

## **Eureka! A Story of the Goldfields**

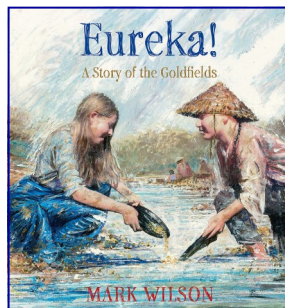
By Mark Wilson

Publisher: Lothian Children's Books

ISBN 9780734416810 SCIS: 1944407

\$26.99

Molly and her father have emigrated to Australia to try their luck as gold prospectors in Ballarat, Victoria. Life on the diggings is hard and Molly misses her mother, who died before they left England. A Chinese teenager, Chen, shows Molly and her Papa how to pan for gold and helps them when their food and money run out. Not everyone on the goldfields is friendly, however. Chen and other Chinese diggers are often bullied and the police lock up miners who haven't paid the exorbitant gold licence fee. Before long, Molly, Papa and Chen are caught up in a protest that will become known as the Eureka Rebellion - a legendary battle that will profoundly affect them all. From award-winning author and illustrator Mark Wilson, this powerful story is inspired by real people and historical events.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

### **Themes:**

- Life on the Goldfields
- Chinese Immigrants and Racism
- The Eureka Stockade
- Values

### **Discussion Questions & Activities:**

- Life on the goldfields was very hard. People lived in tents, and had little money for food, or to pay the hefty licence fees demanded. Research their lives and the challenges they faced.
- Mark Wilson tells us in an afterword that this story is inspired by the life of Catherine Martin and her descendants. Research her life and that of other people on the goldfields.
- Look at the images in this book of people travelling to the goldfields. What sort of problems might they have encountered when journeying to the diggings?
- How did life change in towns like Ballarat before and after the gold rush?
- From what countries did people come to the goldfields, and how did they get there?
- This rebellion was a seminal event in Australian economic and social history. Research to discover the impact it had on later history.
- Peter Lalor was a key figure in the rebellion. Research his later life. Why has he become such a symbol of this movement?
- Examine the battle scene incorporating the newspaper clipping headed 'Rebellion!'. What does it suggest about the struggle between miners and those in power?
- The Eureka Flag is a symbol of the movement to protect workers' rights. In 2018, the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) sought to have the flying of the flag banned on worksites but the Fair Work Commission ruled this invalid. What were the arguments for and against the flag being flown?
- Many Chinese people arrived in Australia in this period and worked hard to establish themselves, and sometimes to bring family to Australia, as Chen does in this story. Why did people of European origin resent them so much?
- How might the marriage between Molly and Chen have been regarded during this time? Would they have experienced racism?
- Discuss the values conveyed in this text.
- Chen is kind to Molly and her father, despite the fact that people have treated him poorly because he is Chinese. How difficult is it to forgive, and to be kind to, people when you have been subject to unkindness?