

Lesson 9:

Topic/skill: Lexington and Concord: What really happened?

Standards:

-*Language Arts Standard 1*- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

-*Language Arts Standard 2*- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

-*Language Arts Standard 3*- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

-*Social Studies Standard 1*- History of the United States and New York: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

Objectives:

-Students will be able to compare and contrast the stories of the colonist and the British soldier of what happened in Lexington and Concord.

-Students will be able to write a journal entry from the point of view of either a colonist or a British soldier.

Materials:

-photocopies of the witness accounts

-SPaRCS handout

Advanced Preparations:

-Make photocopies of the text.

-Create the SPaRCS handout.

-Create questions to ask students through the reading.

-Prepare modifications.

Activating Prior Knowledge:

-Remind the students of the recent lesson during which they read what a colonist and British commander thought about the Boston Massacre. (Were there viewpoints the same? Why/why not?)

-In Paul Revere's Ride, did we learn who first fired "the shots heard around the world"?

Procedure:

1. Review the SPaRCS method, providing a handout to remind them of the acronym.
2. Read using the SPaRCS method.
3. Survey the titles, vocabulary words, and review questions. (What do they tell us?)
4. Predict what the text will be about. (Do you think there will be differences between the two stories? Why or why not?)
5. Read the witness accounts and parts of text pertaining to Lexington and Concord(start/stop).

6. Construct, as a class, a compare/contrast graphic organizer about the differences between the stories (including the number of British soldiers, who was commanding, the number of colonists waiting on the green, the number of colonists that were killed, who fired first, etc.)
7. Review the chart.
8. Ask the students why they think the stories were written so differently.
9. Explain bias.
10. Divide the class in half, with one half writing a journal entry as a colonist and the other half writing an entry as a British soldier.

Modifications:

The teacher will enlarge the photocopied text and SpaRCs handout. The teacher will create a graphic organizer in large print and ask that the student with CP orally provide his/her "entry" to the teacher. The teacher will provide him/her with notes summarizing class discussion and findings after class.

Assessment:

-The teacher will observe the students' usage of the SpaRCs method, note any difficulties that the students have with the reading, and review the journal entry in terms of its factual content. Assign points based on the following checklist (one point per check):

The student:

- makes clear whether s/he is writing from the side of a colonist or British soldier
- uses factual information in the journal entry
- uses empathy and the ability to see things from the perspectives of others in the entry

How to Use the SPaRCS Procedure:

Survey the text's titles, subtitles, and graphics.

Predict the structure of the text – Will it be organized in a compare/contrast, problem/solution, or other manner? Brainstorm about which categories can be used and summarize these ideas.

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Refine predictions you made; then read the text start/stop.
-Ask questions while you read, answer them, and predict the next part of the text.
-Ask yourself if the categories of information in the reading match the categories predicted.
-Ask questions if there is something you don't understand.

Construct and organize categories of key ideas from the text.

Summarize the information using the categories you made. Use a graphic organizer.

From Report to Governor Gage (April 22, 1775)
British Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith

Sir,-In obedience to your Excellency's commands, I marched on the evening of the 18th inst. with the corps of grenadiers and light infantry for Concord, to execute your Excellency's orders with respect to destroying all ammunition, artillery, tents, &c, collected there, which was effected, having knocked of the trunnions of three pieces of iron ordnance, some new gun-carriages, a great number of carriage-wheels burnt, a considerable quantity of flour, some gun-powder and musquet-balls, with other small articles thrown into the river. Notwithstanding we marched with the utmost expedition and secrecy, we found the country had intelligence or strong suspicion of our coming, and fired many signal guns, and rung the alarm bells repeatedly; and were informed, when at Concord, that some cannon had been taken out of the town that day, that others, with some stores, had been carried three days before, which prevented our having an opportunity of destroying so much as might have been expected at our first setting off.

I think it proper to observe, that when I had got some miles on the march from Boston, I detached six light infantry companies to march with all expedition to seize the two bridges on different roads beyond Concord. On these companies' arrival at Lexington, I understand, from the report of Major Pitcairn, who was with them, and from many officers, that they found on a green close to the road a body of the country people drawn up in military order, with arms and accoutrements, and, as appeared after, loaded; and that they had posted some men in a dwelling and Meeting-house. Our troops advanced towards them, without any intention of injuring them, further than to inquire the reason of their being thus assembled, and, if not in confusion went off, principally to the left, only one of them fired before he went off, and three or four more jumped ever a wall and fired from behind it among the soldiers; on which the troops returned it, and killed several of them. They likewise fired on the soldiers from the Meeting and dwelling-houses...

Rather earlier than this, on the road a countryman from behind a wall had snapped his piece at Lieutenants Adair and Sutherland, but it flashed and did not go off. After this we saw some in the woods, but marched on to Concord without anything further happening. While at Concord we saw vast numbers assembling in many parts; at one of the bridges they marched down, with a very considerable body, on the light infantry posted there. On their coming pretty near, one of our men fired on them, which they returned; on which an action ensued, and some few were killed and wounded. In this affair, it appears that, after the bridge was quitted, they scalped and otherwise ill-treated one or two of the men were either killed or severely wounded...

On our leaving Concord to return to Boston, they began to fire on us from behind the walls, ditches, trees, &c., which, as we marched, increased to a very great degree, and continued without intermission of five minutes altogether, for, I believe, upwards of eighteen miles; so that I can't think but it must have been a preconcerted scheme in them, to attack the King's troops the first favorable opportunity that offered, otherwise, I think they could not, in so short a time from our marching out, have raised such a numerous body, and for so great a space of ground. Notwithstanding the enemy's numbers, they did not make one gallant attempt during so long an action, though our men were so very much fatigued, but kept under cover.¹

¹ David E. Shi and Holly A. Mayer, *For the Record, A Documentary History of America*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004) 135-137.

American Account of the Battle of Lexington (April 26, 1775)
The Massachusetts Provincial Congress

Friends and fellow subjects-Hostilities are at length commenced in this colony by troops under the command of general Gage, and it being of the greatest importance, that an early, true, and authentic account of this inhuman proceeding should be known to you, the congress of this colony have transmitted the same, and from want of a session of the hon. continental congress, think it proper to address you on the alarming occasion.

By the clearest depositions relative to this transaction, it will appear that on the night preceding the nineteenth of April instant, a body of the king's troops, under command of colonel Smith, were secretly landed at Cambridge, with an apparent design to take or destroy the military and other stores, provided for the defence of this colony, and deposited at Concord-that some inhabitants of the colony, on the night aforesaid, whilst traveling peaceably on the road, between Boston and Concord, were seized and greatly abused by armed men, who appeared to be officers of general Gage's army; that the town of Lexington, by these means, was alarmed, and a company of the inhabitants mustered on the occasion-that the regular troops on their way to Concord, marched into the said town of Lexington, and the said company, on their approach, began to disperse-that, notwithstanding this, the regulars rushed on with great violence and first began hostilities, by firing on said Lexington company, whereby they killed eight, and wounded several others-that the regulars continued their fire, until those of said company, who were neither killed nor wounded, had made their escape-that colonel Smith, with the detachment then marched to Concord, where a number of provincials were again fired on by the troops, two of them killed and several wounded, before the provincials fired on them and provincials were again fired on by the troops, produced an engagement that lasted through the day, in which many of the provincials and more of the regular troops were killed and wounded.

To give a particular account of the ravages of the troops, as they retreated from Concord to Charlestown, would be very difficult if not impracticable; let it suffice to say, that a great number of the houses on the road were plundered and rendered unfit for use, several were burnt, women in child-bed were driven by the soldiery naked into the streets, old men peaceably in their houses were shot dead, and such scenes exhibited as would disgrace the annals of the most uncivilized nation.

These, brethren, are marks of ministerial vengeance against this colony, for refusing, with her sister colonies, a submission to slavery; but they have not yet detached us from our royal sovereign. We profess to be his loyal and dutiful subjects, and so hardly dealt with as we have been, are still ready, with our lives and fortunes, to defend his person, family, crown and dignity. Nevertheless, to the persecution and tyranny of his cruel ministry we will not tamely submit-appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free..

*By order,
Joseph Warren, President.²*

² Ibid., 137-138.