



Summer Reading Instructions
Eighth Grade

July 2010

Dear Incoming Eighth Graders,

Your summer reading assignment for English will consist of reading one book. That book is Howard Fast's classic novel of the American Revolution *April Morning*. Narrated in the first-person by a 15 year-old boy whose "secure and sun-warmed existence" is violently disrupted by historical events that unfold on one particular day in history, this heartfelt story examines both Adam Cooper's coming of age and our country's birth as a free nation. [You received a copy of this book at our Renaissance School end of year ceremony.](#)

For the *April Morning* assignment, you will answer one question from each chapter (attached). Please follow the directions for this assignment. It is due on the first week of classes in September. A description of the characters in the book is attached as well as a response guide for assisting you in answering your questions in a clear, concise manner. Because we will continue the study of this novel in class, I would recommend re-reading it in August so that its details will be fresh in your mind.

[Optional reading:](#)

[For additional reading you may choose to read the summer reading books assigned to the students of RHP. These books are 1\) *Abraham Lincoln* by Tanya Lee Stone, DK publishing, inc., ISBN 978-0-7566-0834-7,\\$4.99, and 2\) *Charles Darwin*, by David C. King, DK publishing, inc., ISBN 978-0-7566-2554-2,\\$5.99. These books are not required reading for Renaissance students.](#)

Have a wonderful summer reading under a tree somewhere, as I'm looking forward to doing, and feel free to read more than is required!

Sincerely,
Ms. Morris



April Morning Questions

Answer each question concisely and accurately in a **medium** length paragraph (5-7 sentences, but some answers might be a *bit* longer).

Please:

1. Type/ word process your answers
2. Label each answer by number.
3. Use a clear **14** font
4. Double-space your answers.
5. Begin your answer with a statement that restates the question. (See my example on the *April Morning response guide* below).
6. Attach this sheet to your answers.
7. Punctuate direct quotations correctly if you use them in your answer and cite them correctly by the page number:

Example of how to write and cite a quotation: "They shouted at me, but the fact of it was that I didn't feel like a boy any more" (71).

8. Email your responses as you complete each question to me at hmorris@rollinghillsprep.org

Here are the questions:

1. "The Afternoon": Describe Adam's relationships with the members of his family, including his father, his mother, his grandmother, and his brother. Try to characterize each relationship specifically, giving examples from the book.
2. "The Evening": Much of this chapter focuses on Committee activities. What exactly is the Committee? Briefly relate their main business. How would you characterize Moses Cooper's position on the Committee?
3. "The Night": Adam makes an extremely important decision in this chapter. How does his mother respond to this decision? How does his father learn of Adam's decision, and how does he (Moses) respond?
4. "The Morning": On pages 100 and 101, the book reaches its climax as the confrontation with the British turns into a bloodbath. What happens? Describe Adam's reaction to the scene around him.



5. "The Forenoon": At the beginning of this chapter, Adam is in a state of shock over the turn of events on the Common. Whom does he meet, and how does this person help him come to terms with what has transpired?
6. "The Middy": Cousin Simmons tries to explain to Adam why they must risk their lives to fight the British. Summarize the philosophy that drives the men to continue the fight.
7. "The Afternoon": When Adam is shooting at the British from under the windfall, what happens to him? What do you think the author is trying to show by this?
8. "The Evening": In addition to being a historical novel, *April Morning* is a classic coming-of-age story. What evidence exists in this chapter that Adam has changed from a boy into a man?

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR BOOK TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER!



April Morning

Questions Response Guide

Use this guide as a suggestion of how to begin your answer to each of the eight questions on the attached question sheet. Notice how each of the statements below rephrase the question from the question sheet. The “...” indicate where you complete the answer with information from the book. Notice on question one there are really four parts to answer. In question two there are three parts. I recommend you email me your responses as you write them. After you read part one, “The Afternoon”, write your response and send it to me. I will edit your work and send it back. You can submit your work as often as you like until the assignment is due. The assignment is due the first week of classes.

1. In the book, *April Morning* by Howard Fast, Adam Cooper, a fifteen-year-old colonist, faces war, and is forced to grow up quickly. Adam has differing relationships with his four family members. His relationship with his father is... His relationship with his mother...His relationship with his grandmother... His relationship with his brother, Levi, ...
2. Adam’s community is faced with a problem of the interfering British troops. A group of men from the community called The Committee...They decide to... Moses Cooper is an important man in the community because the committee follows his suggestion which is...
3. During the night a messenger tells the community that the British soldiers are on their way to their town. Adam is faced with the decision of ...
4. In the morning the men stand on the common and face the British soldiers. Instead of a reasonable conversation there is a blood bath and Adam witnesses...



5. After the initial shock of the events on the common Adam runs away but meets up with

6. After the killing of the men on the commons of Lexington, the men of the nearby communities meet on neighboring farms to seek revenge on the British soldiers and attack them as they march to Concord to take the colonists ammunitions. Adam's cousin, Joseph Simmons, explains to Adam just why the colonists are fighting the British. Cousin Simmons' philosophy is ...

7. As the battle wages on Adam, out of sight amongst some fallen trees ... The author, Howard Fast, is trying to show...

8. After standing up to the British soldiers in Lexington, and fighting them along the road to and from Concord, Adam returns home a changed young man. Adam no longer... but is now instead... (cite specific actions of Adam's in this chapter).



April Morning

Setting: Lexington, Massachusetts, by Howard Fast April 18-19, 1775, on the eve of
The American Revolution

Characters:

The Coopers: A hard-working Massachusetts farm family

- Adam, 15, is a sensitive teenager who struggles for the love and respect of his strict father.
- Levi, 11, is Adam's pesky little brother. They fight, as siblings do, but they share a deep affection.
- Moses Cooper, Adam's father, is a proud, demanding, and fiercely principled man. He loves Adam but accuses him of immaturity and a poor work ethic. He wants him to grow up and accept more adult responsibilities.
- Sarah Cooper, Adam's mother, is a loving and caring woman. She tries to persuade her husband to be kinder to his son.
- Granny Cooper, Adam's grandmother, is a wise, no-nonsense, opinionated, affectionate friend to Adam. Adam turns to her for understanding and affirmation.

The Simmonses: The Coopers' distant cousins, friends, and neighbors

- Joseph Simmons, Ruth's father, is Adam's quiet, thoughtful, sincere neighbor. He is instrumental in helping Adam cope with the shocking events as the day unfolds.
- Mrs. Simmons, Joseph's wife and Ruth's mother, appears briefly as a dedicated, religious woman. She has a widowed sister who lives with the family.
- Ruth Simmons is Adam's girlfriend. Though they are very young, Ruth and Adam share conversations about the future which discuss Adam's role in the impending battle and their prospective life together.



The Reverend Clarke (a real historical figure) is the town's temperate, wise, and honored spiritual leader who helps Adam come to terms with the reality of their changing life in Lexington. A pacifist, as all the men are, he is involved in both the Committee and the militia.

Jonas Parker (a real historical figure whose first name, John, has been changed by Fast to Jonas) is the Captain of the Militia. He conducts the Committee meetings and commands the militia. The graphic on this page depicts the statue that stands in his honor on Lexington Green.

Solomon Chandler is an old veteran soldier of the French and Indian Wars who helps Adam overcome his panic after the battle on the common. Though he is kind and understanding to Adam, Adam quickly discovers that his philosophy of war directly conflicts with the Lexington men's.