

WRITING TO THINK

When you are researching something, you need to not just move facts from someone else's book to your page. You also need to think, to come up with your own ideas. And one of the best way to do this is to ask questions and then find your own answers to those questions, even if your answers are tentative: "Maybe it's because..." "I think it is because..." "I wonder if perhaps."

You collect facts, then treat them like clues that can help you solve the mystery of of what it was like back then. You have to figure out - speculate or guess - how the facts about the place or event shaped the way people lived.

The settlers traveled from what is now Missouri toward the west in covered wagons. It was a long - more than 200 miles - and hard trip. Many of them traveled through (what is now) Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Washington before they stopped. They had to cross many rivers like the Platte and others.

Your trying to put clues together about what life was like for the settlers. Think about what you might have felt. Ask and answer questions you have.

*People might have wanted to go around the river.

*How long was the river?

*Look up the answer. - 300 miles

*What would that have meant for people standing on the bank of the river?

We can go back to what was written originally and add what we thought.

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The rivers must have given the people some of their hardest challenges. They probably thought about going around them, but the Platte river is 300 miles long. To go around it would have meant heading north where the winters were much worse. Plus, it would have slowed the trip tremendously. So the settlers crossed the rivers. It must have been scary to to do so, with everything you owned crammed in your wagon, hoping it wouldn't flip over or sink.

WRITING TO THINK STARTERS

"This makes me think..."

"For example..."

"Probably after a while..."

"Probably they..."

"I wonder if..."

"This might be important because..."

"I'm realizing,,,"

"Could it be that..."

Paul Revere's Ride

Paul Revere was a member of the Sons of Liberty, a secret organization that was formed to protest taxes being levied against them by the British. The Sons of Liberty were watching the actions of the British closely so that they could warn the citizens of Boston if there was a British attack. Were they not watching so intently, events might have turned out differently.

It was the evening of April 18, 1775 when Dr. James Warren discovered that British troops - close to 800 - were not only on their way to Lexington to arrest Samuel Adams and John Hancock for the roles in the colonial unrest, but were also planning to head to Concord to confiscate weapons and ammunition being stored there. *It must have caused him great concern to know that what they had feared was about to transpire, yet they probably also felt quietly confident knowing they had a plan in place for this very event.*

The first man Dr. Warren contacted about this was William Dawes, one of the two men who'd been chosen ahead of time in the event riders were needed to relay information. Dawes immediately set off on horseback to Lexington and Concord. Dr. Warren next found Revere and informed him about what he'd seen and that Dawes had already been dispatched. Revere was to take an alternate route to Lexington to ensure that at least one man made it to their destination.

Dawes left Boston around 9:30 pm, taking the southern route across Boston Neck. Revere would leave Boston an hour and a half later at about 11:00 pm. Before leaving Boston, Revere had to cross the Charles River. Doing so was incredibly dangerous as there were British ships with sailors on alert for anyone who might be causing trouble. *Revere summoned up all his courage, proving why he was held in such high esteem,* as he rowed a boat silently to the other side, hiding in the moonlight's shadows to avoid being seen. He was met on the other side of the river, where his fellow patriots provided him a horse for his journey.

As he rode, Revere encountered other Patriots on horseback and asked them to spread the word about the marching British soldiers. He also yelled, "The regulars are coming out," as a warning to all he came across. At 12:05 am on April 19th, a little over an hour after leaving Boston, Paul Revere arrived safely in Lexington. William Dawes got there soon after, arriving at 12:30. After making sure that both Samuel Adams and John Hancock had been warned, Revere and Dawes then began riding to Concord.

On their way to Concord, Revere and Dawes were joined by a third man, Dr. Samuel Prescott. Along the way, the three men encountered resistance from British soldiers. *It must have been disheartening to be faced with the realization that their heroic efforts might be for naught.* Dawes ended up escaping on foot and though Revere was captured, the British soldiers who captured him, believing they were needed in battle, ended up letting him go when they heard the first shots fired in Lexington.

Luckily, Prescott escaped and successfully made it to Concord, where he was able to warn the militia about troops on the way. With this advanced warning, they were able to not only remove the weapons and ammunition that the British sought, but also prepare for battle.