



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Johnny Tremain

Esther Hoskins Forbes

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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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, comparing and contrasting, evaluating

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, theme, symbol, direct and indirect characterization

Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms, root words, prefixes/suffixes

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, cause/effect, inference, comparing information from more than one source

Writing

Response journal, newspaper article, narrative

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion, charades

Summary

Johnny Tremain tells of the turbulent passionate times in Boston just before the Revolutionary War. Johnny, a young apprentice silversmith, is involved with James Otis, John Hancock, and John and Samuel Adams in the events that led to the Boston Tea Party, the Battle of Lexington, and a resolution in Johnny's personal life.

Instructions Prior to Reading

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions/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.

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

Initiating Activity

Have a record or tape of the song "Yankee Doodle" playing in the background as the students arrive. (See Teacher Information, page 44 of this guide.)

Read aloud to the group "The War Inevitable," March, 1775, by Patrick Henry, which ends with his famous quote, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" You may want to consider using "I Am What You Make Me (The Flag Speaks)" at the close of this unit, or your present study of the Revolutionary War, if that is the purpose of this selection. (The conclusion of the speech may be found in the encyclopedia. Look up Patrick Henry.) Discuss this speech, and the possible reaction(s) to it. How do you think you would have responded to these words?

Prereading Discussion Questions

1. On War: When, if ever, do you think war is necessary? When, if ever, would you be willing to fight in a war? Why do people sometimes glorify war?
2. On the American Revolution: What do you know about the American Revolution? What were its causes? Which side would you have been on? How was it like future wars in which Americans fought? How was it different?

After reading a chapter, brainstorm “what ifs.” What if one or another character wasn’t in the story, a character did something different, events followed a different sequence or didn’t happen at all, etc. The teacher writes all these “what if” class responses on the board or a large sheet of paper. At the conclusion of the novel, the review of these “what ifs” may be used in writing a different development and/or ending for the novel.

Section I “Up and About”

Chapter 1 — Pages 1-8

Vocabulary:

apprentices 1	wry 2	swinish 2	infernally 3
flaccid 3	parasitic 3	autocratic 3	brackish 4
formidable 5	ethereal 6	apoplectic 6	

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What is the setting (time and place) at the beginning of the story? (*Boston, Pre-Revolutionary War period, about 1772*)
2. What is shown in the picture at the beginning of the chapter?
3. Why did Johnny live with the Lapham family? (*Page 2, Johnny was apprenticed to Mr. Lapham as a silversmith.*)
4. Why did Dusty think everyone liked Johnny? (*Pages 3-4, Mr. Lapham liked him because Johnny was clever at work; Mrs. Lapham, because he was reliable; Lapham girls, because he sassed them.*)

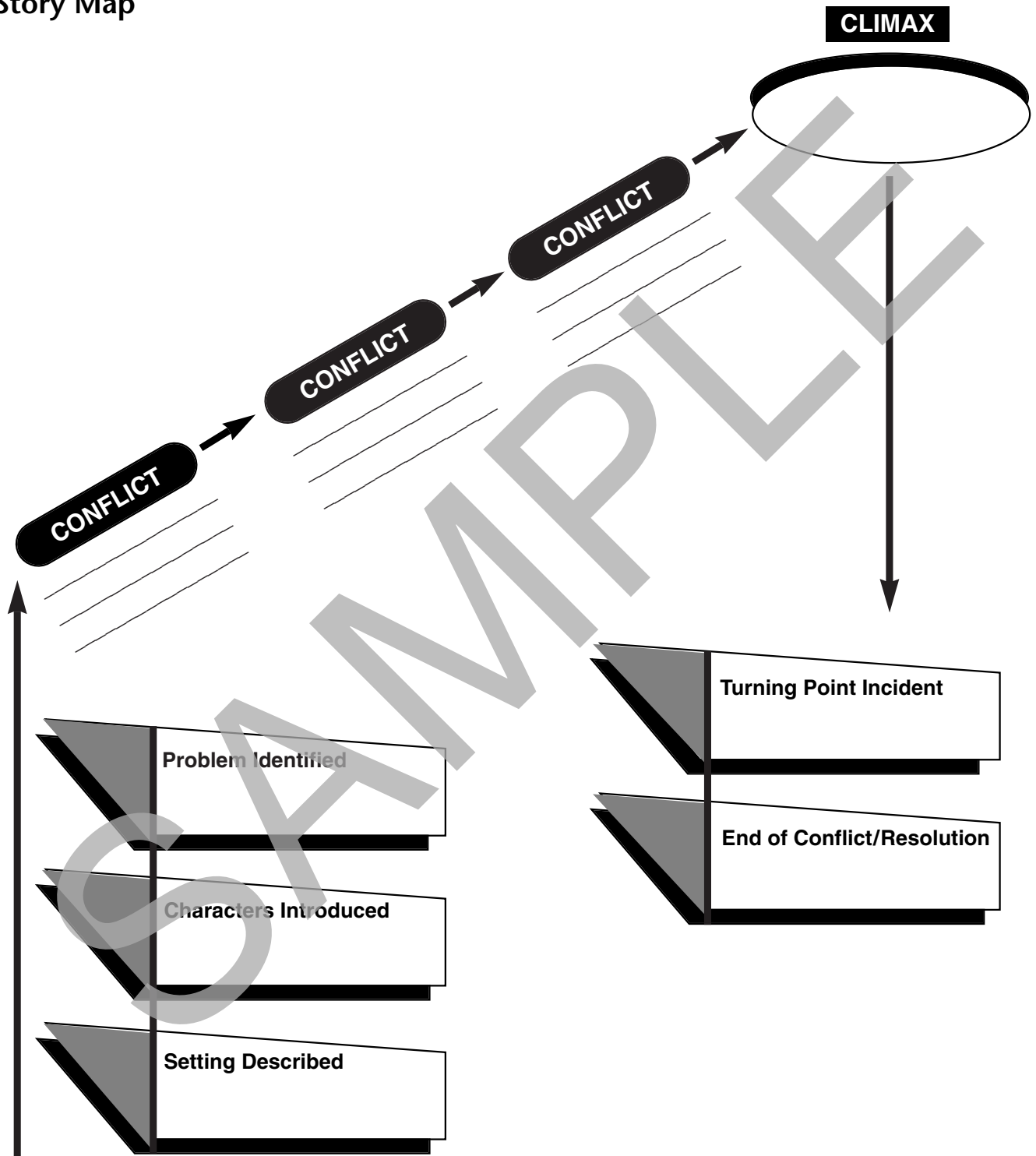
Supplementary Activities:

1. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
 - What is the setting?
 - Who is the main character?
 - What is the problem?

As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions may be made. Fill in the story map that follows on page 12 of this guide.

2. Begin an attribute web for Johnny. (See pages 13-14 of this guide.)

Story Map



Using Character Webs

Attribute Webs are simply a visual representation of a character from the novel. They provide a systematic way for the students to organize and recap the information they have about a particular character. Attribute webs may be used after reading the novel to recapitulate information about a particular character or completed gradually as information unfolds, done individually, or finished as a group project.

One type of character attribute web uses these divisions:

- How a character acts and feels. (How does the character feel in this picture? How would you feel if this happened to you? How do you think the character feels?)
- How a character looks. (Close your eyes and picture the character. Describe him to me.)
- Where a character lives. (Where and when does the character live?)
- How others feel about the character. (How does another specific character feel about our character?)

In group discussion about the student attribute webs and specific characters, the teacher can ask for backup proof from the novel. You can also include inferential thinking.

Attribute webs need not be confined to characters. They may also be used to organize information about a concept, object or place.

Attribute webs are a kind of semantic mapping. Students can move on from attribute webs to other creative kinds of mapping. They can be encouraged to modify attribute webs, use subdivisions, in whatever ways are useful to them personally. It is important to emphasize, especially to older children, that attribute webs are just a visual way to remember concepts. They provide the students with a tool to remember.