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POETRY (MANDATORY)
AND
BJE VOCABULARY (GET A HEAD
START)

FOR

INCOMING GRADE 8

SUMMER 2010

BE SURE TO KEEP THIS PACKET
AND
BRING IT TO SCHOOL
WHEN
YOU RETURN IN SEPTEMBER!

My Excellent Education

How to juggle.
How to hop.
How to make
my knuckles pop.

How to whinny.
How to cluck.
How to talk
like Donald Duck.

How to wiggle
both my ears.
How to fake
convincing tears.

How to yo-yo.
Capture flies.
Roll my tongue
and cross my eyes.

How to make a
piggy snout.
How to make
my eyes bug out.

These are things
I learned in school.
Education—
Ain't it cool?

■ Ken Nesbitt

This poem appears in the book
Revenge of the Lunch Ladies

Walt Whitman (1819–1892). *Leaves of Grass*. 1900.

O Captain! My Captain!

1

O CAPTAIN! My Captain! our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:
 But O heart! heart! heart!
 O the bleeding drops of red,
 Where on the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

2

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
 Here Captain! dear father!
 This arm beneath your head;
 It is some dream that on the deck,
 You've fallen cold and dead.

3

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;
From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won;
 Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
 But I, with mournful tread,
 Walk the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
1807-1882

Written April 19, 1860; first published in 1863 as part of "Tales of a Wayside Inn"

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.
He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,--
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."
Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.
Meanwhile, his friend through alley and street
Wanders and watches, with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.
Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,--
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,--
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.
Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now he gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns.
A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, black and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadow brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled,---
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;=
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,---
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

Questions for Ken Nesbitt's "My Excellent Education."

Read the poem included in the packet and answer the following questions.

1. List five different things that the author learned while he was in school.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____

2. Did you find the things on the author's list surprising? Explain.

3. What poetic devices does the poet use to make this poem interesting to a listener?

4. How do you think the author feels about school?

5. Not including the poems in this packet, what is your favorite poem in the world? Give one reason why.

Questions for "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Read the poem included in the packet and answer the following questions.

1. A narrative poem is a poem that tells a story. What story does this poem tell? Who is the main character, what does he do, and how does he do it? Be specific.

2. What is the signal that Paul Revere is looking for, and what does it mean?

3. List three towns that Paul Revere visited.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. What message does Paul Revere deliver to the towns?

5. In what ways is this ride a significant historical event? In other words, why should modern American students know about this event?

Questions for "O Captain! My Captain!" Walt Whitman
Read the poem included in the packet and answer the following questions.

1. What has happened to the Captain? Why is this event so unfortunate?

2. How did the author feel about the Captain and how did you know he felt this way?

3. This poem is actually a metaphor, the Captain really represents a famous person in American history. Take a guess, or find out, who the Captain is. Give the reasons for your answer below.

4. Both poems, "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" and "Oh Captain, My Captain" are historically significant. Why do you feel people write poems that are historically significant?

**BJE Vocabulary List:
100 Words to Learn and Know**

Sometime in September/ October of 2010, we will be studying and learning these words in preparation for our BJE high school entrance exam. We encourage you to start studying and learning them this summer. Creating flash cards to study from is a great idea, as well, as you will be asked to make these cards for homework.

1. **abhor**: to hate (v)
2. **abolish**: to put an end to; to get rid of (v)
3. **abominable**: very hateful (adj)
4. **abruptly**: suddenly or unexpectedly (adv)
5. **abstract**: existing in the mind rather than in reality; a concept or idea rather than a concrete thing (adj)
6. **adept**: expert at; very skilled (adj)
7. **adverse**: opposing; unfavorable (adj)
8. **agility**: the power to move or think quickly and easily (n)
9. **agony**: extreme pain; intense physical or emotional suffering (n)
10. **allusion**: an indirect reference to something or someone else (n)
11. **ambiguous**: having multiple possible meanings or interpretations (adj)
12. **ambivalent**: uncertainty; inability to make a choice (adj)
13. **belligerent**: having a warlike spirit (adj)
14. **benign**: harmless; gentle; kind (adj)
15. **bias**: prejudice; leaning toward one side or the other (n)
16. **clarity**: the quality of being clearly expressed (n)
17. **compassion**: feeling of sympathy or sorrow for someone who is suffering (n)
18. **compulsory**: required; mandatory (adj)
19. **condemn**: to pronounce guilty; to indicate strong disapproval of (v)
20. **condone**: to overlook; to allow (v)
21. **confidential**: secret (adj)
22. **contradict**: to deny; to argue against another's claim (n)

23. **cumulative**: increasing or growing from the addition of new parts (adj)
24. **dawdle**: to waste time; to move slowly (v)
25. **deceive**: to mislead or trick (v)
26. **defective**: having a flaw; imperfect; broken (adj)
27. **deficient**: not having an sufficient supply or amount; lacking (adj)
28. **deft**: skillful (adj)
29. **delusion**: a false belief or opinion, especially one with strong evidence against (n)
30. **deplete**: to decrease; to lessen the supply (v)
31. **despair**: deep hopelessness (n)
32. **dexterity**: skill and grace in physical movement (n)
33. **dilapidated**: in a state of ruin or decay (adj)
34. **diligence**: steady and persistent effort (n)
35. **disheveled**: untidy; unkempt; disarranged (adj)
36. **dislodge**: remove or force out of a particular place (v)
37. **dodge**: to move aside or change position suddenly, as if to avoid something (v)
38. **drivel**: childish, silly, or meaningless talk (n)
39. **emit**: to give or send out (as with liquid, light, heat, sound, etc.) (v)
40. **endurance**: the ability to handle hardship or stress; the strength to continue (n)
41. **evacuate**: to remove persons from a place for reasons of safety (v)
42. **exhaustive**: performed comprehensively and completely; thorough (adj)
43. **fringe**: an outer edge; something considered extreme in relation to something else (n)
44. **illusion**: false mental image; something that deceives by producing a false or misleading impression of reality (n)
45. **implore**: to beg urgently (v)
46. **inadvertent**: unintentional; careless (adj)
47. **indifferent**: not caring; without interest; not mattering one way or the other (adj)

48. **inevitable**: certain to happen; unavoidable (adj)
49. **inhabit**: to live in (v)
50. **innate**: existing in one from birth; natural (adj)
51. **isolation**: complete separation from others (n)
52. **jeopardy**: danger; Risk of loss or injury (n)
53. **jovial**: jolly; merry; joyful; full of good nature (adj)
54. **languish**: to be or become weak or feeble (v)
55. **lunacy**: insanity; extreme foolishness (n)
56. **luscious**: highly pleasing to the senses (often taste or smell) or to the mind (adj)
57. **misspend**: waste; spend unwisely (v)
58. **modify**: to change; to make less harsh or extreme (v)
59. **nonchalant**: unconcerned, indifferent, or unexcited; casual (adj)
60. **objective**: goal; something you are trying to accomplish (n)
based on facts; unbiased; fair; not influenced by personal feelings (adj)
61. **obscure**: not clear; hard to understand (adj)
to make unclear or less visible; to hide by confusing (v)
62. **obstruct**: to block with an obstacle; to get in the way (v)
63. **omit**: to leave out; to fail to mention (v)
64. **penalize**: to punish; to subject to a penalty (v)
65. **penitent**: feeling or expressing sorrow for sin or wrongdoing; remorseful (adj)
66. **perplex**: to confuse mentally; to make someone unable to understand (v)
67. **pious**: religious (adj)
68. **plunder**: to rob, especially during a war; to take wrongfully (v)
the property taken during "plundering" (n)
69. **posterity**: future generations of people; a person's descendents (n)
70. **proficient**: advanced or expert in any art, science or subject; skillful (adj)
71. **prolific**: producing in large quantities or with great frequency (adj)
72. **prudent**: having common sense; careful in providing for the future; wise and thoughtful (adj)

73. **ramble**: to wander around without a clear purpose or destination (v)
to talk or write in an aimless way (v)
74. **recalcitrant**: resisting authority; not obedient (adj)
75. **recall**: to remember; to bring back; to ask to return (v)
76. **reminisce**: to remember and share past experiences and events (v)
77. **resume**: to start again after interruption; to continue (v)
78. **retrieve**: to get back or regain (v)
79. **rivalry**: competition, often marked by jealousy (n)
80. **scorn**: open display of intense dislike (n)
to treat with hate; to mock (v)
81. **skeptical**: having or showing doubt; questioning (adj)
82. **solemn**: very serious and without cheer (adj)
83. **squelch**: to crush down; to squash; to silence (v)
84. **stifle**: to crush or end by force; to smother (v)
85. **subjective**: taking place in a person's mind—often an opinion; personal; [the opposite of the adjective form of **objective**] (adj)
86. **superfluous**: unnecessary or excessive; beyond what is required (adj)
87. **swift**: moving or able to move with great speed; quick (adj)
88. **tangible**: real; something that is able to be touched (adj)
89. **tenacious**: determined; holding tightly to something (adj)
90. **tepid**: lukewarm; without enthusiasm (adj)
91. **throng**: large group of people crowded together; crowd (n)
92. **uncanny**: beyond the normal; extraordinary (adj)
93. **uncompromising**: inflexible; stubborn; unwilling to compromise (adj)
94. **valid**: reasonable; effective (adj)
95. **venerate**: to treat with great respect (v)
96. **verify**: to prove the truth of; to confirm (v)

97. **vigilant**: awake and alert; watchful to possible danger (adj)

98. **vigor**: strength; healthy physical or mental energy; enthusiasm (n)

99. **vivid**: bright or intense; full of life (such as a color, light, etc.) (adj)

100. **wane**: to decrease in strength, size, amount, power, intensity (etc) (v)