

# The House of the Scorpion

Nancy Farmer

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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### STUDENT PACKET

### **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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**Before** 

**After** 

### **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

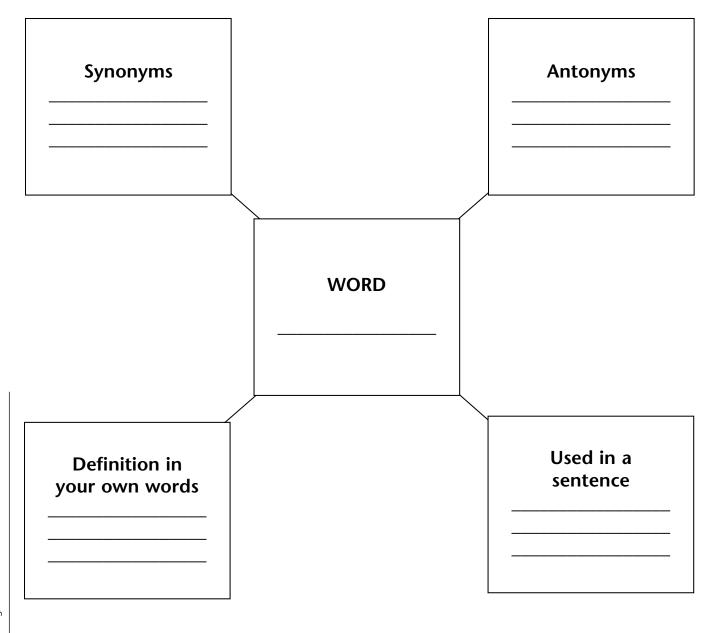
- 1. A child's environment is more important than heredity to his or her ethical development.
- 2. A child's heredity is more important than environment to his or her ethical development.
- 3. The positive influence of one honorable person can overpower the evil influence of many.
- 4. Complete isolation 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
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# **Vocabulary Word Map**

plankton (262) rancid (283) wheedling (302) mausoleum (349) squalid (362)	earnest (267) crestfallen (292) lackey (303) copal (350)	communal (272) drones (300) exhorting (335) holographic (354)	purgatory (279) imperious (302) euphoria (338) mutiny (358)	
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**Directions:** Choose seven words from the vocabulary list above. Complete a word map for each word and share with the class.



- 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?

### **Character Web**

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

