



STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 9-12

The House of the Scorpion

Nancy Farmer

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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Name _____

Anticipation Guide

Directions: Rate each of the following statements before you read the novel and discuss your ratings with a partner. After you have completed the novel, rate and discuss the statements again.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6
 strongly agree strongly disagree

	Before	After
1. A child's environment is more important than heredity to his or her ethical development.	_____	_____
2. A child's heredity is more important than environment to his or her ethical development.	_____	_____
3. The positive influence of one honorable person can overpower the evil influence of many.	_____	_____
4. Complete isolation from human contact destroys a person's will to live.	_____	_____
5. Self-preservation supersedes empathy for others.	_____	_____
6. A morally-corrupt person is destined for destruction from the time of his or her birth.	_____	_____
7. Poverty is more likely than wealth to corrupt an individual's ethics.	_____	_____
8. Wealth is more likely than poverty to corrupt an individual's ethics.	_____	_____
9. A person can be brainwashed into believing a lie.	_____	_____
10. A child's character is molded during the first five years of life.	_____	_____

Name _____

Vocabulary Word Map

plankton (262)	earnest (267)	communal (272)	purgatory (279)
rancid (283)	crestfallen (292)	drones (300)	imperious (302)
wheedling (302)	lackey (303)	exhorting (335)	euphoria (338)
mausoleum (349)	copal (350)	holographic (354)	mutiny (358)
squalid (362)			

Directions: Choose seven words from the vocabulary list above. Complete a word map for each word and share with the class.

Synonyms _____ _____ _____	Antonyms _____ _____ _____
WORD _____	
Definition in your own words _____ _____ _____	Used in a sentence _____ _____ _____

Name _____

8. *What does Matt do to Tom? Why? How does Tom retaliate? What do you think this reveals about Tom?
9. *How does Matt react to the arrival of Celia and María? Why do you think he does this?
10. ***Prediction:** Will Celia be able to rescue Matt? If so, how?

Chapters 6–7, pp. 52–74

1. Where does Rosa take Matt? What instructions does she give him? What does she threaten to do if he does not obey her? How does Matt react?
2. How does El Patrón treat Matt? How does Matt respond?
3. Who tells El Patrón about Matt’s mistreatment? How does El Patrón react?
4. *What happens to Rosa? What do you think this implies?
5. *What is María supposed to get Matt to do? How does he react? Why does he react this way? How do you think she can achieve her goal?
6. *Before leaving the estate, what instructions does El Patrón give concerning Matt? Explain why you do or do not think the family will obey these instructions.
7. *Whom does Matt choose as his bodyguard? Why does he do so? Explain why you do or do not think Matt makes a wise choice.
8. *How does Matt react to María’s departure? Why do you think he does this?
9. *To what does Tam Lin compare El Patrón? Why do you think he tells Matt this?
10. What causes Matt to speak?
11. *How does Tam Lin react to Teacher’s distress? What do you think he means when he says, “You poor, sad creature. I didn’t know what I was looking at until now” (p. 73)?
12. ***Prediction:** Where will Tam Lin take Matt? Why is this significant?

Chapters 8–10, pp. 75–101

1. Where does Tam Lin take Matt? What does Matt discover about Farm laborers?
2. Identify a “Safe Horse” and an “eejit.”
3. What does Tam Lin tell Matt about his origin as a clone? How does Matt react?
4. *What does Tam Lin tell Matt about the people who love him and those who hate him? Why do you think this information is significant?
5. Who is Furball? What does Matt hate about the creature?
6. *How does Matt discover the secret passage? What do you think this foreshadows?
7. What motivates Matt to learn to play the piano? Who is his teacher? What is unique about this man?

Name _____

Character Web

Directions: Complete the attribute web by filling in information specific to El Patrón.

