Guided Notes: Mining Booms and Busts

When we hear the word mine in So	outh Dakota, we thin	k of	. Most
South Dakota gold came from the huge Ho	omestake Mine at Le	ead, where miners	dug
nearlystraight dow	n beneath their city,	through hard rock	L•
They also called the pink rock gran	nite, but in fact, it wa	as a super-hard sto	one called
A mine that's open to the	sky, without underg	ground tunnels, is	often
called a It wasn't only So	uth Dakota towns th	at bought these pa	vers for
streets. In 1889, Sioux Falls Granite Com	pany shipped	million pav	vers by
trains to Omaha, Kansas City, Chicago, ar	nd N	Money was tight a	ll across
the in the 1890s,	and cities stopped b	ouying so many pa	ivers.
Boom means plenty of stone or me	etal is being mined, a	and people are	
good money for it. Bust m	neans the supply of v	whatever is being	mined
-or, as happened to the Sioux	Falls Granite Comp	oany, customers st	op
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In 1886, was discover	red here. If you look	carefully when y	ou visit
the state park today, you can still see when	e the old	Lode Mine v	vas dug.
Coal is valuable in a different way	– because it can be	burned for	
and By the 1930s,	coal mines wer	e in business in S	outh
Dakota. Those were hard years: not enoug	gh rain, dust	, and once ag	gain tight
money.			
In the, another mining	g product that suppli	ed energy stirred	big
excitement in South Dakota. There was n	ew technology for m	naking	at

nuclear power plan	ts. For many miners, it cost to drive a truck to Edgemont
than they were	for their load of uranium soil.
Gold was di	scovered in the Black Hills in 1874, by an army expedition led by
	, and thousands of people rushed to the area, hoping to strike it rich.
G H	wasn't like others hoping to strike it rich. Hearst built an
amazing undergrou	nd world and an equally amazing above ground,
thanks partly to his	, Phoebe. In the late and early,
people from around	the world moved to Lead for Homestake jobs. They brought
	, clothing styles, and customs from England, Italy, Ireland, and
eastern European la	ands they called nations.
Miners had	to be careful around and powerful machinery.
Homestake workers	s got underground by dropping thousands of feet in big, rattling
elevators they calle	d
For most of	Homestake's history, the United States government set
for	gold, and limited who could own big amounts of it. In the 1980s, gold
prices were so	that several new mines began digging. Even Homestake put
some of its miners	to work on the surface, in an area next to Lead called the
	. The new surface mines began going bust – some because
they	of gold, some because of low_prices.
In the year 2	2000, Homestake said it would close at the end of 2001 – after
	Today workers take and out of
the ground.	