Name:

Miss Arney

English 8 team:

Date:

“Paul Revere’s Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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| 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. | *5* |
| 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; | *10* |
| 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.’ |  |
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| Then he said, ‘Good-night!’ and with muffled oar | *15* |
| 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 | *20* |
| Across the moon like a prison bar, |  |
| And a huge black hulk, that was magnified |  |
| By its own reflection in the tide. |  |
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| Stanza 3Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street, |  |
| Wanders and watches with eager ears, | *25* |
| 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. | *30* |
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| 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 sombre rafters, that round him made | *35* |
| 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, | *40* |
| And the moonlight flowing over all. |  |
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| 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, | *45* |
| 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 | *50* |
| 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 | *55* |
| On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats. |  |
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| Stanza 6Meanwhile, 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, | *60* |
| 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, | *65* |
| 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, | *70* |
| 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 | *75* |
| 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. | *80* |
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| 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, | *85* |
| Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides. |  |
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| 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, | *90* |
| And felt the damp of the river fog, |  |
| That rises after the sun goes down. |  |
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| It was one by the village clock, |  |
| When he galloped into Lexington. |  |
| He saw the gilded weathercock | *95* |
| 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. | *100* |
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| 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 | *105* |
| 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. | *110* |
|  |  |
| 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, | *115* |
| Then crossing the fields to emerge again |  |
| Under the trees at the turn of the road, |  |
| And only pausing to fire and load. |  |
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| So through the night rode Paul Revere; |  |
| And so through the night went his cry of alarm | *120* |
| 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, | *125* |
| 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 that steed, |  |
| And the midnight message of Paul Revere. | *130* |