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Teaching American History Grant
Final Project
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Title of Lesson: *Fact or Fiction: The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*

School District: Reading

Grade Level: Third grade

Time Required: 3+ hours

Historical Context & Background:

The basis of this lesson is centered upon the midnight ride of Paul Revere, which took place on April 18th, 1775. This period of time in our nation's history is famous for the various events, battles, and struggles leading to the Revolutionary War. Prior to April 18th, the tug of war for independence and power had already been set into motion. Several major events, including the Boston Tea Party and the Boston Massacre, had set the stage for an all out war between the fledgling colonies and their mother nation, England. Boston became the major hub of this rebellion, and throughout what would later become New England, Patriots had long ago begun to form a plan, network of support, and militia. There were many important men and women during this time in this area that made major contributions in support of this uprising. Paul Revere, a prominent Boston silversmith and Patriot, was one of many colonists who took part in the many efforts. He was occasionally used as a courier for messages sent among the growing militia and helped the cause in other similar small ways when needed. On the night of April 18th, 1775, Paul Revere was one of many men asked to send an important message to John Hancock and Samuel Adams, two of the Revolutionary leaders, who were staying

in Concord at the time – hundreds of British soldiers had arrived and planned to advance to the areas of Lexington and Concord in pursuit of military stores. Revere, along with fellow Patriot William Dawes, had been summoned by Dr. Joseph Warren that night and asked to carry the message along alternate routes to the same destination. Revere and Dawes both left immediately on their journey to Lexington to alert Hancock and Adams. Once this message was delivered, they were to carry on to Concord to alert the town of the same news. Having successfully relayed the message at Lexington, both men were captured by British soldiers on their way to Concord, they being one of three captured that night. Only one man of the three, Samuel Prescott, was able to escape to successfully carry on the message to Concord. Both Dawes and Revere were eventually released, and the Battle of Lexington and Concord, what would later be referred to as the first official battle of the Revolutionary War, began only hours later.

While the majority of these lessons focus on this information, additionally, students will view the poem about Paul Revere's ride that night written over one hundred years later in 1860 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere. This has since become the most read historical poem in our nation's history, citing some factual information about that night, but this is overshadowed by the romantic exaggerated inaccuracies that plague the greater part of the poem. This poem, also written at a tumultuous time in our nation's history, the verge of the Civil War, portrays Revere as a national hero in hopes that it would help to unify and unite the faltering states.

Essential Questions:

- ✓ *What were the actual events that took place on the night of April 18th, 1775?*

- ✓ *Who were the major players in the mission to alert the surrounding areas in addition to Paul Revere?*
- ✓ *Why do some resources give different accounts of this historical event?*

Learning Objectives:

- ✓ Students will be able to accurately describe the events that took place on the night of April 18th, 1775.
- ✓ Students will be able to identify the motivations and reasons behind the “midnight ride”.
- ✓ Students will be able to identify and describe the major individuals, aside from Paul Revere, who took part in the midnight ride.
- ✓ Students will be able to identify information that is both accurate and inaccurate involving this historical event.

Connections to Historical Thinking Benchmarks of the American Historical Association:

- *Analysis of primary and secondary sources.*
- *An understanding of historical debate and controversy.*
- *An understanding of bias and points of view.*

Learning Activity One: What was the “Midnight Ride”?

Background:

Students have spent time reading and learning about several key events during the Revolutionary Period that led to the beginning of the war, including: The Stamp Act, The Boston Massacre, The Boston Tea Party, etc. Students also have a basic understanding of some of the important American people representing the Patriots during this time period, including, but not limited to: George Washington, John Adams, Sam Adams, and Benjamin Franklin.

Description of Activity:

1. Students will begin this activity by completing an activating graphic organizer (sample attached) about several major revolutionary events that led up to the Revolutionary War. This activity will be completed as a whole class on the Smartboard. Students will be asked to identify the important people involved in the event and asked to summarize the event in one or two brief statements. The

events include: The Stamp Act, The Boston Tea Party, The Boston Massacre, and the Midnight Ride.

2. Students will be familiar with the first three events listed, but will not be familiar with the specifics of the Midnight Ride. This will lead us into the main focus of the lesson.
3. At this time I will read brief excerpts from several picture books (*If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution, You Wouldn't Want to be at the Boston Tea Party, and One If By Land*) about Paul Revere and the Midnight Ride. These excerpts are basic, contain some inaccurate information, and portray Revere as the lone rider of the Midnight Ride. (This initial information about Paul Revere will serve as the basis of the next activity in this lesson.)
4. Once students have seen the information, they will be asked to briefly summarize one of the five W's of the Midnight Ride in a small group on a mini-poster. Once group will describe in writing and illustrations *Who* took part in the Midnight Ride, one group will describe *When*, etc. (see samples attached)
5. When all groups have completed this activity, the posters will be reviewed and displayed in the classroom for "reference".

Learning Activity Two: Comparing and Contrasting the Midnight Ride

1. This activity will begin with a brief recap of information that was learned about the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere during the last activity. To do this, students will complete a Type 2 Quickwrite briefly summarizing the Midnight Ride and sharing their responses with the class.
2. Students will be given Venn Diagrams broken down into several sections: The Warning, Crossing the Charles, Who Participated, The Route, and The Outcome. Students will be instructed to fill out one side of the Venn Diagram using the information they learned in the last activity, and the opposite side of the Venn Diagram with the new information they are shown during the present activity. Any similarities between the two will be written in the middle.

3. On the Smartboard, I will go to the Paul Revere House website. On this site, I will link to the information regarding the Midnight Ride, specifically *The Real Story of Revere's Ride* and *Virtual Midnight Ride*. This site contains primary source documentation of the Midnight Ride through its citing of Revere's deposition of the event in 1775. In addition, there are photographs and well known paintings of the event illustrating these specific links for students to view.
4. As we read and discuss this new information, students fill in their Venn Diagrams, categorizing the information correctly.
5. When this is complete, students will break into partnerships with their Venn Diagrams. Each group will generate a list of questions they have regarding gaps or inconsistencies in information that they learned in the past two activities. They will record these questions on Post-It notes. As groups finish, all of the questions will be collected and displayed on chart paper for future use in guiding the next learning activity.

Learning Activity Three: Fact or Fiction?

1. Students will begin this lesson by reviewing some of the questions that were displayed after the last activity. I am assuming that many of the student questions focused on the discrepancies between the descriptions of the Midnight Ride.
2. This sharing will lead us into a discussion of the major gap in information about this night, focusing on the participants of the midnight ride. Each student will receive a copy of two poems: Paul Revere's Ride by Longfellow, and The Midnight Ride of William Dawes, by Helen F. Moore.
3. Beginning with Paul Revere's Ride, the class will listen to the poem being read as they read it silently to themselves. As they read, students will be asked to highlight information that they already learned (from the Paul Revere House website), and underline information that is new to them or different than what they have seen before. Students will then perform a Think, Pair, Share activity. Think represents the work they have already done, Pair represents the

partnerships, and Share is the portion of the activity where students share their information. Students will be allowed to modify their work (highlighting and underlining) if they feel the discussion with their partner warrants it.

4. As a whole class we will come back together to fill out a giant T-Chart on the Smartboard. (see attached) This time, we will be categorizing information that we know to be fact and we know to be fiction from Paul Revere's Ride to what we learned on the official website using the notes students have taken.
5. I predict that students will have overwhelming amounts of information that differs from the website. When this is complete, I will pose the following question: *Why is Paul Revere looked upon as the hero of the night when there were other men who contributed just as much to the mission?*
6. Using their brainstorming as a basis, I will give students each a copy of The Midnight Ride of William Dawes. As a class we will read this together, and asking students to focus on the facts and emotion in this poem versus Paul Revere's Poem. We will have an open discussion about why historians have chosen to honor Paul Revere and not William Dawes. Through this conversation, I will add information that I have since learned the poem, such as; the time the poem was written, the main reasoning behind the poem, Paul Revere's reputation, etc. My hope is that through this discussion, students will have a basic understanding that historians and historical evidence is often changed or modified to perpetuate an ideal value system.
7. This activity will close with a Type One Quickwrite of the following prompt:
How did you feel learning that some of the information in books you have read is inaccurate, or false? Why do you think that author include this information in their books?

Authentic Assessment: Who's Your Hero?

Description: This assessment will take all of the information that students have learned about the Midnight Ride in the three learning activities and ask them to make a decision. In class, we have talked about the different ways our country honors people who are

heroic or have made significant contributions to our society. We have talked about how one of these ways is to commemorate a person on a postage stamp. Students will be asked to think about Paul Revere and the other men they have learned about who played a role in alerting the people of Massachusetts that night and nominate one of them to be honored on a U.S. postage stamp. For this assessment, students will be asked to design the stamp with a picture of the person as well as at least two important symbols from the American Revolution included in the design. In addition, students will be asked to complete a Type 3 writing assignment explaining, in detail, why they have selected the man they did. They must support their nomination with at least three clearly explained reasons in order to convince the U.S. Post Office that they are making a good choice.

How it will be assessed: This assignment will be recognized as a formal assessment. Through their nomination, and the symbols they chose to design their stamps, I will be able to assess the level of their understanding of the topic, and the contributions of the man they chose based on the examples they use to support their writing. (see attached)

Annotated Bibliography

Cook, Peter. *You Wouldn't Want to Be at the Boston Tea Party!* New York: Scholastic, 2006.

The author uses humor, concise summaries and cartoon illustrations to inform his audience of major points about specific Revolutionary period events in the areas surrounding Boston. Text is designed for an audience of intermediate elementary-aged students.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. *Paul Revere's Ride*. 1860. Available from <http://www.paulreverehouse.org/ride/poem.shtml>; Internet.

Longfellow's poem written one hundred years after the event, focuses on the heroism, courage, and bravery of Paul Revere on the night of April 18th, 1775, as he embarked on a mission to inform outlying Boston communities that the British soldier were approaching. Riddled with inaccuracies, Longfellow's poem serves more as a piece for historical narration and pleasure than a succinct historical representation of the actual events.

Moore, Helen F. "The Midnight Ride of William Dawes". *Century Magazine*, 1896.

This short poem, written nearly twenty years after Longfellow's famous similar composition, written in the first person, breaches the assumed jealousy of William Dawes, another rider on the night of April 18th. The author, though writing as Dawes, takes many liberties in assuming emotions of the man and focuses mainly on the lack of credit given to Dawes who contributed as much, if not more, than Paul Revere himself.

Moore, Kay. *If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution*. New York: Scholastic, 1997.

Historical nonfiction written for an elementary intermediate audience is formatted as a question and answer text. The text answers typically asked questions about daily life during the Revolutionary time period and also identifies influential people and events. Information, though brief, is sufficient for the assumed audience.

Paul Revere Memorial Association. *The Paul Revere House*. 1997-2007, accessed 4 May 2007; available from <http://www.paulreverehouse.org.html>; Internet.

This website, run by the Paul Revere Memorial Association, portrays historically correct information about the life of Paul Revere and contains many primary and secondary sources as support. This website is set-up to accommodate the needs of varying visitors, including teachers, students, and other generally historically interested persons. Featuring a virtual tour of the Midnight Ride, excerpts from Paul Revere's deposition days after the event, and famous paintings and writings associated with Paul Revere, this site serves the needs of any person looking for first person documentation.

Raphael, Ray. *Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past*. New York: The New Press, 2004.

Raphael's book illustrates clearly the many inaccuracies surrounding the founding people and important events of our country and exposes the varied gaps and hyperbole of our history. He highlights the commonly perpetuated myths taught

to our children and asks the question of whether we should be exposing our youth to the “stories” of our country or accurate historical facts.

Stemple, Heidi E.Y. *One if by Land: A Massachusetts Number Book*. Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 2006.

This picture book, written for young audiences, depicts the state of Massachusetts with numbers. Famous landmarks, inventions, people, and places are identified with quantitative data, and then expanded upon with unique and typically unknown information, to introduce young children to the many aspects of the state.

When did the Midnight Ride take place?

Where did the Midnight
Ride take place?

Why did the Midnight Ride take place?

Who took part in the
Midnight Ride?

What was the Midnight Ride?

The Paul Revere House

Longfellow's Poem



Paul Revere's Ride

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 the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower, as a signal light, --
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 stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the somber 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, the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
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 his horse's side,
Now gazed on 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 somber 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 heat.

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, blank 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 bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
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 farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then 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 forevermore!
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-beat of that steed,
And the midnight-message of Paul Revere.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1860.

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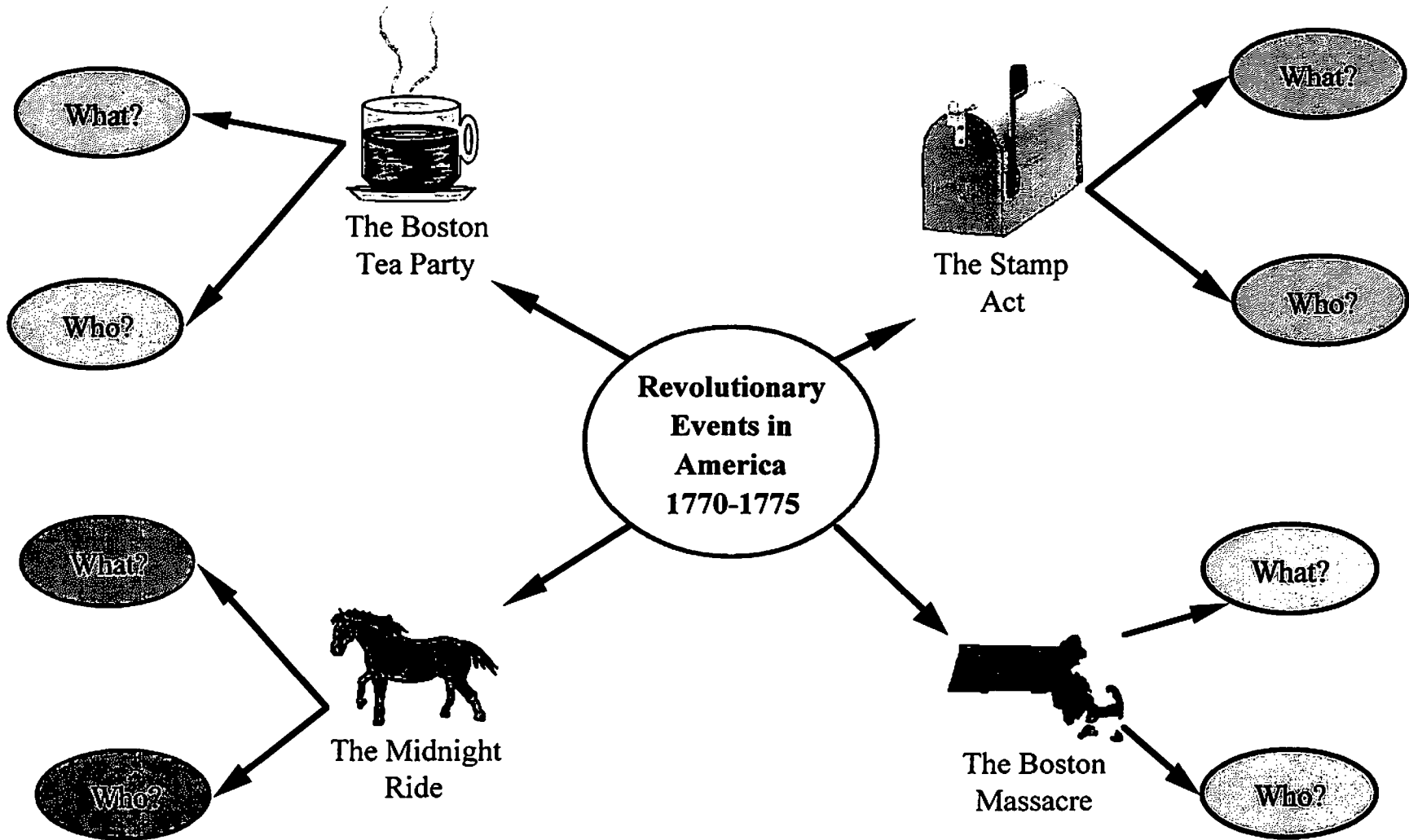
Paul Revere's Ride

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Fact

Fiction

Fact	Fiction



Name _____

Date _____

FCA Strong nomination pts. _____

FCA Supporting reasons pts. _____

FCA Convincing argument pts. _____

Title Who's Your Hero?

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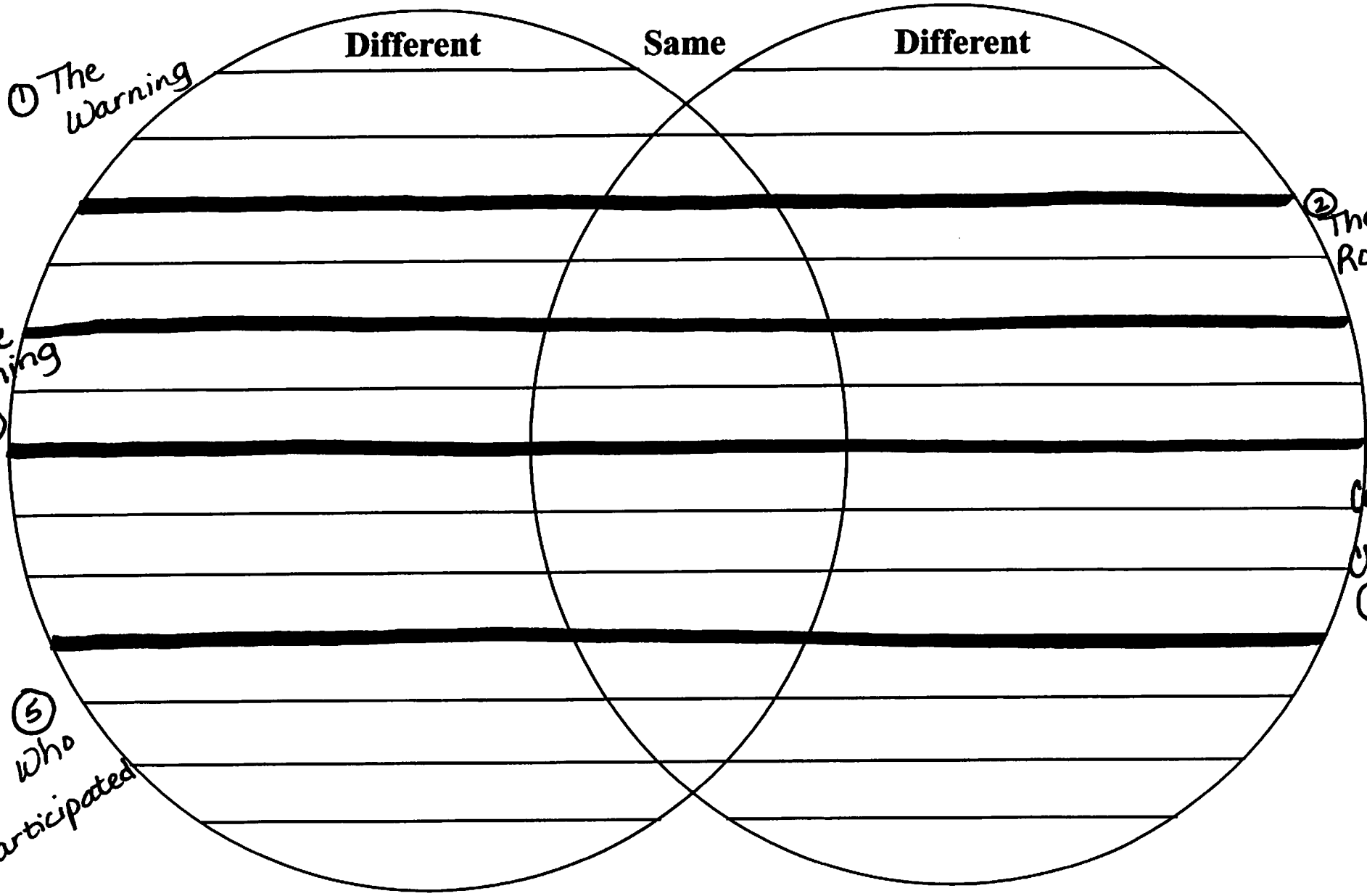
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Topic: The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere

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Venn Diagram

The Midnight Ride of William Dawes

Helen F. Moore,
published in *Century Magazine*, 1896

I am a wandering, bitter shade,
Never of me was a hero made;
Poets have never sung my praise,
Nobody crowned my brow with bays;
And if you ask me the fatal cause,
I answer only, "My name was Dawes"

'TIS all very well for the children to hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere;
But why should my name be quite forgot,
Who rode as boldly and well, God wot?
Why should I ask? The reason is clear --
My name was Dawes and his Revere.

WHEN the lights from the old North Church flashed out,
Paul Revere was waiting about,
But I was already on my way.
The shadows of night fell cold and gray
As I rode, with never a break or a pause;
But what was the use, when my name was Dawes!

HISTORY rings with his silvery name;
Closed to me are the portals of fame.
Had he been Dawes and I Revere,
No one had heard of him, I fear.
No one has heard of me because
He was Revere and I was Dawes.



