

# The Midnight Ride of Sybil Ludington

A thrilling story set during the American Revolution

## About the Story

**Lexile® Measure** 1050L (captions only)  
For qualitative complexity factors, go to  
Scope Online.

**Learning Objective:** to summarize  
the events of a play in the form of a  
newspaper article

**Featured Skill:** summarizing

**Additional skills covered in this  
lesson plan:** author's craft,  
interpreting text, character

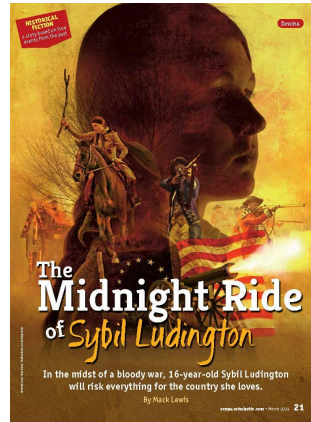
### Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to be underestimated?
- What makes someone courageous?
- What does it take to change long-held ideas?

### Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core Anchor Standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, W.2, SL.1

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



## Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at [scope.scholastic.com](https://scope.scholastic.com).

### Audio:

- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

### Video:

- Virtual Field Trip

### Connected readings from the Scope archives:

- Women's History: Stories of Trailblazers

### Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions
- Featured Skill: Summarizing
- Choice Board
- **Core Skills Workout:**
  - Inference
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- Quiz\*

\*Available on two levels

# Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

## 1. Prepare to Read (25 minutes)

### Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *Continental soldiers, incursion, militia, musket, muster, Redcoats, regiment*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

### Watch a Video (15 minutes)

- Project the **Virtual Field Trip** video in which author Lauren Tarshis takes you and your students on a virtual trip to the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia.

## 2. Read and Discuss (55 minutes)

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the As You Read box on page 22 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class.
- Divide students into groups to discuss the following **Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking** questions, which are also located in the Resources tab.

### Close-Reading Questions (25 minutes)

*The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.*

- In the prologue, 1777 is described as “a dangerous and violent time.” How is this statement supported in Scene 1?** (author’s craft) *This statement is supported by the mood of Scene 1, which is tense and fearful. A mysterious traveler appears on a “damp, moonless night,” creating an ominous feeling. When Sybil hears a knock, her need for caution is apparent from the way she “cracks” the door open. Her family is “tense with fear.” Crosby is slow to reveal his*

identity, and when he does, he reminds the family that the dangers of the war are real. The characters' behavior shows that they are living in "a dangerous and violent" time.

2. **In Scene 1, Sybil says, "One cannot be brave if one is fearless, Mr. Crosby." What does she mean?** (interpreting text) Mr. Crosby implied that Sybil was brave because she wasn't afraid of anything. Sybil is making the point that bravery means overcoming fear, not being fearless. She's letting Crosby know that she is afraid, but that it won't stop her from protecting her family.
  3. **Why does the Colonel agree to let Sybil raise the militia?** (character) He seems to agree for two reasons. First, the militia must be raised, and there isn't anyone else who can do it. Second, he has faith in Sybil. When the messenger says, "You have sent her to her doom," the Colonel responds, "You do not know my Sybil," implying that he is confident in her abilities.
  4. **Which events in the play show that Sybil is both mentally and physically tough?** (character) Sybil shows her mental toughness in Scene 2, when Prosser shows up; she's in danger but quickly thinks of a plan to keep her family safe. In Scene 4, she shows physical toughness when she keeps going even after hurting her ankle. And in Scene 5, her courage helps her escape from the bandits.
- As a class, discuss the following questions.

### Critical-Thinking Questions

(5 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

1. **What can be learned from the story of Sybil Ludington?** Sybil's story highlights the importance of not judging or underestimating someone based on their gender or age. When Sybil wanted to help protect her country, Sybil was met with resistance because she was a teenage girl. Ultimately, she proved to those who doubted her that she was just as capable as any boy, as she stated to her mother in Scene 1. Students may also say that Sybil's story highlights the importance of courage, bravery, and standing up for what you believe in.
2. **Identify three things you learned about life during the American Revolution from the play.** Students may say that you can learn from the play that the American Revolution was a dangerous time in history and that life during it was difficult. Men were often away at war, leaving their wives and children at home to defend the house. Sometimes, neighbors fought neighbors, because not all of the colonists wanted to separate from England. Girls and women were forbidden from fighting. If you needed to spread information quickly, the best way to do it was on horseback.

### 3. Write About It: Summarizing

(45 minutes)

- Have students complete the **Featured Skill Activity: Summarizing**. This activity will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 26 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

*It's May 1777, and you are a reporter for The Patriot Gazette. Write an article about what Sybil Ludington did, the outcome, and what was special about her actions.*

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. (Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine, differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story or article.)

#### Connected readings from the Scope archives:

- [Women's History: Stories of Trailblazers](#)