



The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner, California, 1852 (My Name is America)

By Laurence Yep

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In 1852, during the height of the California Gold Rush, ten-year-old Wong Ming-Chung makes the dangerous trip to America to join his uncle on his hunt for a fortune. The true treasure for Ming-Chung, though, is America itself. In the midst of the lawless, often hostile environment, he is able to forge an international community of friends.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

It is 1852, and 10-year-old Wong Ming-Chung, or Bright Intelligence--or Runt, as he is most commonly called--has arrived at the gold mines of California after a dangerous journey from China. Exchanging the famine and war of his native country for the brutal bullies and grueling labor in America, Runt joins his uncle and countless others in the effort to strike it rich on the great "Golden Mountain." Unfortunately, he, and most of the rest of the dreamers, soon discover that there's no such thing as a Golden Mountain, only dirt, mud, and tiny, occasional flecks of gold dust--flecks that are to be turned over to the owners of the mines, in return for barely livable wages. However, someone as clever and resourceful as Runt can still find true opportunity in this land. He and his uncle team up to find ingenious new ways of making money, and to defend themselves against the bitter, racist white Americans. Along the way, Runt develops lasting friendships with many people from all over the world, learning ways to communicate with them in spite of cultural and language differences.

A thoroughly engrossing addition to the Dear America series, this historical fiction is written in the form of a diary. Laurence Yep has proven himself a master in his art, with such titles as the Newbery Honor-winning *Dragonwings*, among many other tales about the Chinese immigrant experience. A fictional epilogue, photos from the gold rush era, and a historical note round out this fascinating page-turner. (Ages 9 and older) --
Emilie Coulter

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8-Through his diary, a 12-year-old Chinese boy nicknamed "Runt" shares his thoughts, fears, insecurities, and adventures. When Runt's older brother, Blessing, is summoned to California by his uncle, his parents choose to send their younger son instead. Runt learns the hard way that although the Golden Mountain brings the promise of prosperity to his family in China, it also brings hardship, racism, and even death to the "guests" mining for gold. Despite the many difficulties that he is exposed to, however, Runt always has a positive outlook on life. The engrossing story involves readers from start to finish. Yep deals with timely issues, including racism, bullying, and trying to find self-worth. A historical note about the Gold Rush and black-and-white photos and illustrations of actual Chinese miners are appended. An engaging book with strong characters that successfully weaves fact with fiction.

Mercedes Smith, Bishop Kenny High School, Jacksonville, FL

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From [Booklist](#)

In this novel, 11-year-old Wong Ming-Chung, better known as Runt, starts keeping a journal in October 1851, when his Uncle Stone leaves their village in China for the Golden Mountain, the gold fields of America. Later that year, Runt makes the difficult and dangerous journey as well, eventually finding his way to his uncle. Working together at a rough mining camp, Runt finds good friends from around the world, violent prejudice against Chinese, and, eventually, a little gold. Runt's quiet voice draws readers into an eventful and sometimes moving story. Well-drawn settings and characters on both sides of the Pacific contribute to the readers' sense of being there, transported through time to observe a unique era in American history and to watch Runt grow in confidence, cleverness, and self-reliance. A solid historical fiction choice from the My Name Is America series, the boys' division of the Dear America books. As with others in the umbrella series, a selection of photos and illustrations and a long historical note are included at the back.

Carolyn Phelan

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Sandifer:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they take because their hobby will be reading a book. How about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, individual feel need book if they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you should have this The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner, California, 1852 (My Name is America).

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Rhonda Rudder:

Why? Because this The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner, California, 1852 (My Name is America) is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap that but latter it will surprise you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such awesome way makes the content on the inside easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book have such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking way. So , still want to delay having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Mary Brott:

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