

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

FIRST GRADE LESSON PLAN



Background - Paul Revere's Ride - April 18, 1775

America will celebrate its semi quincentennial on July 4, 2026. That means that less than a year-and-a-half from now, the United States will be 250 years old. South Dakota has been planning various events to join in that celebration and get everyone prepared for the big day. One way of doing that is to mark various events in the American Revolution that preceded Independence Day. One of those events, and one traditionally celebrated by American School Children over the centuries, is Paul Revere's famous ride. Below, please find a simple plan for a first-grade lesson on remembering "...the midnight ride of Paul Revere."

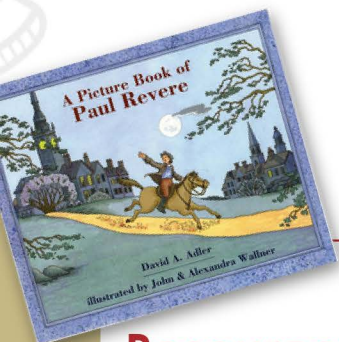
Anticipatory Set

"Alright, first graders, today I'm looking for the meaning of a word. Who can tell me what the word 'anniversary' means?" Students offer various definitions, and the teacher eventually settles on one of them or polishes up the best one.

"Our country, the United States of America will soon be celebrating its 250th anniversary. On July 4, 2026—next year, not this year—America be 250 years old. Wow, that's a long time! On July 4, 1776, our country declared itself independent of England. But that didn't happen overnight. There were several very famous events that led to the declaration. And one of the most famous is the one we are going to learn about today."

Objective and Purpose

- The students will be able to identify Paul Revere as the American colonist who rode his horse to warn the minutemen of attacks by British soldiers in Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts.
- The students will be able to explain the importance of the lanterns hung in the spire of Christ Church to Paul Revere's ride.
- The overall purpose of the lesson will be to acquaint the students with a famous story of the American Revolution in anticipation of the semi quincentennial.



Resources to be Accessed

- "A Picture Book of Paul Revere" by David A. Adler.
- "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. This is one of Longfellow's most famous poems and was often memorized, in part or in whole, by generations of American schoolchildren. The poem is in the public domain and can easily be accessed on the internet through a simple search.

The Lesson

Read Adler's book to the students and discuss the content as you go. Depending upon class engagement and discussion the teacher allows, it should take between 10 and 15 minutes to read to the class.

You may also wish to read part of Longfellow's famous poem, "Paul Revere's Ride." Reading the entire poem would be too much, but reading the first two stanzas and the final stanza will give the students the gist of the work and the tempo of the poem, which young children enjoy even if they don't understand all the vocabulary.

Next explain or re-explain the background of the story: England ruled the 13 American colonies and sent troops to attack the villages of Lexington and Concord because they believed Minutemen (American farmers and others who were ready to fight at a minute's notice) there were fomenting a revolution. Paul Revere convinced Robert Newman to put a lantern or lanterns in the spire of Christ Church to let him know which way the English soldiers would be coming. He would put one lantern in the spire to let Revere know they would be coming by land and two lanterns if by sea. Once the second lantern was lit, Paul Revere rode his horse throughout the countryside, warning his fellow American colonists and especially the Minuteman that the British were coming. As a result, the British and soldiers met on the field of battle and "the shot that was heard around the world" was fired. The American Revolution had begun, and a little more than a year later, America declared her independence from England and her king.

Check for Understanding

Ask the students questions about what you just read. Some may include:

"What did Paul Revere have to do with the Boston Massacre?"

"In what American town did Paul Revere live?"

"Who were the Minutemen?"

"Why did Paul Revere join the Sons of Liberty?"

"What did the two lanterns in the Christ Church spire signal to Paul Revere? What did it tell him?"



Follow-Up Activities

Lessons about Paul Revere's ride are being taught in many places across our country right now. One of the fun things being done to spread the message of the coming 250th anniversary is to hang two lanterns in windows or even spires of local churches. It is part of the "Two Lights for Tomorrow" program started in Wisconsin. Many states are participating.

Consider having your classroom—or as part of an art lesson if your school has elementary art—create paper lanterns to hang up. For an example of such, see the enclosed "Paul Revere Window Lantern Activity" encompassed in this document or look online where you will likely find dozens of different examples, so you can select the one that fits best with your classroom. Ideas would include hanging the lanterns in your classroom windows or sending them home and asking parents to hang them in their homes. Some communities are even finding ways to put them in church spires.

A second possible follow-up is to have students—or perhaps just some students—do what so many schoolchildren have done in the past: memorize part of Longfellow's epic poem. (This is especially powerful if your school is named Longfellow, and we have many examples in our state.) Many children really love to memorize content and take great pride in doing so. If you limit it to the first two and final stanzas of the poem, with each child just memorizing one stanza, the task can be very manageable.

Student-Led Closure

Pair the students up and ask them two questions from the Adler book. Have student 1 answer the first question, responding to student 2. Then ask the second question and reverse the roles.

Standards Assessed

English/Language Arts-Reading: (Grade 1 Students—Informational Text)

- 1.RI.1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- 1.RI.2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- 1.RI.4. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
- 1.RI.6. Identify the difference between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.
- 1.RI.8. Identify the details/evidence an author gives to support points in a text.
- 1.RI.9. Compare and contrast two texts on the same topic. (Only if you use both Adler and Longfellow texts.)

Social Studies:

- 1.SS.8.G. The student tells the story of the French and Indian War, especially the roles of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, and its effects on American identity and sense of unity.
- 1.SS.9.A. The student explains why the colonists believed Great Britain's new claims to control in the colonies violated their rights and freedoms.
- 1.SS.9.B. The student explains how the colonists responded to Great's Britain's new claims of power over them.
- 1.SS.9.C. The student tells the story of the Boston Massacre and John Adam's defense of the British soldiers in the murder trial that followed.
- 1.SS.9.D. The student tells the story of the Boston Tea Party and the response by the British.
- 1.SS.9.E. The student tells the stories of Paul Revere's ride and the Battles of Lexington and Concord.



PAUL REVERE WINDOW LANTERN ACTIVITY



Supplies

- Wax Paper
- Construction paper (brown, yellow, white)
- Tissue Paper cut into one-inch squares (yellow and orange)
- Glue



Prepare

- Measure and cut wax paper to 7x10 inches for each student
- Each student will need two strips of brown construction paper measuring 1 x 7 inches and two strips of brown construction paper measuring 1 x 10 inches for the border of their lantern
- Create circles in brown construction paper for the top of the lantern - one per student
- Pre-cut yellow and orange tissue paper into one-inch squares - enough for 20 squares per student
- Each student will need a 1 x 5-inch strip of white paper for the candle
- Create a flame using yellow construction paper for each student

Step 1:

Attach the brown paper strips along the edge of the wax paper to create a border.

Step 2:

Have students spread glue on the wax paper.

Step 3:

Then add yellow and orange tissue paper.

Step 4:

Position and glue the candle at the bottom center of the wax paper.

Step 5:

Glue the flame to the candle.

Step 6:

Lastly, glue the circle on top of the lantern and hang finished product in the window.

