

The American Revolution: The First Shot April 19, 1775: Lexington, MA

Mary Reger Boston Lesson 2009

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Abstract:

The students will learn about the night and morning of April 19, 1775, through poems, stories, letters, and photos. They will learn about the midnight ride of Paul Revere, the role Captain John Parker played, and how the Revolutionary War began. They will analyze primary sources (paintings and letters) and write a letter of their own. They will retell the story in writing in their own words.

Essential questions/enduring understandings:

Who was Paul Revere and how did he help to alert the men who would fight the first battle of the American Revolution? When and where was the first battle of the American Revolution fought?

Assessment:

Using photos the students will retell the story of the day the Revolutionary War began.

Setting the purpose:

Give the students a quiz to activate any prior knowledge they have.

Analysis of sources:

Students will analyze the painting of the battle at Lexington. They will also use photos of historical sites from the first battle of the Revolutionary War to tell the story.

Ties to national primary source:

Students will analyze a letter written about the battle of Lexington and Concord from a colonist's point of view and they will analyze a local letter written by a soldier in the Civil War.

Materials:

- Quiz
- Painting of Paul Revere and the battle at Lexington on web at http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.mce.k12tn.net/revolutionary_war/lexington.gif&imgrefurl=http://www.mce.k12tn.net/revolutionary_war/lesson_6.htm&usq=9gXIUSStVaWXgXXkJWGtiNr9iYxY=&h=248&w=411&sz=72&hl=en&start=3&tbnid=Jkl79mmupnqTaM:&tbnh=75&tbnw=125&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dbattle%2Bat%2Bl exington%26gbv%3D2%26hl%3Den

- *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- *Let It Begin Here: Lexington and Concord* by Dennis Brindell Fradin
- *Studying Visual Sources* graphic organizer
- *Studying Written Sources* graphic organizer
- Photo directions rubric
- Letter from colonist's point of view of the battle <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/c-eight/america/lex1.htm>
- Letters from Civil War soldiers
<http://www.usd116.org/ProfDev/AHTC/lessons/reger/AHTC009.pdf>
- PowerPoint including photos of Paul Revere statue, the Old North Church, two lanterns, statue of John Parker, the Lexington battle field, river in Concord
- Print outs of the PowerPoint with one photo per page

Timeline: 3-5 Days

- Part 1: 1-2 days-What led up to the first shot? Paul Revere and the Old North Church
- Part 2: 1-2 days-Who shot the first shot? The Battle of Lexington.
- Part 3: 1 day-Retell the story of the first battle

Lesson

Part 1:

1. To get the children thinking and to tap into their prior knowledge they will take a quiz about the Revolutionary War. Tell the students to keep their tests handy throughout the lessons so they can correct their test as they learn the answers.
2. After the students have taken the quiz, show the students the painting of Paul Revere website listed in materials needed. Talk about primary and secondary sources. Tell them that since this is a painting it would be a secondary source. Have the students look at the painting and describe what is they see in the painting. Teach them to look at it in all four quadrants to find details. On the overheard complete a *Studying Visual Sources* graphic organizer as a class. Talk about who Paul Revere was; he was a silversmith who was a messenger that warned the people that the Regulars were coming to attack.
3. Read the book *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. If you don't have the book you could read the poem, but the book has very nice illustrations. As you read ask questions and discuss what is going on.

Part 2:

1. Start by reviewing Paul Revere's ride from the previous lesson. Next show the painting of the Lexington battle and have the students complete a *Studying Visual Sources* graphic organizer. When they are done discuss it as a class. Don't tell them it is the battle at Lexington until after reading the book.

2. Show them the book *Let It Begin Here: Lexington and Concord* by Dennis Brindell Fradin. Tell them this story tells what happened next. Have students write predictions of what they think will happen next.
3. Read the book and have an open discussion about the events as you read it. When you are done revisit the painting of the battle and ask what they think the painting is of.
4. Project the letter from the colonist's point of view of the Battle of Lexington and Concord and focus on a few detailed paragraphs and complete the *Studying Written Sources* graphic organizer. Talk about what they are saying in these paragraphs.
5. Give each student a copy of the letters from soldiers from Illinois during the Civil War. The students will complete a *Studying Written Sources* graphic organizer. When they are done talk about what the letters are saying. Tell the students that a good source of historical events are letters people write to each other about the happenings. Talk about how people all over the world write letters and that this is an example of a local person writing a letter and a person in another part of the country. Point out that there were few non-Native Americans living in the Illinois area so it would be very difficult to find a local letter written about the Revolutionary War.
6. Have the students write in their writer's notebook a letter to Paul Revere or Captain Parker expressing their thoughts about what role they played in the first battle of the Revolutionary War. Tell them to ask him questions about the role they played, have them think about what they learned about war from the letters and to ask questions that might elicit these kinds of responses and more.

Part 3:

1. Review what the students have learned the last few days. Show the PowerPoint photos and have the students tell the story of the photos. The teacher may need to scaffold the story.
2. Give each student the six photos and have them write the story of each photo. Tell them they are going to write story they learned over the last few days and the story on each page should include what the photo is about. When the students are done have them read their story to a partner and then have a few read to the class.

Optional:

1. Have the students put on a skit of the story.
2. Have the students write a letter to a current soldier asking similar questions to what is in their letter to Paul Revere or Captain John Parker.