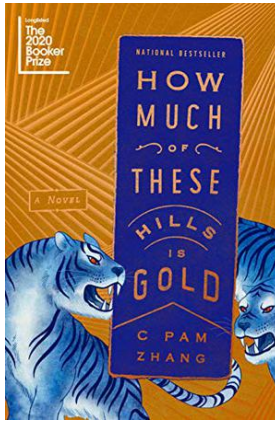


Proposed Core Literature Titles

The following summary is provided by the California Department of Education's "Recommended Literature List", and the top three Google searches of the book title and author name (e.g. How Much of These Hills is Gold by C Pam Zhang) that produced a description of the title.

How Much of These Hills is Gold

Proposed Grade Level: 11



Title: How Much of These Hills is Gold

Author: **C Pam Zhang**

First Published: **2020**

Proposed Grade Level: **11**

Descriptions From Top 3 Google Searches:

<https://www.amazon.com/How-Much-These-Hills-Gold/dp/0525537201>

An electric debut novel set against the twilight of the American gold rush, two siblings are on the run in an unforgiving landscape—trying not just to survive but to find a home.

Ba dies in the night; Ma is already gone. Newly orphaned children of immigrants, Lucy and Sam are suddenly alone in a land that refutes their existence. Fleeing the threats of their western mining town, they set off to bury their father in the only way that will set them free from their past. Along the way, they encounter giant buffalo bones, tiger paw prints, and the specters of a ravaged landscape as well as family secrets, sibling rivalry, and glimpses of a different kind of future.

Both epic and intimate, blending Chinese symbolism and reimagined history with fiercely original language and storytelling, *How Much of These Hills Is Gold* is a haunting adventure story, an unforgettable sibling story, and the announcement of a stunning new voice in literature. On a broad level, it explores race in an expanding country and the question of where immigrants are allowed to belong. But page by page, it's about the memories that bind and divide families, and the yearning for home.

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/45895362-how-much-of-these-hills-is-gold>

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<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/c-pam-zhang/how-much-of-these-hills-is-gold/>

A first-time novelist explores timely questions about home and belonging in a story set during the gold rush in a reimagined American West.

Even now, when most of what used to be the Wild West has begun to look like everywhere else—a few big cities spread out among sprawling suburbs full of chain restaurants and strip malls, connected by interstate highways and digital networks—a mythic version of this part of the country endures alongside the reality. That there is a place where anyone can strike it rich or, failing that, at least live free is one of the stories Americans love to tell ourselves. Zhang plays with this duality in her brutally lyrical debut. Lucy and Sam's family left China for North America with the idea that their father, Ba, would become a prospector. The gold rush is over before they get there, though; he ends up mining coal instead. Sam's daydreams of being a cowboy exist alongside the naked racism his family endures, but the romantic wish to be an outlaw comes true when Lucy and Sam are forced to flee their small mining village after their father's death, taking his corpse with them because they lack the means to give it the burial that will let his ghost rest. As they travel through desiccated landscapes littered with the bones of tigers and buffalo, Lucy and Sam meet archetypes we think we know from Westerns, but they are stripped of romance. The journey of these two children—and the backstories of their parents—force us to confront just how White the history we've been taught is. Aside from fictions—some fanciful inventions, some hateful lies—about Native Americans, we don't hear much about the experiences of people of color and immigrants in shaping the West. Zhang asks readers to acknowledge a legacy we have been taught to ignore by creating a new and spellbinding mythology of her own.

Aesthetically arresting and a vital contribution to America's conversation about itself.