

Lesson 11

From **Paul Revere's Ride** (poem)
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 tonight,
Hang a lantern **aloft** in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signallight,
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....
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 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 **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!

Exercise 1: Context Clues

Read the selection, paying special attention to the words in dark type. These are the Master Words you will study in this lesson. As you read, look for context clues in the sentences and paragraphs around each Master Word. Circle any words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the Master Words.

Master Words

Place a check by words you feel you know; underline words you don't know.

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|--------|----------|
| aloft | linger | mooring | muster | spectral |
| impetuous | measured | muffle | somber | stealthy |

Exercise 2: Using Context Clues

Fill in the form for each of the Master Words listed below with context clues (if any), your definition, and the dictionary definition. If you have difficulty writing a definition, try using the word in a sentence instead.

1. **aloft** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

2. **impetuous** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

3. **linger** Part of Speech: *v.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

4. **measured** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

5. **mooring** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

6. **muffled** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

7. **muster** Part of Speech: *n.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

8. **somber** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

9. **spectral** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

10. **stealthy** Part of Speech: *adj.* Context Clues: _____

Your Definition: _____

Dictionary Definition: _____

• • • Exercise 3: Using Words in Context

Correct or Incorrect: Write **C** on the line if the statement is true; write **I** if the statement is false.

- _____ 1. You would hold **aloft** something you want to hide.
- _____ 2. A **stealthy** action is meant to go unnoticed.
- _____ 3. Birthday parties are usually **somber** events.
- _____ 4. An **impetuous** purchase is carefully planned.
- _____ 5. If you have free time, you might **linger** at your favorite store.
- _____ 6. A vessel that loses its **mooring** will likely stay put.
- _____ 7. **Muffled** tones are likely to draw attention.
- _____ 8. The campaign committee will probably plan a **muster** of volunteers after the election.
- _____ 9. You will likely keep a **measured** pace while ambling through the mall.
- _____ 10. You can expect **spectral** images when visiting the eye doctor.

• • • Exercise 4: Sentence Completion

From the Master Words, choose the appropriate word for the blank in each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided at the right.

1. With ...?... steps, the marching band practiced the program.
2. Colorful flags flying ...?... could be seen on every pole.
3. The ship came loose from its ...?... during the fierce storm.
4. Marta made (a, an) ...?... decision to buy a book.
5. Alan's blood ran cold when the ...?... figure appeared before him.
6. Eva did not ...?... but instead went home immediately.
7. Over two hundred soldiers gathered for the ...?... of troops.
8. Our cat is ...?... She will jump on your shoulder from out of nowhere.
9. He tried to ...?... the sound of his footsteps by taking off his shoes.
10. His sadness was only deepened by the ...?... weather.

• Exercise 5: Related Words and Meanings

The italic words in the sentences below are related to the Master Words. Write the matching synonym from the list on the line following the sentence.

careful

conceal

gathered

lasting

unanchored

1. The old dog became *unmoored* from his routine and wandered aimlessly around the neighborhood. _____
2. The vet had a *lingering* doubt that the dog would get better. _____
3. With *measured* words, he gave Marta the news. _____
4. Marta *mustered* her courage. She knew her pet might not have long to live. _____
5. When the dog died, Marta tried to *muffle* her emotions. _____

• Exercise 6: Similes and Mood

A simile is a comparison that uses the word *like* or *as*. Similes and metaphors are frequently used to create mood or atmosphere. What mood does Longfellow create with the simile in the couplet that describes the British warship? Underline the words that help to create the mood.

A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar.

Can you come up with a simile to create a different mood? Fill in the blanks below to create another simile to describe a ship. Or, if you like, write a simile from scratch. Pay close attention to your word choice. See if your readers can guess the mood you are trying to evoke. Added challenge: create your simile in couplet form using the same meter and rhyme scheme as Longfellow's original.

A _____ ship, with _____ and _____
_____ like a _____

Write About It: Adventure Story

"Paul Revere's Ride" is written in poetic form. But at heart, it is an adventure story—complete with intrigue, suspense, and atmosphere. **Write the opening scene** of an adventure story in poetic form. Use at least five Master Words in your story/poem.