



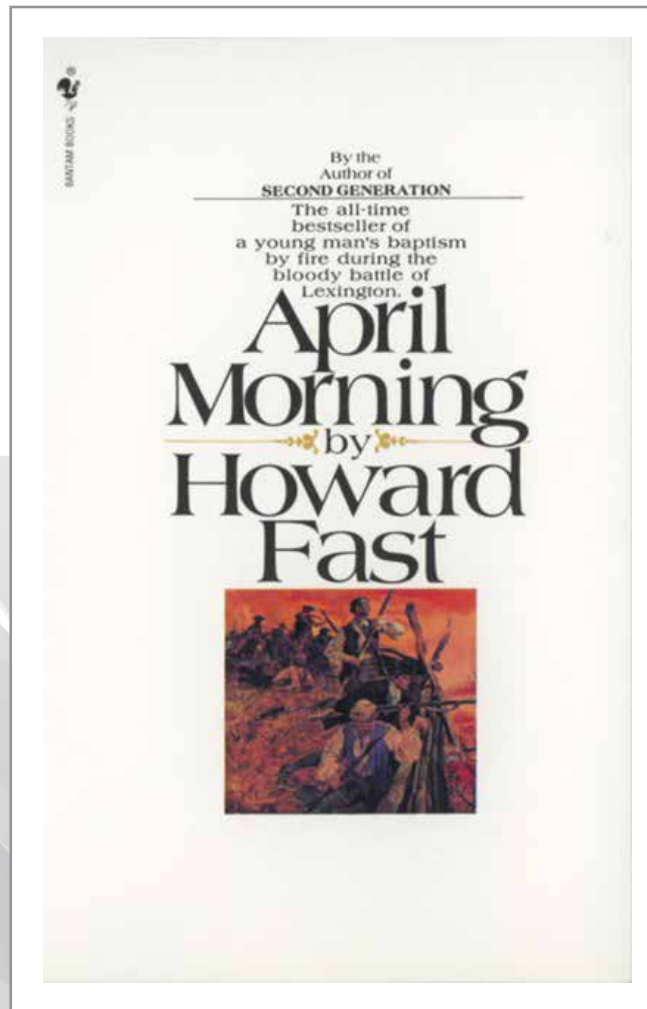
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 6-8**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# April Morning

Howard Fast



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# April Morning

Howard Fast

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying  
and categorizing, evaluating,  
analyzing details

### Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,  
cause/effect, inference

### Writing

Descriptive, narrative,  
comparison/contrast, letters,  
advertisement, journal entry

### Vocabulary

Antonym/synonym, context,  
root words, prefixes/suffixes

### Listening/Speaking

Debate, monologue,  
participation in discussion,  
participation in cooperative  
groups

### Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot,  
conflict

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### ***Summary of April Morning:***

*April Morning* tells the story of a young man, Adam Cooper, and the events of April 19, 1775. The book is historical fiction; it replays for the reader the factual events of the beginning of the American Revolution at the Battle of Lexington.

Adam Cooper experiences this day with conflicting emotions of excitement and sadness. The events of this day forever change the course of American history. For Adam, childhood is suddenly a part of the past. Overnight he must assume the responsibilities of adulthood. This is both a painful and stirring transition.

### ***About the Author:***

Howard Fast was born and educated in New York City. He worked at several odd jobs and as a page in the New York Public Library before having his first novel published in 1932 at age 18. Since then he has been a writer in a variety of forms, in World War II as a war correspondent and later as a foreign correspondent for newspapers and magazines. He has written numerous books for adults and adolescents, winning many awards.

### ***Instructions Prior to Reading:***

Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with this unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that the discretionary choices made are the most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range of activities has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Initiating Activities. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

### ***Initiating Activities:***

1. Look at the cover and title of the book. What are your guesses about the book? Make a list to verify as you read the book.
2. Read the book cover “teaser” aloud. (“The all-time bestseller of a young man’s baptism by fire during the bloody battle of Lexington.”) What is a “teaser”? What ideas does the teaser give you about the book?
3. Concept Map: Write **Freedom** at the center of a large piece of paper. Brainstorm. Have students generate any ideas that come to mind when they hear the term, helping students organize them into categories such as speech, government, taxation without representation, antonym, synonym, etc. Draw “wagon spokes” around the central concept to connect with the supporting ideas or categories. (Encourage students to add to the chart during and after their reading of the novel.)

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**Recommended Procedure:**

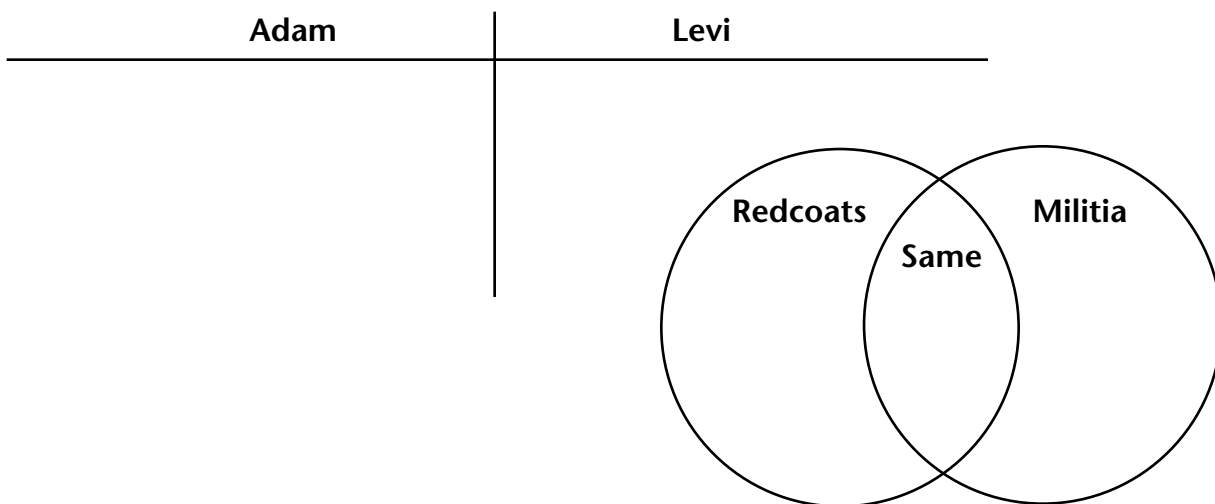
We are offering some “tools” that will help facilitate your use of this guide.

**Bloom’s Taxonomy:** A classification system for various levels of thinking. Questions keyed to these levels may be:

- *Comprehension questions*, which ask one to state the meaning of what is written;
- *Application questions*, which ask one to think about relationships between ideas such as cause/effect;
- *Evaluation questions*, which ask one to judge the accuracy of ideas;
- *Synthesis questions*, which ask one to develop a product by integrating the ideas in the text with ideas of one’s own.

**Graphic Organizers:** Visual representation of how ideas are related to each other. These “pictures”—including Venn diagrams, the T-diagram, brainstorming, cluster circles, flow charts, attribute webs, etc.—help students collect information, make interpretations, solve problems, devise plans, and become aware of how they think.

A variety of possible answers should be listed by the teacher, either on large sheets of paper or the chalkboard. Only then should the students be asked to develop their own graphics. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, and to state what they know about a topic. The teacher lists these opinions and “facts” and later, as the students read and research, discovery may be made that some of their ideas are incorrect. These ideas may be crossed out on the sheets or board. Students should be encouraged to elaborate on their answers, justify their opinions, prove their predictions, and relate what they have read to their own lives.



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*be like the Papist or the High Church people who “cringed and groveled before the clay and plaster images...”*)

9. How does Granny treat her son (Adam’s father) at dinner? *(Pages 17-18, She scolds Adam’s father about his foolish treatment of his son and gives him a sermon about pride.)*
10. Why is Adam’s father so angry with him at dinner? What reasons does he give for his outrage? *(Page 17, Because Adam has used the spell on the water; the family prides itself on book learning—they are not ignorant.)*
11. Why is Mrs. Cooper’s grandfather Isaac an embarrassment to the family? *(Page 19, He had kept one wife and family in Boston and another wife and family in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia wife was one half Shawnee Indian and had not been baptized.)*
12. Why has Joseph Simmons stopped by the Cooper house? *(page 20, to go to the committee meeting with Adam’s father and to read over his statement on the rights of man) Why do you think Moses Cooper does not like what Joseph has written?*
13. How does Adam feel about his father? Is this true? *(Page 23, He feels that his father hates him. Granny says it is not so. “...what a fuss to make over a cantankerous man who’s enamored with the sound of his own voice!”)*
14. Why is Adam’s brother Levi scared of him? *(Page 24, He has told his father about Adam and the spell over the water. He is afraid Adam will beat him.)*
15. What words might you use to describe Levi? *(pest and tattletale)*

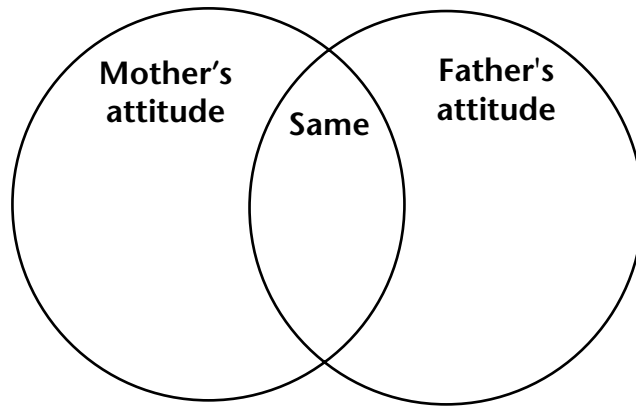
**Prediction:**

Will Adam resolve his problems with his father? How will he prove that he is a man?

**Supplementary Activities:**

1. Writing: Write a short paper in which you reflect on the following three questions.
  - a) Who can you talk to in your family? Does anyone in the Cooper family remind you of anyone in your family?
  - b) Describe the evening dinner at your house. How does it compare to the blessing and conversation around the Coopers' table?
  - c) Do your mother or father ever “get on your case”? Why? Over what? Does brother Levi remind you of anyone in your family?

- 
- Adam asks about his father, "Why does he hate me so?" (page 23) Does Adam's father hate him? Decide for yourself and prepare to argue your case and defend your answer.
  - Compare and contrast the mother's and father's attitude and actions towards Adam. How are they similar? How are they different? Use a Venn diagram to organize your thoughts.



- Describe the most vivid or memorable scene in this chapter.
- Rename the title of this chapter.
- Art Connection: Illustrate one scene from this chapter. Be sure to caption your illustration.
- Begin attribute webs for Adam and his father. (See page 11 of this guide.)

## Teacher Information

### *Literary Analysis—Characterization:*

The author may present his characters directly or indirectly. In **direct** presentation, he tells us straight out what a character is like, or has someone else in the story tell us what he/she is like. In **indirect** presentation, the author shows us the character in action; we infer what he is like from what he thinks or says or does.

To be convincing, characterization must also observe three other principles.

**First**, characters must be consistent in their behavior. They must not behave one way on one occasion and a different way on another unless there is a sufficient reason for change.

**Second**, characters must be clearly motivated in whatever they do, especially when there is any change in behavior.

**Third**, characters must be plausible or lifelike.

2. Begin a Decisive Plots Chart: In literature, the plot often is carried along by the causes and effects of decisions made by the main character. Had the character made an alternate decision, the plot would have turned in a different direction. Even small decisions can bring about later events.

In the diagrams below, briefly describe two situations in which a decision had to be made, what the decision in the chapter was, and what alternative decision could have been made. Then discuss the results of the decision. Finally write the changes in the plot that would have resulted, had the alternative decision been made.

