harper was born in Ireland in 1835. He emigrated to New York as a boy and, at twenty, moved west to California. One of the first prospectors and traders in the Yukon, he worked with Jack McQuesten, "Father of the Yukon," and Joe Ladue, founder of Dawson City. Harper cashed in on the Klondike gold rush by investing heavily in real estate. He ran the Fortymile Post, and was later involved in Dawson properties. He left over \$200,000 to his wife and children when he died of tuberculosis in Arizona in 1897.

New York:

J.J. Clements - Clements was lucky to be alive when he and four others staked claims on what would become known as the "richest creek in the world." He had almost starved to death prospecting during the winter of 1896. But in August of that year he and his companions stared into a pan that, to their astonishment, had at least six dollars' worth of gold in the bottom. Each of the claims staked that day eventually produced one million dollars or more. Clements later sold his claim, however, to Clarence Berry and Antone Stander. He disembarked from the Excelsior at San Francisco in July 1897 with \$50,000 in Klondike gold. His starving days were over but his windfall could easily have been millions, had he held his claim.

Ohio:

Joe Staley - Staley, of Dayton, Ohio, was a newcomer to the Yukon gold rush in the summer of 1897. Staley got lucky when he fell in with an old miner called Caribou Billy who had a theory about a lost channel of gold that ran through the Klondike Hills. Caribou and Staley began searching for the gold and miraculously found it the following spring. The two miners hid their discovery until they could stake the land. The next day when they recorded their claim the secret was out, and a stampede followed. Of all the hundreds and thousands that roamed the Yukon that year, Staley and Caribou were among the few who were able to unravel the riddle of the Klondike hills.

Oregon:

Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka - Schwatka attended Willamette University in Oregon before going on to become a U.S. military lieutenant. In 1883, Schwatka led a party of six men from Portland, Oregon to Alaska. They were to report the number, character and disposition of the Indians, their relations with each other, their feeling toward the Russian government and their attitude toward the United States. Schwatka's journal contains one of the first records of a Chilkoot Pass crossing by a white man. Schwatka's legacy remained in the Yukon sites he named: Lake Bennett, Lake Lindeman and Miles Canyon. Without his early explorations, maps of the Yukon circulated during the 1897-98 gold rush would have featured different names.

Pennsylvania:

Belinda Mulrone - Mulrone left Scranton to become the "richest woman in the Klondike." She waitressed her way to the Yukon where she turned fortune into fortune, opening roadhouses and hotels and managing the largest mining company in the region. She and her husband, the supposed "Count" Carbonneau from France (who was in fact a Montreal barber) left Dawson City and bought a ranch near Yakima, Washington, commuting each winter to Europe, where Carbonneau became a bank director and steamship magnate. "Count" Carbonneau was killed in World War I. Belinda Mulrone settled finally in Washington State where she lived until her death in the 1960s.

Pennsylvania:

Frank Neill In the fall of 1897 a Philadelphia promoter talked twelve technical-school students into persuading their fathers to buy a schooner and send them around Cape Horn to the Klondike. The promoter was supposed to be a navigator, but turned out to be a very poor one. After a series of fits and starts, delays and bunglings, storms and calms, the vessel finally stumbled into Juneau, Alaska. All of the boys went home except one, Frank Neill. He pressed on to the Klondike, arriving finally in 1900. All the gold was gone, but Neill made a small fortune hauling logs, used it to get started in the construction business in Long Island, and did well enough to marry and make a wedding trip back to the Klondike. He remained a wealthy, respected man in Skagway long after the great rush abated.

South Dakota:

Dick Lowe - Lowe was a rugged and wiry ex-mule-skinner who had already made and lost one fortune in South Dakota. In the Black Hills he struck gold and started a transportation company, only to have it wiped out by the Indian War. Lowe wandered up to the Yukon trying to recoup his losses and joined a survey team measuring claims. Lowe claimed a small fraction of land on Bonanza Creek which he vainly tried to sell, then to lease, but there were no takers. The lucky Lowe decided to work the fraction himself, which eventually paid out over half a million dollars, the richest claim per square foot ever staked in the Yukon.

Tennessee:

Sam McGee - "Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and grows," according to Robert Service, the Bard of the Klondike. Service immortalized the miners of the Yukon gold rush in his famous poetry about the era. McGee, based on a man Service met in Whitehorse, was among the poet's most popular characters, and his story is told in "The Cremation of Sam McGee." In the ballad McGee was lured to the Yukon by the prospect of gold, though being from Tennessee he despised the cold. Fearing that the bitter weather may kill him, McGee forced a promise from his partner to cremate him if he should die. McGee did indeed freeze, and his partner cremated him in the boiler of an abandoned ship. When the partner decided "I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked," he discovered McGee with a smile on his face, enjoying the heat.

Texas:

George Lewis "Tex" Rickard - A former Texas marshal, his friends called him Tex. After the frenzy to secure stakes on Bonanza Creek, he and a partner were able to buy a half-interest in one of the claims. They sold it almost at once for twenty thousand dollars and bought an interest in

another, which sold for thirty thousand dollars. It was the start of a career that led Tex Rickard to Madison Square Gardens in New York as the greatest fight promoter of his day. In 1898, Dawson City dance hall girls often shared the stage with prizefighters who could bring in spectators at \$25 a chair. Rickard's first fight-promoting effort matched two friends but promoted them as bitter adversaries. They were Australian Frank Slavin, the heavyweight champion of the British Empire and Joe Boyle, his Canadian sparring partner. The two had arrived in Dawson City together, but Rickard talked them into publicly "hating" each other to increase interest in the upcoming boxing match. He billed Boyle as a man who had defied gangster head-man Soapy Smith in Skagway and dubbed Slavin the "Sydney Slasher."

Washington:

W.D. Wood, Mayor of Seattle Wood happened to be in San Francisco attending a convention when news of the Klondike steamships' arrivals hit. He did not bother to return home to Seattle, simply wiring his resignation as mayor. Before the month was out he had raised one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, bought himself an ocean steamer, the Humboldt, and formed the Seattle and Yukon Trading Company, whose subsequent history was a troubled one. Every ship going north was overloaded. When the Humboldt, after a series of delays, finally escaped from San Francisco on August 16, W.D. Wood tried to leave behind some fifty thousand pounds of his passengers' personal baggage behind. This so enraged them that a group actually attempted to hang the former mayor on the dockside. Cooler heads prevailed, and the ship was reloaded.

West Virginia:

"Silent Sam" Bonnefield Silent Sam Bonnefield, who never cracked a smile or uttered a word as he played, was the best known gambler in Dawson and the owner of a popular saloon. Bonnefield never turned down a bet and never pulled out of a game until it was over. The biggest poker game ever recorded in the Klondike was won by Bonnefield, who took home one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. During one desperate poker game Bonnefield, after losing seventy-two thousand dollars, put his saloon in the pot and lost that too. At the eleventh hour a crony of his arrived and loaned the gambler enough to stay in the game. Within six hours Bonnefield had won everything back and cleaned out the customer at the same time.
