Suzanne Keefe
Secondary English
2 May 2007
The Power of Poetry

Rationale
Experiencing poetry adds creative, artistic and emotional qualities to learning that other forms of instruction sometimes cannot. Poetry is by nature subjective, as it involves aspects of language that appeal to and communicate by emotion. What, then, is the role of poetry in reflecting on historical events and personalities? This series of lessons was created to assist students in thinking about the power of poetry and its influence on our understanding of history.

Essential Questions:
♦ How do art and literature contribute to our modern day perspective of historical events?
♦ How different are the portrayals of Paul Revere’s ride as they are represented by: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem; a variety of visual art forms; and in Ray Raphael’s Founding Myths?
♦ What role do art and literature play in shaping our belief systems?

Materials:

Day 1:
Copies of KWL chart
Transparencies of fine art representations of Paul Revere’s Ride
Copies of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem: “Paul Revere’s Ride”
Copies of questions to accompany Longfellow’s poem

Day 2:
Copies of Ray Raphael’s chapter: “Paul Revere’s Ride”
Copies of Venn-Diagram

Day 3:
Copies of Writing Assignment: Writing with Poetic License
Dedicated time in a computer lab with Internet access

Essential Vocabulary:
fiction icon
nonfiction poetic license
narrative poem imagery
emotionally charged words

Objectives:

Knowledge:
Students will recognize the essential difference between poetry and nonfiction.
Students will understand the concept of poetic license.
Students will recognize a variety of purposes in the creation of art and literature.
Skills:
Students will analyze pieces of literature and art and identify emotionally charged images and words. Students will read actively to identify the differences between fact and fiction as they relate to a historical event. Students will create an original example of poetry using poetic license.

Activities:

Day 1:
• Students complete the first column of the KWL chart – identifying what they know about Paul Revere and his role in history. Results are shared with partner and large group. (Access prior knowledge)

• Students analyze visual representations of Paul Revere’s ride displayed on overhead. Whole group brainstorms emotions depicted and details used to establish these emotions.

• Teacher defines the term “poetic license” on the board and provides examples of when it is employed. (definition: the liberties an artist may take in the name of art — breaking rules for the sake of an effect – closely aligned with “artistic freedom”)

Homework: Students read Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem “Paul Revere’s Ride” and complete accompanying questions.

Day 2:
• Students complete second column of KWL chart – identifying what they might “want” to know about Paul Revere and his ride.

• Students participate in active reading by completing the last column of the KWL chart as they read Chapter 1 of Founding Myths: “Paul Revere’s Ride.” This activity can be done independently, in student pairs, or when appropriate, as modeled for the whole group by the teacher.

• Students complete a formative assessment (“Ticket to Leave”) by answering the question: How has your perception of Paul Revere changed over the course of this class period?

Homework: Students complete a Venn-diagram identifying the similarities and differences of Longfellow’s and Raphael’s depictions of Paul Revere and his famous ride.

Day 3:
• Students choose an event or personality that they deem has the potential to become an American icon/legend and research the basic facts.

• Students write a poem based on this event or personality, demonstrating poetic license in their work.
Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework
Learning Standards:

*Language Strand:*
Standard 2: Questioning, Listening and Contributing
Standard 4: Vocabulary Concept Development

*Reading and Literature Strand:*
Standard 8: Understanding a Text
Standard 14: Poetry
Standard 15: Style and Language

*Composition Strand:*
Standard 20: Consideration of Audience and Purpose
Standard 24: Research
### English 2B – Keefe
KWL – Paul Revere’s Ride

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>What I KNOW</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>What I WANT to Know</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>What I have LEARNED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Image #1: www.paulreverehouse.org
Image #3: paul-revere-house.visit-boston-massachusetts.com
"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 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 to the tower of the church,
Up 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, --
    Up the light ladder, slender 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 that flies 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 when the sun goes down.
It was one by the village-clock,  
When he rode into Lexington.  
He saw the gilded weathervane  
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 farmyard-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.

- 1860.
Read Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem “Paul Revere’s Ride” and answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What seems to be Longfellow’s purpose in writing this poem?

2. Who is Longfellow’s intended audience? (Support your answer)

3. How does Longfellow establish his authority on the subject of Paul Revere at the outset of his poem?

4. What is the mood of Longfellow’s poem? Provide at least four adjectives.

5. How is this mood established? Provide three pieces of textual evidence.

6. What qualities does the poet seem to admire in Paul Revere?

7. Longfellow wrote this poem in 1860. Paul Revere’s ride took place in 1775. How might this fact be important?
Paul Revere's Ride
S. Keefe - English 2B

Consider the accounts of Paul Revere's famous ride provided by Longfellow and Raphael. Using the diagram below, record the similarities and differences in their versions of the event.
English 2B – Keefe
The Power of Poetry
Writing With Poetic License

Over the past few days, we have looked at how poetry provides a very emotional platform for communicating events. In terms of Paul Revere’s famous ride, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s narrative poem had a decidedly different feel than Ray Raphael’s nonfiction account of the same event in *Founding Myths*.

**Your Task:** Choose an historical event or personality that you would like to tell the “story” of. Your story will take the form of a narrative poem that is intentionally emotional. In other words, you will be exercising your poetic license. You may choose to present your event/personality in a positive or negative light – praising or discrediting. Your poem can take any form, but must tell a story.

**The Process:**

- Choose a topic
- Research basic facts about this topic and record your findings
- Choose a clear purpose for your writing – what feeling toward your subject do you want to create in your reader?
- Craft a poem that tells your subject’s story – be sure to use emotionally charged words and images

**Suggested Topics:**

- Death of Tupac
- Rosa Parks’ famous bus ride
- Rescue of Jessica Lynch
- Influence of Kurt Cobain
- Barry Bonds controversy