

Teacher Guide

Grades 7–8

# Forged By Fire

Sharon Mills Draper

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# FORGED BY FIRE

by  
Sharon M. Draper

## Teacher Guide

Written by  
Veda Boyd Jones

### Note

The Simon Pulse paperback edition of the book, published by Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, © 1998, was used to prepare this guide. The page references may differ in other editions.

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**Please note:** This novel deals with sensitive, mature issues. Parts may contain profanity, sexual references, and/or descriptions of violence. Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with them.

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## Table of Contents

Summary .....	3
About the Author .....	3
Characters .....	4
Teacher Note .....	4
Initiating Activities.....	5
Vocabulary Activities.....	5
Nine Sections .....	14
Each section contains: Summary, Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Supplementary Activities	
Post-reading Discussion Questions .....	24
Post-reading Extension Activities.....	26
Assessment.....	27
Scoring Rubric.....	28

## Skills and Strategies

### Critical Thinking

Interpreting, evidence, compare/contrast, forming opinions, identifying stereotypes, paradox, pros/cons, research

### Comprehension

Cause/effect, classifying, details, generalizing, inferencing, main idea, predicting, summarizing

### Listening/Speaking

Discussion, oral report, role-playing, interviewing

### Vocabulary

Compound words, context clues, synonyms, antonyms, definitions

### Writing

Article, description, list, narrative, letter, report

### Literary Elements

Analogy, characterization, descriptions, foreshadowing, plot development, setting, point of view, simile, metaphor, theme, figurative language

### Across the Curriculum

Art—architecture, drawing; Science—CPR; Social Studies—maps, history, culture, laws; Math—statistics, percentages; Technology—Internet research; Music—ballet

## Chapters Twenty-two–Twenty-four, pp. 141–156

Robbie Washington’s funeral is attended by over 500 mourners. Gerald is consumed with grief, and Andy is consumed with guilt. Jordan is behaving, and Monique is less spacey than she was. One day after her dance lesson, Angel returns home to an empty apartment. She has just put two hot dogs on to boil when a drunken Jordan enters. He drags Angel to her bedroom and shuts the door. He tells her he is not her father. The hot dogs catch fire, and the fire spreads. When Gerald returns from a basketball game, he sees smoke coming out of the apartment window. He runs upstairs and finds Angel and Jordan in Andy’s bedroom. Jordan hits Gerald and breaks his shinbone. Gerald trips Jordan, who struggles up and heads for the apartment door. Gerald carries an unconscious Angel toward the door. He stumbles over something and falls, finds more oxygen near the floor, and drags Angel with him down one flight of stairs. Jordan dies in the fire, and Monique finally recognizes the pain he has caused her family. She now seems to love her children and her husband. She rides to the hospital in the ambulance with her children.

### Vocabulary

consumed (141)  
 competition (141)  
 psychologist (142)  
 suspicion (143)  
 resignation (144)  
 disbelief (144)  
 receded (145)  
 wary (145)  
 engulfed (149)  
 paramedic (153)  
 incoherently (153)  
 raspy (153)

### Discussion Questions

1. Rob’s funeral is attended by hundreds, yet Gerald thinks that a person dies with pain all alone. Do you agree or disagree? (*Each person reacts with grief differently. Answers will vary. p. 141*)
2. Gerald has a hard time dealing with the fact of why he is alive and why his brother is dead. Have you ever had this worry? Is this a feeling many people experience when someone close dies? (*It is a universal feeling. Answers will vary. p. 142*)
3. Angel can tell the difference between Jordan’s smile and “the smile of the person that lived within Jordan Sparks” (p. 145). What is the difference in a genuine smile and a smile of evil? (*Answers will vary.*)
4. The author slips into Monique’s view of Jordan and explains her tears as not for Jordan but for “the pain he had caused her family. Why has she suddenly changed.” (*Answers will vary. p. 155*)
5. Do you think Gerald will forgive Monique for her helplessness that has shaped his childhood? (*Answers will vary. p. 155*)
6. **Prediction:** Will Monique become more like Aunt Queen?

### Supplementary Activities

1. Art: Draw a picture of the apartment in flames.
2. Literary Analysis: Complete your Story Map.
3. Writing: Write a letter of apology to someone you have hurt, however unintentionally you may have hurt that person. You do not have to mail the letter, but you may if you want.

# Story Map

Characters \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Time and Place \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Problem \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Goal \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Beginning → Development → Outcome

\_\_\_\_\_



Resolution \_\_\_\_\_

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Vocabulary, Discussion, Questions, Activities, Worksheets