

## Introducing Longfellow's Paul Revere: Instructions for teachers

**This .pdf contains the teacher instructions for completing each of the activities related to Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride." The student worksheets and other necessary documents are included in a document packet, which can be downloaded separately, along with these instructions. The notes in red after each section of the instructions indicate which resources accompany that section. The outline below corresponds to the order of the documents in the document packet as well as to the Teacher Instructions below.**

### Outline:

#### A. Reading Activities

1. Pre-reading map work
  - a. Maps (list of labels included in teacher's instructions)
2. Read-aloud materials
  - a. Poem w/ line numbers
3. Labeling Revere's and Dawes' routes
4. Reading Comprehension
  - a. "Paul Revere's Ride" Fact Retrieval
  - b. "Paul Revere's Ride" Fact Retrieval Answer Key
5. The language of the poem
  - a. The Mood of "Paul Revere's Ride"
  - b. The Mood of "Paul Revere's Ride" – Answer Key
  - c. Longfellow's Message in "Paul Revere's Ride"
  - d. Longfellow's Message – Answer Key

#### B. Historical Context

1. link to a map showing the routes of Revere, Dawes and the British
2. Paul Revere's testimony of his midnight ride to Lexington

### Overview:

In order to help present Longfellow's poetry using the contextual approach we described on our introductory page, we have tried to create a series of lesson plans with a logical flow that clearly delineate the three areas of information that students need to fully appreciate the poems we choose to present. We include personal/biographical information about the author that connects him to the poem, historical/cultural information about the times that might have shaped the poem and finally, how all this information is reflected in the actual lines of the poem. In short, we look for the key concepts of:

1. author
2. times
3. poem

Our complete unit includes presenting about five of Longfellow's poems in this way. We begin with the analysis of "Paul Revere's Ride" that is included here and we have found that, with this as an example, students quite quickly come to understand and to use the approach with other poems. We encourage you to arrange and adapt the information for your own teaching needs.

## **A. Reading Activities:**

Ideally, this poem should be read either concurrently or after social studies classes study the beginning of the American Revolution so the basic information is already previous knowledge.

### **1. Pre-reading map work**

For our purposes, we begin with map work by providing students with a simple, uncluttered and unlabeled map of Boston and the surrounding areas that include appropriately placed dots for cities and the two routes used that night by Paul Revere and William Dawes.

#### **a. Use one of the maps provided.**

Together we place the following labels on the map:

1. Boston peninsula
2. Boston Harbor
3. Boston Neck
4. Charles River
5. Mystic River
6. Charleston
7. Medford
8. Lexington
9. Concord
- 10 & 11. Revere's and Dawes's routes should be labeled after reading poem.

### **2. Read "Paul Revere's Ride" aloud in class**

#### **a. Use Revere poem with line numbers**

### **3. Labeling Revere's and Dawes's routes**

Students should refer to lines 10 & 11 in order to "break" the lantern code in place that night.

1. "One, if by land, and two, if by sea"

This refers to whether the British will either take a longer land route off the peninsula by going across the Neck and around to Medford or a faster water route by loading into boats and crossing the Charles River to Charleston.

2. "And I on the opposite shore will be"

This refers to Revere's location across the Charles River where he is watching for the lanterns.

Using these lines, students can easily label the routes correctly.

#### 4. Reading comprehension

Having read the poem and completed the map, the teacher needs to check for reading comprehension. As a narrative poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride” tells a simple story about Revere’s mission to warn the colonists that the British were coming to Medford, Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts and that they should be ready to protect something valuable that is not specifically revealed in the poem.

I check comprehension and at the same time give students practice in referring to a poem by line number using the following worksheet.

- a. Use [Fact Retrieval Comprehension Sheet](#)
- b. Use [Fact Retrieval Comprehension Sheet Answer Key](#)

#### 5. The language of the poem.

At this point, we move to the style and message of the poem.

1. Mood - There is a play back and forth between two distinct moods within the poem. It starts with an energetic tone and then moves to one that’s more “eerie”. Longfellow’s deliberate choice of words creates images to make this difference. A search for “eerie” words is an effective tool to help students see this.

- a. Use [“The Mood of 'Paul Revere's Ride'” Worksheet](#)
- b. Use [“The Mood of 'Paul Revere's Ride'” Answer Key](#)

2. Message - We then look closely at the lines that are not narrative. The accompanying worksheet is best used in class with the teacher as guide using transparencies on the overhead. The key is to explain the difference between the literal and figurative language.

- a. Use [“Longfellow's Message in 'Paul Revere's Ride'” Worksheet](#)
- b. Use [“Longfellow's Message in 'Paul Revere's Ride'” Answer Key](#)

#### **B. Historical Context**

Once your students have read Longfellow’s narrative aloud, it is helpful to take a look at the actual historical accounts of the ride and gather information about the participants.

1. For a basic overview of what happened that night, go to the Paul Revere House homepage at <http://www.paulreverehouse.org> Follow the trail through “Paul Revere’s Ride” and then into “The Real Story” for a map that shows the night’s events and Revere, Dawes, and British routes.
2. For an even more detailed account of the night, reading Revere’s post-ride testimony makes it clear he wasn’t quite the hero Longfellow created. You can find this testimony at [http://ahp.gatech.edu/midnight\\_ride\\_1775.html](http://ahp.gatech.edu/midnight_ride_1775.html)

- a. Use [Paul Revere’s Testimony](#)