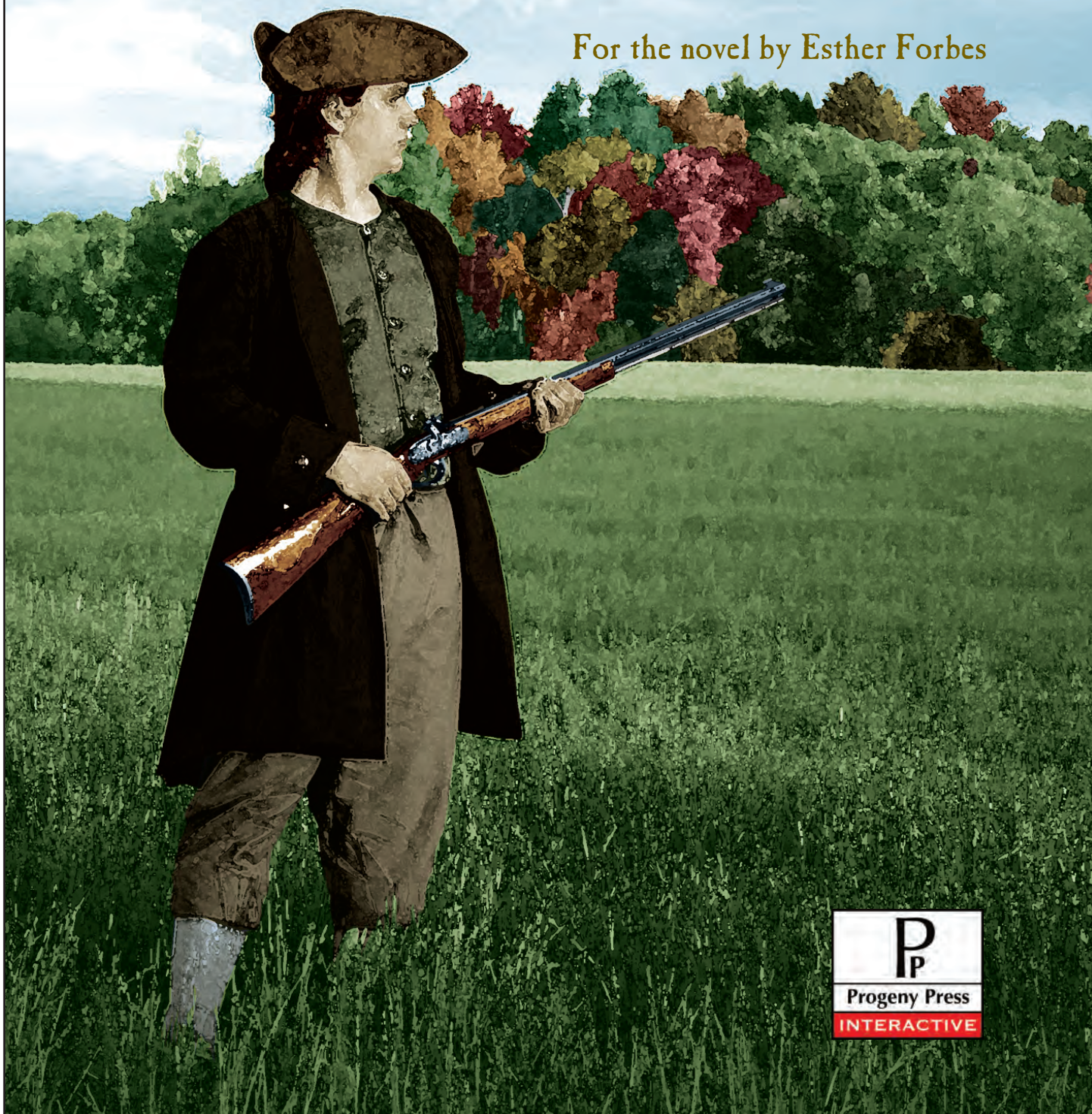


Johnny Tremain

Study Guide

by Gregory Power

For the novel by Esther Forbes



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Johnny Tremain Study Guide
A Progeny Press Study Guide
by Greg Power
with Andrew Clausen

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Note to Instructor

How to Use Progeny Press Study Guides. Progeny Press study guides are designed to help students better understand and enjoy literature by getting them to notice and understand how authors craft their stories and to show them how to think through the themes and ideas introduced in the stories. To properly work through a Progeny Press study guide, students should have easy access to a good dictionary, a thesaurus, a Bible (we use NIV translation, but that is up to your preference; just be aware of some differences in language), and sometimes a topical Bible or concordance. Supervised access to the Internet also can be helpful at times, as can a good set of encyclopedias.

Most middle grades and high school study guides take from eight to ten weeks to complete, generally working on one section per week. Over the years, we have found that it works best if the students completely read the novel the first week, while also working on a prereading activity chosen by the parent or teacher. Starting the second week, most parents and teachers have found it works best to work on one study guide page per day until the chapter sections are completed. Students should be allowed to complete questions by referring to the book; many questions require some cross-reference between elements of the stories.

Most study guides contain an Overview section that can be used as a final test, or it can be completed in the same way the chapter sections were completed. If you wish to perform a final test but your particular study guide does not have an Overview section, we suggest picking a couple of questions from each section of the study guide and using them as your final test.

Most study guides also have a final section of essays and postreading activities. These may be assigned at the parents' or teachers' discretion, but we suggest that students engage in several writing or other extra activities during the study of the novel to complement their reading and strengthen their writing skills.

As for high school credits, most Christian high schools with whom we have spoken have assigned a value of one-fourth credit to each study guide, and this also seems to be acceptable to colleges assessing homeschool transcripts.

Internet References

All websites listed in this study guide were checked for appropriateness at the time of publication. However, due to the changing nature of the Internet, we cannot guarantee that the URLs listed will remain appropriate or viable. Therefore, we urge parents and teachers to take care in and exercise careful oversight of their children's use of the Internet.

Synopsis

In colonial Boston, proud, orphaned, quick-tempered Johnny Tremain works as an apprentice to Mr. Lapham, a master silversmith, now getting on in years. More clever and skilled than the other two apprentices living at the Laphams', Johnny has the run of the Lapham household. His future seems secure: when he is old enough, Johnny will marry Priscilla Lapham, one of old Mr. Lapham's granddaughters, and inherit the silversmith shop. There he will live out his years, fashioning silver cups and basins and other fine ware for the well-to-do of Boston society.

But fate or providence has different plans for Johnny Tremain. A crippling accident at the shop leaves Johnny unable to work as a silversmith. He is forced to find other labor, or risk starvation or the gallows.

Finally securing employment at *The Boston Observer* newspaper, Johnny soon finds himself caught up in the on-going struggle between Boston's anti-British Whigs and pro-British Tories. In addition to delivering *The Observer* throughout Boston and the outlying towns, Johnny begins delivering letters for Sam Adams and The Boston Committee of Correspondence, the secret communications network of the American rebels.

When Boston is occupied by British soldiers in retaliation for the Boston Tea Party, the struggle against England intensifies. Johnny learns from his friend Rab Silsbee and patriots such as Sam Adams, Paul Revere, John Hancock, and James Otis that both individuals and nations will pay a high price for freedom and independence.

By the close of the novel, Johnny has discovered the secret of his ancestry, he has learned that the Yankees have a fighting chance against the redcoats and he is prepared to take his place among the rebel armies encircling the British in Boston. Johnny has learned too that the ideals of the American Revolution must first conquer the human heart before they can conquer armies and topple empires.

About the Author

Esther Forbes was born in 1891 in Westborough, Massachusetts, a small town about 30 miles west of Boston. She grew up surrounded by the history and traditions of New England. Her father was a judge and her mother a researcher of colonial history. She studied American history from 1916 to 1918 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and later worked as an editor at the large Boston publishing house of Houghton Mifflin. In 1926 she left the publishing company and began a full-time writing career.

It was while researching the colonial apprenticeship system for her book *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, that Esther Forbes conceived the idea of writing a novel for young people about a silversmith's apprentice growing up in colonial Boston. Originally, Forbes wanted her main character in the novel to remain neutral during the American Revolution, but the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941 convinced her that it was not possible to remain neutral in wartime. The day after Pearl Harbor, she began work on the novel that was to become *Johnny Tremain*.

In 1943 she won a Pulitzer Prize for American History for her biography, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*. The following year Miss Forbes won the Newbery Medal "for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" for *Johnny Tremain*.

Esther Forbes went on to write many other books, including several more for young people. She died in 1967.

Background Information

After the French and Indian War ended in 1763, the British had established undisputed control over half the North American continent. With the British treasury all but exhausted from its long wars with the French and their Indian allies, the Parliament decided to reduce some of its expenses. Accordingly, the government in London asked the American colonies to help bear their share of the burden of the British Empire.

First, England brought an end to colonial settlement west of the Appalachian mountains. The rich soil in this region—land that would later become Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee—meant opportunity and a way out of poverty to any colonial who was willing to work hard, but to the British these settlements meant money and troops wasted protecting settlers from Indian attack.

Second, colonists were expected to provide food and housing for British troops sent to North America to protect the colonists. To Parliament this seemed only fair, to the colonists it seemed an insult.

Last, Parliament raised the colonies' taxes on a number of items; the most notorious tax, passed by Parliament in 1765, was known as the Stamp Act. Nearly every printed item—from newspapers and calendars to playing cards—was taxed. Americans reacted to the Stamp Act with riots. They also refused to buy any British goods until the Stamp Act was withdrawn. And they formed secret organizations, such as the Sons of Liberty, to resist British taxation.

To those colonists who gave the matter some thought, what was at stake was not the paying of a few pennies in tax; they had long paid taxes to their own colonial governments. This was a different matter. They were expected to pay taxes to a government that had no colonial representatives in it. What right did Parliament have to reach into the colonials' pockets when they denied them any voice in the making of Parliament's laws? The rallying cry went up: "No taxation without representation!"

The colonists' boycott of British goods was successful enough to convince the Parliament to withdraw the Stamp Act. Yet two years later, in 1767, new taxes were placed on the colonies by Parliament: paint, lead, glass, paper . . . and tea.

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Again the colonists boycotted the British. This time an angry Parliament sent its troops to occupy the most troublesome of the colonial cities, Boston. In March of 1770, trouble broke out between some Boston hotheads and a small group of redcoats (as the British troops were called). This incident, which began with the throwing of snowballs and ended with British soldiers firing into a crowd for fear of their lives, came to be known as “The Boston Massacre.”

After a trial, in which the British soldiers were defended by John Adams (later the second President of the United States), the soldiers were freed and British troops were withdrawn from the city.

After the so-called Boston Massacre, Parliament withdrew nearly all its taxes on the colonies, although it retained a small tax on tea. The Sons of Liberty, believing that to drink English tea was to accept an unjust tax, continued their boycott of the tea. At the same time, a number of colonists began smuggling in untaxed tea from Holland. (This was not entirely an act of patriotism. Since smugglers could also avoid paying the legitimate import tax on their tea, a comfortable profit could be made from smuggled tea.)

England and the colonies settled down to an uneasy truce. Colonial Whigs formed a secret communications network called the Committees of Correspondence to keep in touch with one another, but other than the Gaspee episode, in which a gang of Rhode Islanders burned a British patrol boat to the water line, there were no major incidents. That is, until that November day in 1773 when three ships filled with English tea sailed into the port of Boston. . . .

Chapter 1: “Up and About”

Vocabulary:

Answer the following questions using a dictionary.

1. The Lapham’s live in “a crooked little house at the head of Hancock’s Wharf on crowded Fish Street . . .” What is a “wharf?”
2. Dove, Dusty and Johnny are apprentices in Mr. Lapham’s silversmith shop. In section 1 of Chapter 1, the life of an apprentice is described. Quote this passage.
3. Johnny Tremain’s rule over the other two apprentices is described as autocratic. What kind of power does an autocrat have?

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4. Johnny tells Dove to get out a crucible and melt down the silver spoon Dove made. In silversmithing, what is a crucible used for?

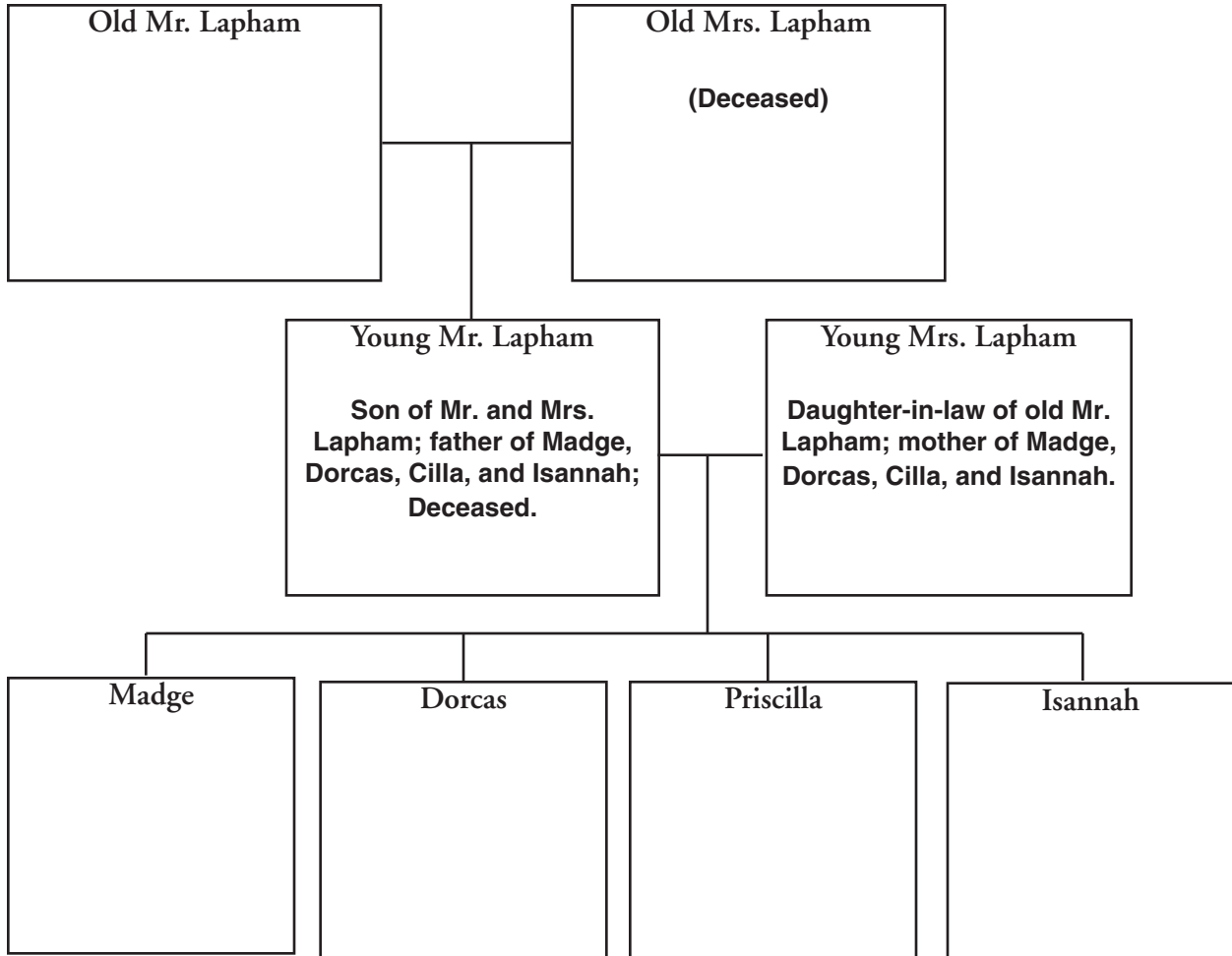
5. At the breakfast table, Mr. Lapham “took his time blessing the meal. He was a deacon at the Cockerel Church and very pious.” What is a one-word definition for pious?

6. Johnny notices that the garlands on Mr. Hancock’s cream pitcher “were rounded out in repoussé work.” What does repoussé work look like?

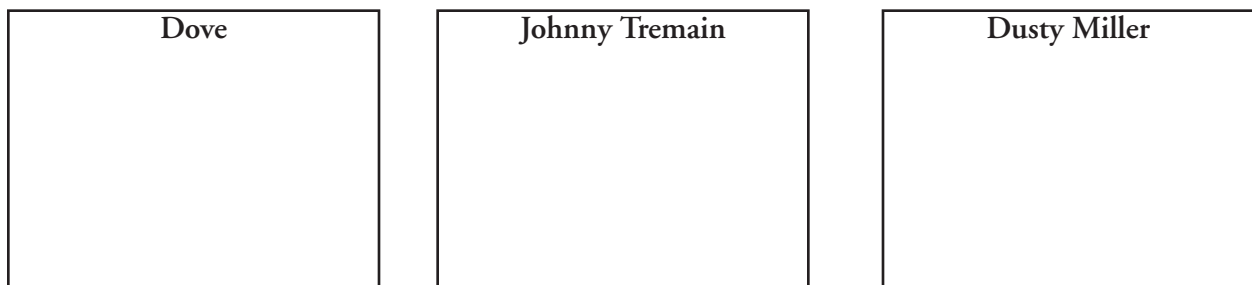
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Questions:

1. Describe each of the characters shown below. List their ages, temperament, occupation or role in the Lapham household and any other information which will help in taking a “snapshot” of their character. Two have been done for you.



Mr. Lapham's Apprentices



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2. What does the location of the Lapham house tell you about the family's social standing in Boston society?

3. What other clues do you find in the chapter that tell you about the economic status of the Laphams?

4. What general lesson was old Mr. Lapham trying to teach Johnny at the breakfast table that morning?

5. Mr. Lapham asks Johnny to read the following verse from the Old Testament book of Leviticus: “. . . And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as brass.” (Leviticus 26:19) Who is the “I” speaking here?

What is “the pride” of Johnny’s “power”? In other words, what is it that makes Johnny so proud?

How might Johnny’s pride be “broken”?

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6. Does Mr. Lapham's use of Bible readings at the breakfast table accomplish its purpose? Explain your answer.

7. What do we learn in Chapter 1 about Mr. Hancock's political beliefs?

8. What do we learn about Mr. Lapham's political beliefs?

9. What is Johnny's middle name? What was Johnny's mother's name? What is the significance of these names?

10. What did Johnny's mother tell him he was to do if he ever "got to the end of everything"?

Dig Deeper:

Mr. Lapham said, “I don’t hold much with these fellows that are always trying to stir up trouble between us and England. Maybe English rule ain’t always perfect, but it’s good enough for me. Fellows like Mr. Hancock and Sam Adams, calling themselves patriots and talking too much. Not reading God’s Word—like their parents did—which tells us to be humble.”

Mr. Lapham seems to imply that to speak out against the British the way John Hancock and Sam Adams do is, according to the Bible, disobedience. Consider the following quotations:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those [authorities] that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

Romans 13:1–5

Upon careful review of the author’s reasoning in this passage [from Romans 13], it appears that his arguments to enforce submission are of such nature as to conclude only in favor of submission to such powers as he [St. Paul] himself describes, i.e., such as rule for the good of society. . . . If it be our duty to obey our king, merely for this reason, that he rules for the public welfare . . . it follows . . . that when [the king] turns tyrant [becomes a dictator] we are bound to throw off our allegiance to him, and to resist.

From “A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-resistance to the Higher Powers,” a sermon given by Jonathan Mayhew in 1750.

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Self-preservation is an instinct by God implanted in our nature. Therefore we sin against God and Nature when we tamely resign our rights to tyrants if it be in our power to defend ourselves. . . . [God] commands us to stand fast in the liberty wherewith he hath made us free and not to bow down to any tyrant on earth. . . . The cause of liberty is the cause of God and truth, [and] to take arms and repel force by force, when our liberties are invaded, is well-pleasing to God.

From “Antidote Against Toryism,” a sermon given by Nathaniel Whitaker in 1777. (The American Revolution began in the spring of 1776.)

Do you think speaking out against British rule was disobeying scripture? Write a short essay discussing the following questions:

- Were Bostonians in particular and Americans in general disobeying God when they spoke out against British rule over the colonies?
- Was the American Revolution itself wrong in the eyes of God?
- More generally, is it ever right to rebel against authority? If so, when? If not, why not?

Chapter 2: “The Pride of Your Power”

Vocabulary:

Choosing from the list below, fill in the blank with the word that best fits each sentence.

laudanum	berated	mundane	midwife	maimed
beaux	Sabbath	poultice	dire	

1. Of course, on Sunday, the shop would be locked up all day, the furnace cold . . . Madge and Dorcas usually entertained their _____.
(boyfriends)
2. “You’re getting above yourself—like I tried to point out to you. God is going to send you a _____ punishment for your pride.”
(dreadful)
3. “And, boy, don’t you go get all fretted up over what’s after all nothing but an order for silver. It’s sinful to let yourself go so over _____ things.”
(day-to-day or worldly)
4. “ _____ or no _____, that sugar basin is going to be done on time.”
(Sunday) *(Sunday)*
5. “Cilla, you run down the wharf and you fetch that old _____, Gran’ Hopper. These old _____ women know better than any doctor how to cure things like this.”
(woman who assists in childbirth and healing)

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6. His hand had been done up in a linseed _____.
(a thick paste put on a wound)
7. Gran' Hopper gave him _____ and more
(a pain-killing drug made from opium)
_____. There followed drowsy days and
(a pain-killing drug made from opium)
nights that ran together, a ceaseless roaring in the ears. There was nothing left
of him but the pain and the drug.”
8. “Seemingly in one month he had become a stranger, an outcast on Hancock’s
Wharf. He was _____ and they were whole.”
(wounded or crippled)
9. “The old man had never once _____ him for Sabbath-
(scolded)
breaking, never reminded him how often he had pointed out that pride goeth
before a fall.”

Questions:

1. What prediction does old Mr. Lapham make about Johnny?

2. Which crucible does Dove give to Johnny? What does Dove hope to accomplish by this?

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3. What are two reasons Mrs. Lapham fetches a midwife instead of a doctor to tend to Johnny's hand?

4. In what way are each of the people below responsible in some sense for the crippling of Johnny's hand?

A. Old Mr. Lapham—

B. Mrs. Lapham—

C. Dove—

D. Gran' Hopper—

E. Mr. Hancock—

F. Dusty—

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G. Johnny Tremain—

5. According to old Mr. Lapham, why has Johnny's hand been injured?

6. After the accident, Johnny stayed in the "birth and death room." Consider the symbolic meaning of the birth and death room. In what way is Johnny's accident like a death?

7. How might it be like a birth?

Chapter 3: “An Earth Of Brass”

Vocabulary:

Word Search. From the clues given below, write the correct word in the space provided, then locate the vocabulary word in the word search. The first one has been done for you.

arrogance	gallows	spinster	aloof	genial
chaise	felon	staves	cobbles	journeyman
rakish	gig	gait	squab	

1. When one is no longer an apprentice, but not yet a master—Mr. Tweedie of Baltimore, for instance.
journeyman
2. Friendly or good-natured—like the little man with the spy glass on the sign at *The Boston Observer*.
3. Distant or indifferent—the way Rab would sometimes behave.
4. A painful infection at the end of a finger or toe—this was why Madge wasn't good for anything one morning.

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5. The place where criminals are executed—where Johnny would end up, according to Mrs. Lapham.
6. An older, unmarried woman—according to Johnny, this is what Mr. Tweedie really was, although dressed up in men's clothes.
7. Johnny wore his hat in a style that suggests one is up to no good—looking clever but dishonest.
8. Proud or contemptuous—the way Johnny struck some people as he wandered about Boston.
9. Two words for small, two-wheeled carriages, usually pulled by one horse.
10. Any particular way of walking.
11. A young pigeon—Johnny ate five of them.
12. Long sticks or poles—the town watch carried them.
13. Paving stones—like those on Hull Street.

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Find the vocabulary words in the word search puzzle below.

U Z F M O H N L B A R Y D C P E
H T W W N A M Y E N R U O J V Y
X N M V Y O Q A C Y K D H P J N
I O O H T R R A K I S H F N L K
A E C L F E Y N V I I B O C I S
T R E M E E B A F W E P O J C E
V Y R U R F P S Q U A B L U G L
J H M O G A L L O W S P A Y I B
X B P Q G A X L U G I G G L I B
W P P V I A Q W E H H W O X N O
C L C N H Y N L U V C P K B T C
S H E E E N S C J K J P E S T D
X G A M O V H P E Z Q X H E P O
J Q K I C S Z C I H A V U V D G
Y T J I S G E S P N K O V A Y P
T C V U W E I L E S S M N T F J
E F T N S P I N E T U T Z S O O
Q L V Z O P K D E A G S E F Y N
L Z T I A G C G J B L X H R R X

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Questions:

1. What evidence can you find in the chapter that suggests that Johnny's accident has not completely succeeded in curing him of his pride?
2. Why is Johnny willing to tell Rab the story of his accident when he was unwilling to tell others?
3. What do we learn about Johnny's character from the way he spends the silver given to him by Mr. Hancock?
4. As Johnny shares his gifts with Cilla and Isannah, "he completely forgot his crippled hand. It was all as if nothing had happened and he and Cilla and Isannah were all one again." What suddenly ends this happy scene? What do you think the author is suggesting by this?

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5. By the conclusion of Chapter 3, Johnny is still without a job, he is without a home and seemingly without friends. He feels that “God has turned away from him.” Why do you suppose the author chose to set this last scene of the chapter in Copp’s Hill graveyard? What is she trying to suggest?

6. Read Deuteronomy 31:17, 18; 2 Chronicles 15:1–5, 30:9; Joshua 1:9; Matthew 28:20; and Hebrews 13:5–6. Does God ever “turn His face away” from us? Explain your answer.

7. What do you predict will happen in Chapter 4?

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3)

4)

5. If you were a Whig in colonial Boston and wanted to protest English rule, would you engage in all of the activities of the Sons of Liberty? Are there any you would not participate in? Why or why not?

Map Skills:

Exploring Colonial and Contemporary Boston

For this exercise you will need to find two maps of Boston—one recent and one from colonial times. Possible sources for colonial maps are *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* by Esther Forbes, and *A Book of Old Maps Delineating American History From the Earliest Days Down to the Close of the Revolutionary War*. See the resource list at the end of this guide for more information on these books. A map of contemporary Boston can be found in most standard U.S. road atlases. Use both maps to answer the questions below.

1. Looking carefully at both maps, what do you think has happened to large parts of Boston Harbor since 1775?

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2. Locate on the modern map of Boston the “Back Bay Fens.” What are “fens”?

3. What was located in “Back Bay Fens” in 1775?

4. The Mill Pond has long since been filled in. What reminder of the Mill Pond still exists in modern-day Boston? (Hint: A “causeway” is a raised roadway across a body of water.)

5. The Boston Tea Party took place at Griffin’s Wharf. Approximately where would that be located in modern Boston?

6. On what street did the Laphams live?

Locate that street on the colonial Boston map. What street is probably at that spot today?

Chapter 5: “The Boston Observer”

Vocabulary:

Complete the sentences by filling in the correct vocabulary word. The words and their definitions are given to you below.

nonchalant:	seemingly indifferent or unconcerned
windfalls:	fruit fallen from a tree
ardent:	enthusiastic
atrophying:	shriveling or withering
sillabubs:	sweet cream mixed with alcohol or fruit juice
equitation:	the art of horseback riding
hippogriffs:	mythical creatures—part horse, part lion, part eagle
fagots:	a bundle of twigs or sticks
seditions:	encouraging rebellion against the government

1. But all enjoyed themselves, although Isannah drank herself sick and silly on _____.
2. Hadden flung up his bony arms trying to stop him, but went down like a bunch of _____.
3. “But you take the afternoon off and give Johnny a lesson in _____ —show him how to fall off a horse without getting hurt.”

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4. It had been sent to Mr. Lorne, commanding him and the other printers of Boston to quit their _____, rebellious publications—or else.
5. “He thinks they are white _____ big enough to carry horses off in their talons.”
6. In only a few weeks he changed from knowing little enough about the political excitement, and caring less, to being an _____ Whig.
7. . . . once a farmer’s wife gave him his hat full of bad apples and he lured Goblin easily. After that he always stuffed his pockets with _____.
8. Although too badly injured ever to be skillful again, it was no longer in danger of _____ —as it had been in Johnny’s pocket.
9. He flung himself into the dancing. Johnny thought in amazement how _____ and even sluggish Rab could seem about the printing shop.

Questions:

1. What job does Johnny end up taking? Where does he now sleep?

2. What does Sam Adams hire Johnny to do?

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3. Johnny's character has begun to change in many ways. Below, explain how people or events have helped to change certain aspects of his personality.

A. Controlling his temper—

B. Expressing affection or love—

C. Losing his self-consciousness—

D. Growing intellectually/Becoming politically aware—

Dig Deeper:

Consider your own character—your strong points and your weak points. Describe one specific way in which your character has been changed for the better by a person, book, or event in your life.

Background Reading

The Boston Tea Party:

Tea was a very popular drink in both England and the American colonies—as popular as soda or coffee is in America today. Some of the tea that colonists drank was smuggled in to avoid the expense of various import taxes, but most of the tea was supplied by giant companies such as the British East India Company. The East India Company would buy the tea at auctions in London. After paying an import tax to the British government, the Company would then sell its tea through numerous retailers or middlemen. Colonial middlemen made a considerable profit selling tea to eager colonists.

In 1773 the British East India Company was in deep financial trouble, close to bankruptcy. The British government did not dare allow the Company to collapse, for it was responsible for running Britain’s profitable colonies in India. If the Company were to fall, Britain would be in danger of losing its Indian colonies and Indian trade.

In May of 1773, Parliament came up with a plan called the Tea Act. It would allow the British East India Company to sell the 17,000,000 pounds of tea in its warehouses, but bypassing the colonial middlemen and without paying the English import tax. The only tax they would have to pay would be the tiny tax that Parliament, years before, had placed on the colonists’ tea. In this way, their tea would be cheaper than ever, even less expensive than the smugglers’ tea!

Naturally, many colonists did not like this new arrangement. For one thing, colonial tea merchants would be cut out of any profits from the tea. For another, smugglers would see their business threatened. Most importantly, in the eyes of rebels like Sam Adams, the cheaper price of the tea might disguise the fact that there was still a tax on the tea, a tax that was placed there directly by Parliament, without the colonists having any say in the matter. To buy the tea would be to pay the tax. To pay the tax would be to accept Parliament’s right to tax the colonies whenever and however it pleased. The tea, concluded the Sons of Liberty, must never be sold.

On the night of December 16, 1773, 50 colonists in disguise boarded three ships berthed at Griffin’s Wharf. They hacked open over 300 wooden tea chests and tossed them overboard. Fifteen thousand pounds of fine Indian tea sank beneath the frigid waters of Boston Harbor. “This destruction of the tea is so bold, so daring, so firm,” wrote John Adams the following day, “it must have such important and lasting consequences that I can’t help considering it a turning point in history.”

Chapter 6: “Salt-Water Tea”

Questions:

1. Why did Parliament insist on keeping a small tax on tea?
2. Why did the colonists refuse to pay the tax, even though it was very small? (What principle was at stake?)
3. Why did the colonists drop the tea in Boston Harbor? What other choices were open to them?
4. In protesting the tax on tea, the colonists destroyed thousands of dollars of private property. Do you believe they were justified in doing this? Why or why not? If not, what should they have done about the tea?

Chapter 7: “The Fiddler’s Bill”

Vocabulary:

Look up the definition of each of the words listed and write it in the space below. On the lines provided, quote the sentence (or portion of the sentence) as it appears in the chapter.

1. paroxysm

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

2. moderate

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

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3. tyranny

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

4. commandeer

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

5. lascivious

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

6. tar and feather

Dictionary definition:

“ _____

_____”

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Questions:

1. How did Parliament punish Boston for her “tea party”?
2. Why was this a particularly harsh punishment?
3. How did Parliament’s punishment change the opinions of some Tories and “moderate” men?
4. How did the closing of Boston Harbor affect all 13 colonies?
5. Governor Hutchinson was ordered back to England. Who replaced him? What did this replacement bring with him?

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6. Explain why Johnny has such contradictory feelings about the British soldiers occupying Boston.

7. What does Mrs. Bessie tell Johnny the Sons of Liberty are planning to do to the Lytes? Do you think they are fair to treat the Lytes in this way? Why or why not?

Chapter 8: “A World To Come”

Vocabulary:

As you read the chapter, write the vocabulary words in the appropriate blank, choosing from the list below. The first one is done for you.

lucid	sortie	plague	canny	wraiths
placate	genealogy	routed	courting	

1. There were sheets of paper between the Old and New Testaments. Here a man might write his genealogy.
(family tree)
2. Married to Dr. Charles Latour, both of whom died of _____ in Marseilles shortly before his own birth.
(a highly infectious disease)
3. This haunted house, with its thin wreath of _____ and his mother’s among them.
(spirits or ghosts)
4. “First folk like them get _____ out of Milton—then out of Boston.”
(retreat or flight)
5. Now [Rab] was blocked and it made him restless, possibly less _____.
(cautious, shrewd)

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6. He was fifteen now. And soon he would be a grown-up man going _____ like Rab.
(dating; looking to marry)
7. Ever since [James Otis] had grown so queer, the other members did not wish him about, even in his _____ periods.
(sane; clear-headed; rational)
8. They were talking about how Gage had at last dared send out a _____ beyond the gate of Boston
(a quick attack from a place of defense)
and . . . they had seized cannon and gunpowder over in Charlestown.
9. “God grant we fight soon. For ten years we’ve tried this and we’ve tried that. We’ve tried to _____ them and they to _____ us. Gentlemen, you know it has not
(calm down; reduce the anger of)
_____ us. Gentlemen, you know it has not
(calm down; reduce the anger of)
worked. I will not work for peace.”

Questions:

1. What does Johnny discover in the Lyte family Bible?

2. Why does Johnny refuse to take back his silver cup?

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3. At the Lyte summer home in Milton Johnny says, “This is the end. The end of one thing—the beginning of something else. . . . And the cards are going to be reshuffled. Dealt again.” What do you suppose he means by this?

4. When General Gage sent out a sortie to Charlestown, what did the British troops capture?

5. Why was it important for the revolutionary leaders in Boston to know an hour or two ahead of time where the British were intending to attack?

6. Sam Adams tells James Otis that we will fight for _____.
Rab tells Otis we will fight for _____.
But James Otis believes Americans should fight for _____
_____.

7. According to James Otis, “We give all we have, lives, property, safety, skills . . . for a simple thing.” What is that thing?

What does Otis mean by this?

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8. In what year was *Johnny Tremain* first published?

What important event was taking place in the world at that time?

The author, in writing James Otis's last speech to The Observers Club, was not writing only about the American Revolution. What else was she thinking about? That is, to those who read *Johnny Tremain* when it first came out, what did Otis's speech mean?

9. Where today are people trying "to stand up"?

Dig Deeper:

10. Johnny claims that he no longer cares to be related to the Lytes, feeling that he is better off without them. "I want nothing of them. Neither their blood nor their silver." While he can refuse their "silver," it is not as easy to reject his ancestry. In what ways is or was Johnny very much like Merchant Lyte?

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11. What might Johnny have become if Merchant Lyte had accepted Johnny into the Lyte family when Johnny first presented his silver cup to him?

Chapter 9: “The Scarlet Deluge”

Questions:

1. What do the Sons of Liberty learn from the letter Lt. Stranger tore up and threw away?
2. What do the Sons of Liberty do with the information they piece together from Lt. Stranger’s letter?
3. Years ago, old Mr. Lapham had asked Johnny to “forgive Dove like a Christian” for burning Johnny’s hand. Has Johnny forgiven Dove “like a Christian?” Explain your answer. (Consider Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34; Matthew 18:21, 22; Ephesians 4:32.)

Background Reading

Lexington and Concord:

In the spring of 1775, General Thomas Gage, commander of the British troops occupying Boston, received a letter from England ordering him to attack the rebel troops arming and drilling in the Massachusetts countryside. Gage's spies had already informed him of a stockpile of Yankee supplies and gunpowder in the small town of Concord, located about 20 miles outside Boston. Reasoning that an army that has no supplies is an army that cannot fight, Gage decided to attack.

Early on the morning of April 18, 700 British troops set out on foot for Concord. Unknown to them, they were preceded on horseback by two members of the Sons of Liberty—Paul Revere and William Dawes—who managed to alert the entire countryside to the coming British attack. By the time the British arrived in Lexington, a small town about five miles from Concord, 70 Minutemen stood ready on the village green. A commander of the British troops, Major Pitcairn, ordered them to disperse.

What happened next is unclear. According to rebel sources, as the Minutemen followed Pitcairn's orders, a single shot (perhaps from an officer's pistol) went off, then a volley from the British troops. The clearing smoke revealed eight dead colonials and one wounded redcoat—the first casualties of the American Revolution.

The British marched on to Concord. There they drove off a few ragtag rebels, and rounded up the supplies they could find—a few gun carriages and some flour (which they piled up and burned). The British then marched northward out of Concord (perhaps hoping to find the missing supplies in some Yankee's barn). At North Bridge they were driven back by a crowd of Minutemen.

The British, harassed on every side by 3,000 to 4,000 militia—some from as far away as Connecticut and New Hampshire—began a long, disastrous retreat back to Boston. The British suffered 273 casualties. 73 died and 200 were wounded or missing before they reached the safety of Charlestown and the Boston ferry that night.

For the proud redcoats, their defeat at the hands of an untrained rebel militia was a stinging humiliation. For the American colonists, Lexington and Concord were only the first battles in what would prove to be a long and agonizing battle for liberty and independence.

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Over 60 years later a monument was erected at the site of North Bridge. On it were written these lines from “Concord Hymn” by American essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson:

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

Chapter 10: “Disperse, Ye Rebels!”

Vocabulary:

Look up the vocabulary words listed below. Write a brief definition on the line provided. Then write a sentence using the vocabulary word. The first one is done for you.

1. new evolutions: _____ New march steps _____

The soldiers had been marching day and night to practice their new evolutions.

2. ardor: _____

3. martial: _____

4. queue: _____

5. disconsolately: _____

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6. whist: _____

7. embarkation: _____

8. inebriated: _____

9. volley: _____

10. army chaplain: _____

Questions:

1. Doctor Warren and Mr. Revere discussed the unusual activity of the British troops in Boston. The British were preparing their landing boats. This might mean that they were going to _____
or that they were going to _____

_____.

But then, the British might also march out _____

_____.

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2. Why was it important for the rebel leaders to know what the British were planning?

3. What was the signal agreed upon if the British go by land (“go out over the Neck”)?

What was the signal if the British take the boats across to Charlestown?

Where would the signal be shown?

Why there?

4. Why must Rab get out of Boston right away?

5. What information about the intentions of the British does Johnny manage to worm out of Dove? (The first one is done for you.)
 - A. Colonel Smith is having his “campaign” saddle readied, not his “parade” saddle. (He must be preparing for a battle)

 - B.

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C.

D.

E.

6. How many lights shone in the spire of Christ's Church the night of April 18?

What did this signal mean?

7. In what town were the first shots fired between rebels and redcoats?

What was the date? (*month/day/year*)

Chapter 11: “Yankee Doodle”

Questions:

1. What tune did the British troops play as they marched out of Boston?

Why did they play this tune?

2. Once the British knew that war had begun, why did they begin going from house to house?

3. Where did Uncle Lorne hide?

4. Why wasn't it very difficult for Cilla to let her sister Isannah go off to London with the Lytes?

Chapter 12: “A Man Can Stand Up”

Questions:

1. What angers Johnny about how the wounded British privates are treated? Why does this anger Johnny?
2. Where was the battle in Concord fought?
3. What happened to Rab?
4. Why does Johnny decide to let Dr. Warren fix his hand?
5. What do you think the last lines of the novel mean? “True, Rab had died. Hundreds would die, but not the thing they died for. ‘A man can stand up.’”

Dig Deeper:

6. Many times the author of a book will cite a particularly appropriate quotation which helps to illuminate the theme of the book. One such quotation for *Johnny Tremain* might be from John 12:24 in the New Testament, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” How might this quotation help to illuminate one of the main themes of *Johnny Tremain*?

7. Consider the portrayal of Christians and Christianity in *Johnny Tremain*. The Lapham household is headed by a kindly and pious old man, who nevertheless has lost his vigour and skill. Although he quotes passages from the Bible at Johnny and he correctly predicts Johnny’s accident, nothing he says seems to have had much influence on Johnny. Before the novel has concluded, he is dead.

The Lorne household, on the other hand, is not overtly Christian, but it is here that Johnny begins to widen his horizons, to feed his intellectual hunger, to feel and express love and to gain true friends.

Is the author making a comment about Christianity and its place in American society? To the author is Christianity like Mr. Lapham—harmless and well-meaning, but something whose time has long since passed? Explain why you think this.

Ideas For Final Projects

American Revolution Time Line

On a large roll of paper, make a time line of the important events leading up to and including the American Revolution. Add to this time line important events in *Johnny Tremain*. From old books or magazines (*and with permission!*), cut out photographs to illustrate your time line, or draw the pictures yourself.

Shop Signs

Many residents of colonial Boston were illiterate. As the novel informs you, shopkeepers did not want to lose a potential customer just because that customer could not read. Thus, their shop signs revealed what the shopkeeper had to sell: a pair of scissors and some thread for a tailor, a glass of ale for a tavern. Using large sheets of cardboard, make your own shop signs, either for shops such as might have been found in colonial Boston or shops such as we have today. What might be on a sign for a plumber's shop? a computer store? a law firm?

Genealogy

Johnny Tremain discovers his family tree in an old Bible at the Lyte's Milton home. Make a family tree of your own family. You could illustrate it with photographs, or draw your own pictures. Just as Johnny has inherited some physical features and character traits from his ancestors, so have you. See if you can include on your family tree the sources of some noticeable family traits.

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Illustrations

Some editions of *Johnny Tremain* are illustrated by a well-known American illustrator, Lynd Ward. (Ward also illustrated another book by Esther Forbes, *America's Paul Revere*). Perhaps you'd like to try your hand at illustrating important or memorable scenes from *Johnny Tremain*: Johnny alone on Copp's Hill graveyard, Rab and Johnny fighting the butcher and his family, James Otis giving a speech, or the Boston Tea Party. Paul Revere made an engraving of the Boston Massacre which told the rebels' side of the story. Perhaps you could draw some Whig propaganda, or political cartoons such as might have been printed in *The Boston Observer*.

Newspaper

Newspapers played an important part in the daily life of the colonies and a pivotal role in *Johnny Tremain*. Write your own newspaper. It could be set in the days of the American Revolution or your paper could cover current events. If you have access to a computer or a typewriter you could type it, otherwise you could write it by hand. Perhaps you could include a few illustrations or political cartoons, or some classified ads. If you are so inclined, your newspaper could be a Tory paper from the colonies or a British newspaper printed in London. This might provide an interesting slant on the historical events it covers.

Poetry

There are numerous poems written during or about the Revolutionary period. "Concord Hymn" by Ralph Waldo Emerson and "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow are two such examples. Paul Revere wrote an atrocious poem to accompany his engraving of the Boston Massacre. You might want to compare these poems to the historical events as related in *Johnny Tremain*. Try writing a poem on some aspect of the American Revolution that catches your attention: the Battle of Bunker Hill, the rebel army's long suffering at Valley Forge, or the writing of the Declaration of Independence.

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Biographies

Many famous people put in an appearance in *Johnny Tremain*. Many others, such as George Washington, Mercy Otis Warren, Ben Franklin, or Thomas Jefferson, do not appear at all. If any of these people intrigue you, check out a book from the library on them. Write a short biography of your subject.

Historical Fiction

Johnny Tremain is an example of a literary genre known as “historical fiction.” As the name implies, it combines elements of both fiction and history, and requires the skills of both a novelist and an historian. Perhaps you would like to write historical fiction. Choose a time period that interests you and about which you could find information. Research the daily life, habits, styles, and ideas of your time period. Into that setting insert the characters and events that capture your imagination. Historical fiction could be as long as a novel or as short as a one-page short story.

Essays

Choose one essay question from Group A and one essay from Group B. Each essay ought to be a minimum of one side of a sheet of lined note paper. A good essay will back up its opinions with quotations and examples from the novel and will list page numbers for each quotation. Double-check your work for spelling errors, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and other grammatical errors as well as general lack of clarity.

—A—

1. Johnny's character changes a great deal from the beginning to the end of the novel. Describe in detail two ways in which Johnny's character and personality change. Describe what events or characters in Johnny's life have helped to cause this change. Use specific examples from the novel.
2. In the chapter, "Disperse, Ye Rebels!" Johnny has a dream about lobsters. Describe this dream and explain what it reveals to us about Sam Adams, John Hancock, and Johnny himself. Be sure to use examples from the novel.
3. Imagine a "Chapter 13" to the novel, *Johnny Tremain*. Write the chapter, describing what happens to Johnny, Cilla, Paul Revere, Sam Adams, Lt. Stranger, or any other characters in the novel. Be sure that if you choose to write about actual historical figures that your new chapter is in accordance with history as it actually happened. Use your imagination, but make sure that your chapter fits in with the events, characters, and personalities already established in the novel.

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—B—

1. What does James Otis believe the American Revolution is being fought for? In other words, what are the “principles” the American Revolutionaries were willing to die for? Do you think these things are worth fighting and dying for? Why? Be specific, using examples from the novel.

2. In the Christian tradition of the “just war,” a number of conditions must be met before a war can be considered to be fair, legitimate, or just. Among these conditions are the following:
 - The war must be a last resort. All other methods of resolving the conflict must have been tried and found to fail.
 - The war must be fought for a good cause, such as repelling invaders or defending the innocent.
 - The damage that will be caused by the war must not exceed the good that the war will bring about.
 - The war must not deliberately target civilians.

Imagine that you are a minister living at the time of *Johnny Tremain* and that you know as much about the background and causes of the American Revolution as Johnny does, but no more. Write an argument either defending or attacking the idea that the American Revolution will be a “just war.”

3. The reader of *Johnny Tremain* is able to learn a great deal about the daily life of the apprentices, shopkeepers, merchants, and housewives of Boston. Using examples from the novel, describe how life in 18th-century Boston was different from and similar to life in the 20th century in your town.

Additional Resources

Other books by Esther Forbes

- Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* published by Peter Smith, Publisher, Inc.,
for grades 5–8
- America's Paul Revere* grades 3–5, published by Houghton Mifflin
Co.

Books of Related Interest:

- Ben And Me* by Robert Lawson, grades 4–6
- Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson, grades 4–6
- The Light and the Glory* by Peter Marshall and David Manuel,
published by Fleming H. Revell Co.
- This Dear-Bought Land* by Jean Lee Latham
- Carry On, Mr. Bowditch* by Jean Lee Latham, grades 5–7
- Sarah Bishop* by Scott O'Dell, grades 6–8
- The King's Fifth* by Scott O'Dell, grades 6–8
- America in Maps Dating From
1500 to 1856* compiled and edited by Egon Kemp.
Reproductions of many early American
maps
- A Book of Old Maps Delineating
American History From the
Earliest Days Down to the
Close of the Revolutionary War* compiled and edited by Emerson D. Fite
and Archibald Freeman. Includes colonial
maps of the city of Boston
- The Bloody Country* by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher
Collier, grades 7–9, published by
Scholastic, for mature readers

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My Brother Sam is Dead

by James Lincoln Collier, grades 7–9,
published by Scholastic, a Newbery
Honor Book, for mature readers

The Winter Hero

by James Lincoln Collier, grades 7–9,
published by Scholastic, for mature
readers

*The Secret Soldier: The Story of
Deborah Sampson*

by Ann McGovern, a biography of a young
woman who disguised herself as a man to
fight in the Revolutionary War. Grades
4–6, published by Scholastic

Phoebe the Spy

by Judith Berry Griffin, based on a true
story of a black girl who helps General
Washington. Grades 4–6, published by
Scholastic