



Day 9 American Revolution  
130 Minutes

Lexington and Concord

# The Battles of Lexington and Concord

Detailed Lesson Plan with PowerPoint Script

**Grade Level:** 5–8

**Time:** 60–75 minutes (with extensions available)

**Unit:** Causes of the American Revolution

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## Lesson Overview

This lesson examines the opening battles of the American Revolution at Lexington and Concord. Using a teacher-led PowerPoint presentation as an anchor, students explore how rising tensions, secret intelligence, and colonial resistance led to the first armed conflict between Britain and the colonies. Students then analyze events through a rich article experience and an interactive exhibit titled *People of Lexington and Concord*, which includes a built-in online or printable scavenger hunt.

The lesson highlights the roles of communication, leadership, and ordinary colonists, while encouraging students to think critically about historical uncertainty—particularly the mystery surrounding Margaret Kemble Gage.

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## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain why fighting broke out at Lexington and Concord
- Identify key people involved in the opening battles
- Describe how intelligence and communication influenced events
- Analyze differing historical interpretations of key moments

- Understand why these battles marked the beginning of the American Revolution
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## Essential Question

How did secrecy, warning systems, and local action turn colonial resistance into open war?

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## Materials

- PowerPoint presentation: *Battles of Lexington and Concord*
  - Article on the Battles of Lexington and Concord
  - Interactive exhibit: *People of Lexington and Concord*
  - Integrated online or printable scavenger hunt
  - Optional article on Margaret Kemble Gage
  - Extension articles on Joseph Warren and Samuel Adams
  - Reading comprehension exercises
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## Lesson Sequence

### 1. Hook and Background Activation (5 minutes)

Begin with the prompt:

What happens when both sides believe they are acting in self-defense?

Briefly review rising tensions between Britain and the colonies. Explain that by 1775, both sides expected conflict, even if neither openly declared war.

- Then, ask students: “**Why do you think this battle is called the Shot Heard Round’ the World?**”

Solicit responses and explain the reason is because the battle started the war that changed world history and led to the birth of the United States.

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## 2. PowerPoint Anchor Instruction (20 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/revwar/lexconcord.pptx>

Use the PowerPoint presentation as the main instructional anchor.

Emphasize that this presentation sets the historical framework for all reading and interactive activities that follow.

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# PowerPoint Script

## Battles of Lexington and Concord

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### Slide 1 – Battles of Lexington and Concord

The Battles of Lexington and Concord were the first armed conflicts of the American Revolution. These events transformed years of protest and resistance into open warfare.

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### Slide 2 – Growing Tensions

Following resolutions made by the Continental Congress, armed conflict seemed increasingly likely. King George III declared the colonies to be in a state of rebellion. British troops had already occupied Boston since 1768.

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### Slide 3 – British Plans

General Thomas Gage was sent to Boston to restore order. He was ordered to disarm colonial militias and arrest Patriot leaders John Hancock and Samuel Adams. British officials believed a large supply of colonial weapons was hidden in Concord.

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### Slide 4 – The March to Concord

General Gage sent about 700 British soldiers under Colonel Francis Smith to march toward Concord. Unknown to the British, most colonial weapons had already been moved to secret locations.

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### Slide 5 – Paul Revere's Midnight Ride

As British troops mobilized, Dr. Joseph Warren warned Patriot messengers Paul Revere and William Dawes. Revere rode through the countryside alerting militia members that British soldiers were on the move.

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## **Slide 6 – Intelligence and Inside Information**

Some historians believe Margaret Kemble Gage, the general's wife, may have shared information about the British plan with Patriot leaders. This possibility raises important questions about loyalty and secrecy in revolutionary Boston.

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## **Slide 7 – The Signal at Old North Church**

Lanterns were hung in the Old North Church as a warning system. One lantern signaled a land route, while two lanterns signaled a sea route. These signals helped riders avoid British patrols.

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## **Slide 8 – Lexington: The Shot Heard Round the World**

British troops arrived at Lexington Green, where colonial militia were waiting. A single shot was fired, though no one knows who fired it. British soldiers then fired volleys and charged with bayonets.

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## **Slide 9 – Losses at Lexington**

Eight Minutemen were killed and ten were wounded. British troops continued marching toward Concord, but colonial militia numbers continued to grow.

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## **Slide 10 – Fighting at the North Bridge**

At Concord's North Bridge, colonial militia confronted British troops. In a turning point, the Minutemen held the bridge and forced the British to retreat.

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## **Slide 11 – The Retreat to Boston**

As British troops marched back to Boston, colonial fighters attacked from behind trees, stone walls, and buildings. The Redcoats suffered heavy losses during the long retreat.

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## **Slide 12 – The Outcome**

By the time British troops reached Boston, 73 were dead and 174 were wounded. The American Revolution had officially begun.

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### 3. Core Reading and Interactive Exploration (20 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/battles-of-the-revolutionary-war/battles-of-lexington-and-concord>

Students read the **article on Lexington and Concord**, then explore the **People of Lexington and Concord interactive exhibit**.

Students complete the integrated **online or printable scavenger hunt**, which directs attention to:

- Key individuals
  - Differing roles during the battles
  - How ordinary colonists shaped events
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### 4. Optional Historical Investigation (10 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/battles-of-the-revolutionary-war/margaret-kemble-gage->

Students read the optional article examining whether **Margaret Kemble Gage** revealed her husband's plans.

Discussion focus:

- Evidence versus speculation
  - Why historians disagree
  - How personal relationships can influence history
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### 5. Extension Readings (Optional)

Students read additional articles on:

- **Joseph Warren** – Patriot leader and intelligence organizer

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/people-of-the-revolutionary-war/dr-joseph-warren>

- **Samuel Adams** – Revolutionary leader and organizer of resistance

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/people-of-the-revolutionary-war/samuel-adams>

Students compare how leadership and communication shaped colonial actions.

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## 6. Literacy Reinforcement Options

- [Battles of Lexington and Concord Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1200
  - [Battles of Lexington and Concord Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1200
  - [Battles of Lexington and Concord Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
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## Closure (5 minutes)

Discussion prompt:

Why did the fighting at Lexington and Concord make compromise nearly impossible?

Exit ticket options:

- One reason the battles changed colonial history
- One person whose actions stood out and why