Paul Revere's Ride





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Paul Revere's Ride

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march By land or sea from town to-night, Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch Of the North Church tower as a signal light,-Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch One if by land, and two if by sea; And I on the opposite shore will be, Ready to ride and spread the alarm Through every Middlesex village and farm, For the country folk to be up and to arm." Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore, Just as the moon rose over the bay, Where swinging wide at her moorings lay The Somerset, British man-of-war; A phantom ship, with each mast and spar Across the moon like a prison bar,

And a huge black hulk, that was magnified By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend through alley and street Wanders and watches, with eager ears, Till in the silence around him he hears The muster of men at the barrack door, The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet, And the measured tread of the grenadiers, Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church, By the wooden stairs, with a stealthy tread, To the belfry chamber overhead, And startled the pigeons from their perch On the sombre rafters, that round him made Masses and moving shapes of shade,-By the trembling ladder, steep and tall, To the highest window in the wall, Where he paused to listen and look down A moment on the roofs of the town And the moonlight flowing over all.



Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead, In their night encampment on the hill, Wrapped in silence so deep and still That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread, The watchful night-wind, as it went Creeping along from tent to tent, And seeming to whisper, "All is well!" A moment only he feels the spell Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread Of the lonely belfry and the dead; For suddenly all his thoughts are bents On a shadowy something far away, Where the river widens to meet the bay,-A line of black that bends and floats On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride, Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere. Now he patted bis horse's side, Now he gazed at the landscape far and near, Then, impetuous, stamped the earth, And turned and tightened his saddle girth; But mostly he watched with eager search The belfry tower of the Old North Church, As it rose above the graves on the hill, Lonely and spectral and sombre and still. And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height A glimmer, and then a gleam of light! He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns, But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight A second lamp in the belfry burns.

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its hear.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides:
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.



It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, black and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the blasting of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadown brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bead
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.

You know the rest in the books you have read How the British Regulars fired and fled,-How the farmers gave them ball for ball From behind each fence and farmyard wall, Chasing the redcoats down the lane, The crossing the fields to emerge again Under the trees at the turn of the road, And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of the steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.





Comprehension



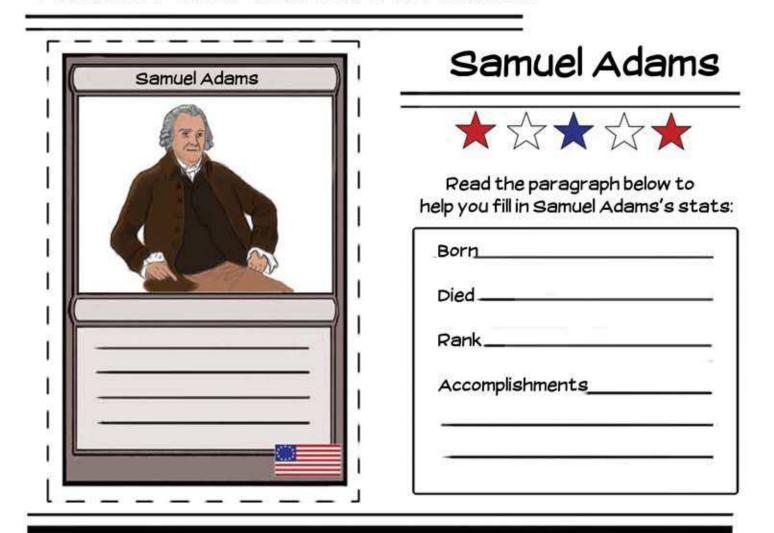
Did you notice any unfamiliar words? Highlight all the words that you don't know and look up theilefinitions.
Vhat is the overall theme of this poem? Discuss.
How does this poem match up to the real events that occurred the morning of the start of the American Revolution? Does this poem exaggerate or leave out information? Explain in 1 to 2 paragraphs.



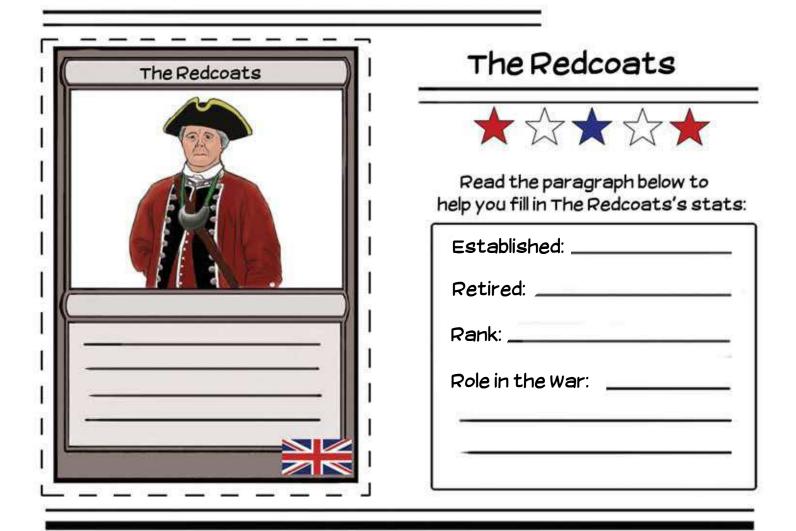
Paul Revere was born in 1735 in Boston, MA. He was the son of a silversmith and ran his father's shop after his father passed away. In the late 1760s he began creating stamps, seals and other paraphernalia for the Sons of Liberty, an organization of patriots who protested the 1765 Stamp Act and were generally anti-British. He soon became a trusted ally and began working for the Massachusetts Committee of Safety. He became most famous for raising the alarm of a British attack on Concord, MA in April of 1775. After the war he resumed his work as a silversmith and engraver. He died in 1818.



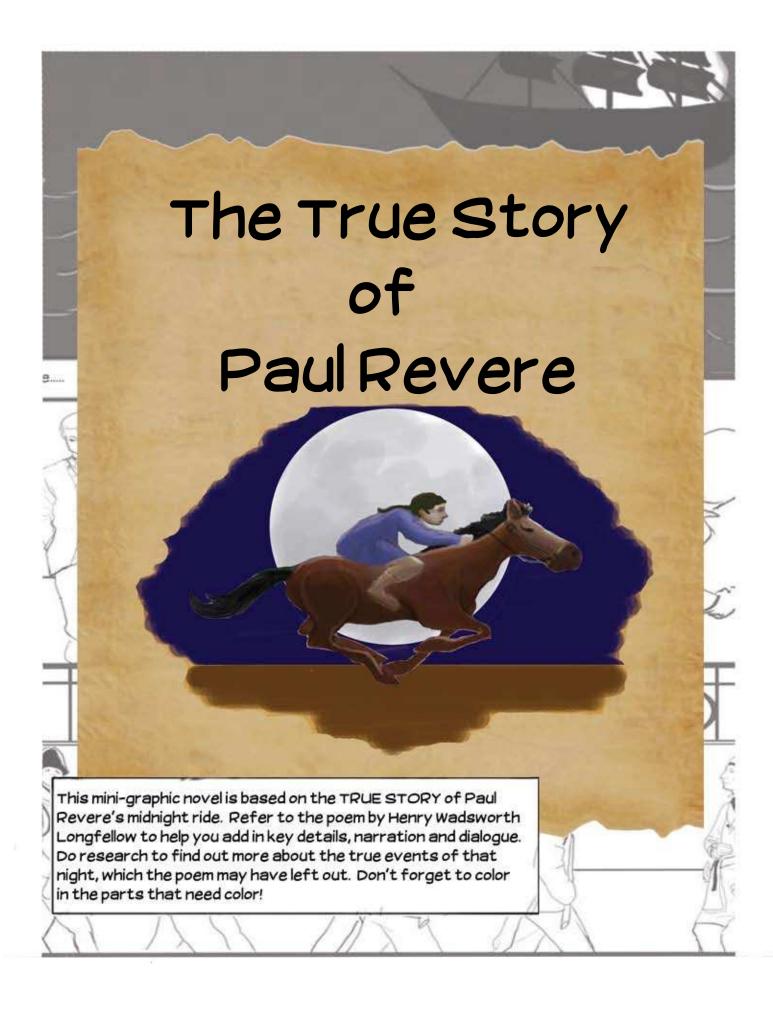
John Hancock was born in Braintree, MA in 1737. After being adopted by a wealthy uncle, he went to Harvard and became a successful businessman. He got involved in politics during the 1760s, and during his life he was elected to serve a multitude of government posts in Massachusetts. He played an important role in the Boston Tea Party and supported the patriot troops during the American Revolution. Hancock was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence, and his signature is still famous to this day. He died in 1793 while serving his term as governor of Massachusetts.



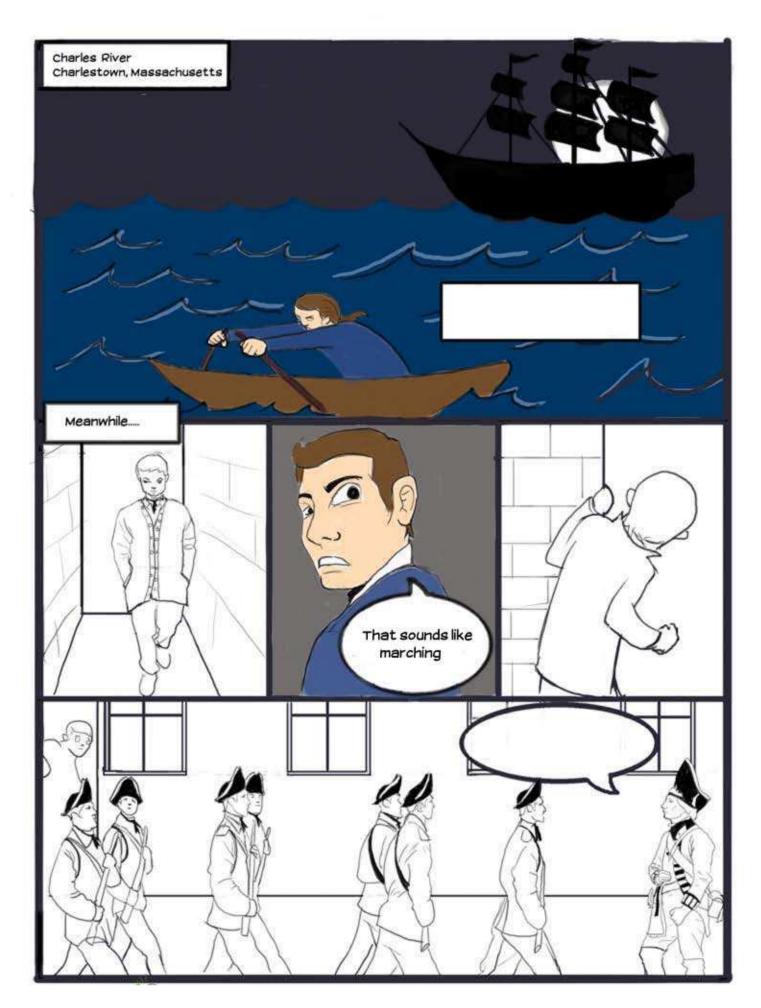
Samuel Adams was born in Massachusetts in 1722, the son of a merchant brewer. He was the cousin of the future President John Adams. He was said to have no skills in business or brewing beer, however he was a great politician. He began his career as a tax collector, and became a big advocate for the merchants of Boston. He later served as a member of the Continental Congress, and supported the patriots during the revolution. He was known to be a great public speaker and zealous patriot. He died in 1803.

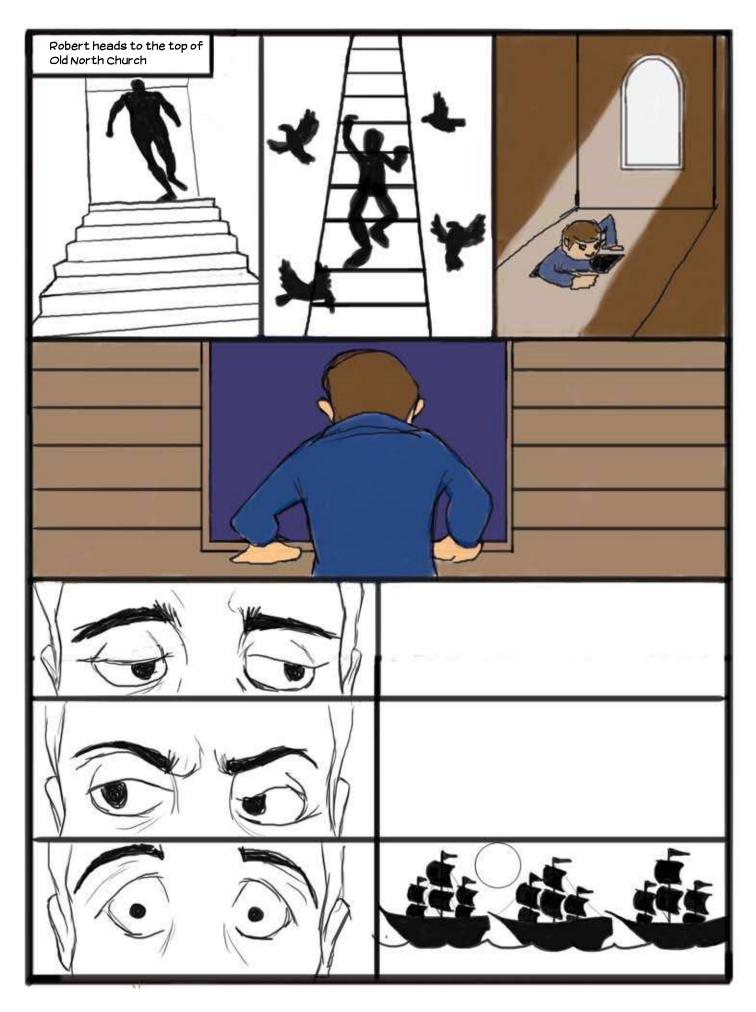


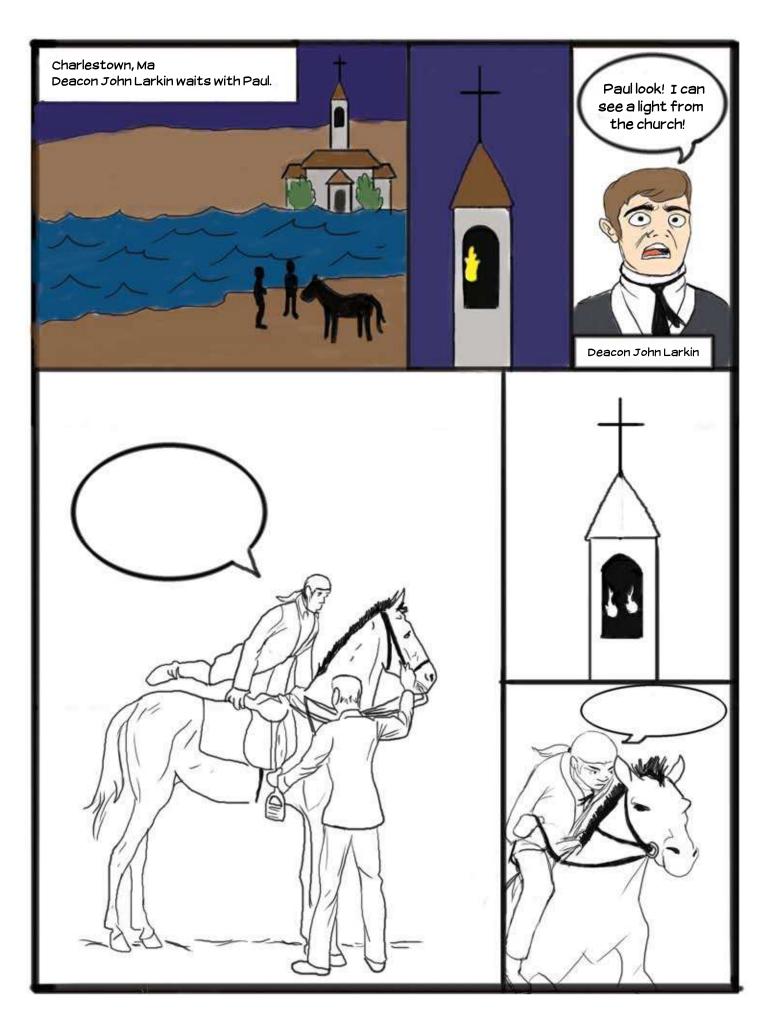
The "redcoats" were the infantry (foot) soldiers of the British Army, nicknamed for the bright red color of their uniforms. These vivid coats were first worn by the new English Army when it was formed in February of 1645; they were used until the late 1800s when the uniforms were changed to a darker scarlet color. During the Revolutionary War, the redcoats battled the patriots for control of the new world colonies, but they lost. The war officially ended in 1783 when the Treaty of Paris was signed and England gave up all control of the United States.











Paul heads to Medford to warn the town of the British soldiers. EVERYONE, THE BRITISH ARE COMING!!!







