

The Battle of Lexington

Passage A

In April 1775, General Gage, the military governor of Massachusetts, sent out a body of troops to take possession of military stores at Concord, a short distance from Boston. At Lexington, a handful of "embattled farmers," who had been tipped off by Paul Revere, barred the way. The "rebels" were ordered to disperse. They stood their ground. The English fired a volley of shots that killed eight patriots. It was not long before the swift riding Paul Revere spread the news of this new atrocity to the neighboring colonies. The patriots of all of New England, although still a handful, were now ready to fight the English. Even in faraway North Carolina, patriots organized to resist them.

Samuel Steinberg, *The United States: Story of a Free People* (1963)

Passage B

At five o'clock in the morning the local militia of Lexington, seventy strong, formed up on the village green. As the sun rose the head of the British column, with three officers riding in front, came into view. The leading officer, brandishing his sword, shouted, "Disperse, you rebels, immediately!"

The militia commander ordered his men to disperse. The colonial committees were very anxious not to fire the first shot, and there were strict orders not to provoke open conflict with the British regulars. But in the confusion someone fired. A volley was returned. The ranks of the militia were thinned and there was a general *melee*. Brushing aside the survivors, the British column marched on to Concord.

Winston Churchill, *History of the English Speaking Peoples* (1957)

Passage C

The British troops approached us rapidly in platoons, with a General officer on horse-back at their head. The officer came up to within about two rods of the centre of the company, where I stood.—The first platoon being about three rods distant. They there halted. The officer then swung his sword, and said, "Lay down your arms, you damn'd rebels, or you are all dead men—fire." Some guns were fired by the British at us from the first platoon, but no person was killed or hurt, being probably charged only with powder. Just at this time, Captain Parker ordered every man to take care of himself. The company immediately dispersed; and while the company was dispersing and leaping over the wall, the second platoon of the British fired, and killed some of our men. There was not a gun fired by any of Captain

Parker's company within my knowledge.

Sylvanus Wood, Deposition (June 17, 1826)

Passage D

I, John Bateman, belonging to the Fifty-Second Regiment, commanded by Colonel Jones, on Wednesday morning on the nineteenth day of April instant, was in the party marching to Concord, being at Lexington, in the County of Middlesex; being nigh the meeting-house in said Lexington, there was a small party of men gathered together in that place when our Troops marched by, and I testify and declare, that I heard the word of command given to the Troops to fire, and some of said Troops did fire, and I saw one of said small party lay dead on the ground nigh said meeting-house, and I testify that I never heard any of the inhabitants so much as fire one gun on said Troops.

John Bateman, Testimony (April 23, 1775)

What issue about the Battle of Lexington is discussed in all passages?

Scoring Guide

Score & Description

Acceptable

Acceptable responses indicate that the skirmish was between the British soldiers and the colonists, and a position is offered by each passage that identifies which side fired first. For example:

"The facts about how the battle got started."

- "The bravery of the farmers to stand up for their rights."
- "The shot heard around the world."
- "The British firing on the American rebels."

Unacceptable

Unacceptable responses may include:

- "The fighting and killing"

Acceptable - Student Response

What issue about the Battle of Lexington is discussed in all passages?

The issue discussed in these passages was that British troops were first to fire on the colonial rebels, but most of the time there was no return fire.

What issue about the Battle of Lexington is discussed in all passages?

Who fired the first shot.

Scorer Comments:

Both responses identify a key issue discussed in all of the passages with the first response providing a bit more detail.

Unacceptable - Student Response

What issue about the Battle of Lexington is discussed in all passages?

The issue of marching and the British are discussed in all the passages. In each passage there is always something about a commander

What issue about the Battle of Lexington is discussed in all passages?

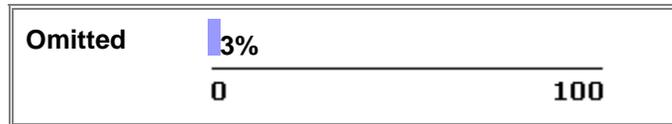
That people were killed in each one (passage)

Scorer Comments:

Both responses are too general to receive credit. They do not isolate key issues and show no interpretation of the texts.

1992 National Performance Results

Score	Percentage of Students
Unacceptable	32%
Acceptable	65%



Note:

- These results are for public and nonpublic school students.
- Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Reading for Information

- Involves the engagement of the reader with aspects of the real world

Reading for information is most commonly associated with textbooks, primary and secondary sources, newspaper and magazine articles, essays, and speeches. Some features that distinguish informational text from literary text are organization and the way information is presented. Informational text is organized by topic and supporting details, whereas literary text is organized by the structure of a story, poem, or drama. Informational texts may have boldface headings, graphics, illustrations, and captions that signal importance in the text. However, some commonalities exist between literary and informational text and the skills and strategies required for reading each. Both require people to critically analyze the text, reflect on it, and draw conclusions.

When reading for information, readers need to know the specific text patterns, or forms of organization (e.g., cause and effect, sequential order, comparison/contrast, opinion and supporting arguments), to develop understanding. People frequently have different purposes for reading text of this nature—for example, to find specific pieces of information, answer a question, or get some general information when glancing through a magazine article. Reading informational text calls for orientations to the text that differ from those used in reading for literary experience because readers are specifically focused on acquiring information. When people read for information, they may select parts of the text they need, rather than reading from beginning to end.

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Aspects of Reading

Forming a General Understanding

To form a general understanding, the reader must consider the text as a whole and provide a global understanding of it. Students may be asked, for example, to demonstrate a general understanding by giving the topic of a passage, explaining the purpose of an article, or reflecting on the theme of a story. Tasks and questions that measure this aspect of reading include the following:

- Write a paragraph telling what the story/poem is about.
- Which of the following is the best statement of the theme of the story?
- Write a paragraph telling what this article generally tells you.
- What is this text supposed to help you do?
- What would you tell someone about the main character?

