

QUICK CARD: “PAUL REVERE’S RIDE”



Reference	<p>“<i>Paul Revere’s Ride</i>,” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (1861) ISBN: 978-0140556124</p>
Plot	<p>On the eve of the battles of Concord and Lexington, April 18, 1775, the British grenadiers muster ranks to begin an organized, surprise attack on the colonists’ arsenals. Paul Revere and a fellow Son of Liberty watch and wait to discover their intent, then spring into action to sound the alarm that will muster the Minutemen and mark the beginning of the American Revolution.</p>
Setting	<p>Colonial Massachusetts’ Middlesex villages. Revere’s ride begins in Boston and ranges through Charleston, Medford, Lexington, and Concord.</p> <p>April 18-19, 1775</p> <p>Midnight and the early morning hours</p> <p>Context: Longfellow wrote this piece during his tenure as America’s poet laureate and on the eve of the American Civil War. This context sheds a new light on possible thematic intentions. Longfellow’s historical narrative suggests that the spark of patriotism that inspired America’s independence and the formation of the union might serve to preserve it in the face of secession. He assumes Revere’s voice to sound his own cry of alarm: Preserve the union!</p>
Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Revere, the colonial American silversmith and member of the Sons of Liberty • His friend, a fellow Son of Liberty • The British Grenadiers
Conflict	<p>Man vs. Society – Although the American colonists demand their rights as British citizens, the British deny them; they plan to disarm the colonists and force them into subjection.</p>
Theme	<p>Liberty The preservation of the union Patriotism</p>

<p>Literary Devices</p>	<p>Narrative Poetry – long, poetic verse that tells a story</p> <p>Alliteration – the repetition of initial consonants in words in close proximity: “The muster of men at the barrack door/ And the measured tread of the grenadiers,/ Marching down to their boats...”</p> <p>Assonance – the repetition of internal vowel sounds in non-rhyming stressed syllables of words in close proximity: “Just as the moon rose over the bay, / where swinging wide at her moorings lay...”</p> <p>Imagery – strong mental pictures evoked by words and sensory language: “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.”</p> <p>Simile – the comparison of unlike things using the words “like” or “as”: “that he could hear, like a sentinel’s tread, / the watchful night-wind, as it went/Creeping along from tent to tent...”</p> <p>Metaphor – the comparison of unlike things without the use of “like” or “as”: “The Somerset, British man-of-war;/ A phantom ship...”; “Beneath in the churchyard, lay the dead, / in their night-encampment on the hill...”</p> <p>Allusion – a reference to a historical event, person, or artistic work outside the text (“You know the rest....”)</p> <p>Symbolism – the use of concrete things to represent abstract ideas; the use of one thing to represent another: “And beneath, from the pebbles, inn passing, a spark/ Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:...”</p> <p>Meter – a regular, rhythmic pattern in poetic verse: Varied meter includes dactyls (/UU), iambs (U/), and anapests (UU/), which work in concert to simulate the sound of the tramp of a galloping horse</p> <p>Rhyme – poetic device that employs like internal vowel sounds, especially in the final syllable of end words in poetic verse: Longfellow begins in rhyming couplets called riding couplets (or sometimes open couplets): hear/Revere, five/alive. He varies this rhyme scheme, however, to include ABAB (march/ tonight/arch/light), ABBA (Church/ tread/overhead/perch), and more complicated, varying rhyme patterns. By assigning a letter to the rhyme sounds, the pattern can be noted by students.</p> <p>Onomatopoeia – the use of sound words: “He heard the bleating of the flock / And the twitter of birds among the trees...”</p> <p>Personification – ascribing human qualities to inanimate objects: “...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!’”; “...And felt the breath of the morning breeze...”; “He saw the gilded weathercock / Swim in the moonlight as he passed,/ And the meeting-house windows, bland and bare, / Gaze at him with a spectral glare...”</p>
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