

1. Title / Content Area:	White Gold
2. Historic Site:	Denver Mint, Great Western Effluent Flume, the Von Trotha Firestien Farm
3. Episode:	<a href="https://video.rmpbs.org/video/white-gold-ptpa4x/">https://video.rmpbs.org/video/white-gold-ptpa4x/</a>
4. Developed by:	Sally Purath, Poudre School District Laura Israelsen, Denver Public Schools Michelle Pearson, Adams 12 School District Century Middle School Team, Adams 12 School District
5. Grade Level and Standards:	<i>Grade Level: 3-5</i> Content in this Document Based Question ( DBQ ) link to Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Colorado Academic Standards <i>Prepared Graduate Competencies: 1, 2, and 4</i> Colorado Standards: 3rd: History Standard 1 GLE 2. 4th: History Standard 1 GLE 2.. 5th: Geography Standard 2 GLE 2 <i>C3 Standards in Social Studies:</i> <i>D2.Geo.2.3-5.</i> <i>D2.Geo.4.3-5.</i> <i>D2.Geo.5.3-5. D2.His.2.3-5. D2.His.3.3-5.</i>
6. Assessment Question:	How do structures play a role in the history of the sugar beet industry in Colorado?
7. Contextual Paragraph	The sugar beet industry has played a large role in the history of Colorado and remains an integral part of the economy today. After the panic of 1893, the state began to recover and prosperity started to return through a solid agricultural economy at the turn of the century. The declining economy in the 1890's due to reduction in mining and other pursuits forced businessmen to look for other investments and sugar beets seemed to be an important part of success for laborers, farmers, investors and business. In the sugar beet industry, everyone could find a job.



In 1901, Loveland landed the fourth sugar beet factory created by Great Western Sugar Company in the state and one was soon constructed in both Eaton and Greeley. The boom of the industry created expansion in agriculture and settlement in small towns on the plains where sugar beets grow well and crops are profitable. With the increased population, buildings were needed, Carnegie libraries established, and businesses flourished especially during the 4 months of harvest and processing.

Today sugar beets continue to play a role in the Colorado community albeit a much smaller one with only the Fort Morgan refinery still in operation. More information on the sugar beet industry can be found in the Colorado Encyclopedia here:

<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/sugar-beet-industry>

8. Connection to Historic Preservation

The Great Western Sugar Effluent Flume is often considered to be a structure where agriculture and technology meet. One of the first suspension bridges in Colorado, at the time of installation it was also a technical marvel of the time period because it was one of the few suspension bridge/ flumes that was designed specifically for moving industrial waste away from the sugar beet plant rather than allowing for the waste to be disposed of around the plant. It is deemed significant for this technological innovation and was listed in the National Register for Historic Places in 2014.

The Von Trotha Firestien family farm played a major role in northern Colorado sugar beet production as one of the largest and most long standing sugar beet farms in the region. It was listed in 2009 in the National Register of Historic Places. They celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017.

The Denver Mint, a building listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, was one of the first places to assay the quality of sugar beets in Colorado just like they would with silver or gold.

## Document Based Question (DBQ)

### Document Set

The Denver Mint



1. How was the Denver Mint involved in the sugar beet industry?
2. What were people looking for in the sugar beets?

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.co0089.photos/?sp=>

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Great Western Effluent Bridge



GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. Examine the map. What was the Great Western Sugar Company trying to cross by building the bridge?
2. Why did they have to get the sugar beet slurry away from the plant?
3. Great Western Sugar was thoughtful about how they were crossing the river. What are other methods could they have used that were less expensive and easier to build?

<https://www.pbs.org/video/white-gold-ptpa4x/>

Great Western Effluent Bridge



<https://www.pbs.org/video/white-gold-ptpa4x/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. Research the date of this bridge. It is one of the earliest suspension bridges in Colorado and was built prior to what other Colorado suspension bridge?
2. What materials are used in the creation of the suspension bridge?
3. What is the importance of this engineering feat?

**Assessment Question**

How do structures play a role in the history of the sugar beet industry in Colorado?

Response