



Day 8 American Revolution
60 Minutes

Paul Revere and His Midnight Ride

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Detailed Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 4–8

Time: 60–75 minutes (with optional extensions)

Unit: Causes of the American Revolution

Lesson Overview

This lesson explores the life and legacy of Paul Revere, focusing on his role as a Patriot messenger and the historical significance of his Midnight Ride. Students begin with a teacher-led PowerPoint presentation that establishes historical context and key events. Students then engage with differentiated reading materials and interactive literacy activities that deepen understanding and challenge popular myths surrounding Revere's famous ride.

The lesson emphasizes how communication, secrecy, and coordinated resistance helped shape early Revolutionary events at Lexington and Concord.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify Paul Revere's background and role in colonial Boston
- Explain the purpose and impact of the Midnight Ride
- Distinguish between historical fact and popular myth
- Analyze how Revere's actions affected Patriot preparations

- Interpret historical meaning through poetry and primary sources
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Essential Question

Why did Paul Revere's warnings matter more than the words he is famous for saying?

Materials

- PowerPoint presentation: *Paul Revere and His Midnight Ride*
 - Paul Revere differentiated article
 - Optional in-depth article on the Midnight Ride and the phrase "One if by land, two if by sea"
 - Longfellow primary source reading comprehension activity
 - Paul Revere Midnight Ride paralaugh or online Mad Lib
 - Optional literacy extensions:
 - Paul Revere Super Cloze Series
 - Traditional reading comprehension exercises
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Lesson Sequence

1. Hook and Background Activation (5 minutes)

Begin with a discussion prompt:

What would happen if an important warning failed to reach people in time?

Briefly explain that communication was difficult and dangerous in colonial America. Introduce Paul Revere as a silversmith, engraver, and Patriot who played a key role in spreading urgent information.

2. PowerPoint Anchor Instruction (15–20 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/revwar/revere.pptx>

Use the PowerPoint presentation as the main instructional anchor.

Key ideas to emphasize while presenting:

- Paul Revere’s life in Boston and work as a silversmith
 - His role as a Patriot and member of resistance networks
 - The April 7 warning to the Provincial Congress
 - The April 18 Midnight Ride
 - Why secrecy mattered
 - What Revere likely said versus the famous myth
 - The lasting impact of the ride on Patriot preparedness
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3. Core Reading Activity (15 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/people-of-the-revolutionary-war/paul-revere>

Students read the **Paul Revere differentiated article**, selecting an appropriate reading level. In addition, have students use the **interactive map** on the page to learn details about Paul Revere’s path in spreading his message.

Guided focus questions:

- Why was Revere trusted with secret messages?
 - How did his warning help the Patriot cause?
 - Why has his role sometimes been misunderstood or exaggerated?
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4. Optional In-Depth Reading (10 minutes)

Students who finish early or require enrichment read the **in-depth article on the Midnight Ride and the phrase “One if by land, two if by sea.”**

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/battles-of-the-revolutionary-war/one-if-by-land-two-if-by-sea>

Discussion focus:

- Who actually watched the lanterns
 - Why the phrase became symbolic rather than literal
 - How myths grow from real historical events
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Culminating Activities (Choose One or More)

Option 1: Primary Source Reading

Students complete a reading comprehension activity using Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem about Paul Revere.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/primary-source-super-comprehension/paul-reveres-ride-primary-source-super-comprehension-on-longfellows-poem>

These primary source comprehension activities guide students through close reading of authentic historical texts. By working across three skill-focused tabs—Main Idea & Details, Inference, and Contextual Vocabulary—students develop a deeper understanding of the passages and strengthen essential literacy skills. The interactive tools and structured layout help readers analyze, annotate, and interpret the text with clarity and confidence.

Focus:

- How poetry shapes historical memory
 - Differences between the poem and historical accounts
 - Why Longfellow wrote the poem decades later
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Option 2: Paul Revere Midnight Ride Paralaugh or Online Mad Lib

Students complete a creative writing activity that reinforces historical vocabulary and sequence of events while maintaining accuracy.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/revolutionary-war-literacy-and-comprehension-activities/paul-reveres-midnight-ride-super-paralaugh>

Purpose:

- Strengthen engagement

- Reinforce content knowledge through humor and structure
 - Support literacy and language development
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Optional Literacy Extensions

- **Paul Revere Super Cloze Series**

Supports vocabulary, sequencing, and contextual understanding

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/revolutionary-war-literacy-and-comprehension-activities/paul-revere-super-cloze-series>

This interactive Cloze Reading Activity is designed to reinforce key historical concepts about Revere through an engaging, differentiated format. Students complete fill-in-the-blank passages using drag-and-drop vocabulary, with features like limited dictionary hints, read-aloud, and three progressive difficulty levels. Built-in scoring, printable reports, and customization options make it ideal for independent practice, centers, or blended learning environments.

- **Traditional Reading Comprehension Exercises**

Reinforces key ideas with multiple-choice and short-response questions

[Sons of Liberty Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100

[Sons of Liberty Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100

These activities may be used for centers, homework, or differentiation.

Closure (5 minutes)

Discussion prompt:

Why is Paul Revere remembered more for his ride than his many other contributions?

Exit ticket options:

- One sentence explaining why the Midnight Ride mattered
- One myth about Revere and one historical fact

Alternatively:

- [The “Bloody Massacre” Coloring Page](#)
- [Old North Church Postage Stamp Coloring Page](#)