

7th Grade Study Groups *House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer

CCCS- 7L1-L4, L6 (analysis, theme, story elements, text meanings, point of view); Writing 7L9 (provide supporting evidence), Speaking and Listening 7L1 (collaboration); Speaking and Listening (informal speaking); Voc 7L4 (words in context; Convention & 11-3 (usage, sentence structure, commas, precise language)

Resources: *House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer and questions

Essential Question(s):

1. How do reading strategies enable independent learning?
2. How should I read different types of texts? How are reading strategies used to understand various texts?
3. What techniques do good writers use? How do effective writers hook and hold their readers? Why write?
4. What makes a writer easy to follow? How is information accessed and used to communicate clearly and effectively?

House of the Scorpion

You will be responsible for reading this book and answering questions to be prepared for a book group meeting. You do not have to write the questions but write the answers including the question inside the answer. Write the date in the date column. Attach the page to the top of your finished answers. Be sure to assess yourself in pencil for the rubric to self assess.

Be prepared to seminar the following questions and support your opinion with details from the book.



Seminar Topics

As a culmination to *The House of the Scorpion*, be prepared to seminar the following **THEMES** from the novel. Remember: a **THEME** of a literary work is an insight about life or human nature that the writer presents to the reader. In *The House of the Scorpion*, Nancy Farmer shares some of her ideas about **life and death, shame, identity, family, and friendship**. Reflect back to your small group discussions while formulating your ideas.

- It is often challenging to find one's place in society.
- In order to grow, one needs to accept responsibility for his or her actions.
- A negative experience can have positive results.
- It is better to fight with dignity than surrender in shame.
- The community is a necessary support for individuals.

Book Group **Date** _____ **Chapters 1- 9**

Book Group **Date** _____ **Chapter 10 – 21**

Book Group **Date** _____ **Chapter 21 - 38**

Name _____

Date	Ch.	House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer Book Group Questions
	1-3	1. Describe Matt's relationship with Celia. 2. Celia snaps at Matt when he calls her mama. Then she says to him, "I love you more than anything in the world. Never forget that. But you were only loaned to me, mi vida." Why doesn't she explain the term loaned to Matt? 3. How does Celia continue to protect Matt throughout his life on the Alacrán Estate? 4. Matteo Alacrán is the clone of El Patrón, the lord of the country called Opium, and lives in isolation until children playing in the poppy fields discover him. Why is he so eager to talk to the children, after he is warned against it?
	4-6	5. Why is Mariá especially attracted to Matt? 6. After the children discover Matt, he is taken from Celia and imprisoned in a stall for six months with only straw for a bed. How might prison be considered a metaphor for his entire life? Who is the warden of his prison? 7. Rosá describes El Patrón as a bandit. How has El Patrón stolen the lives of all those living on his estate?
	7-9	8. Explain what Tam Lin is trying to tell Matt when he says, "If you are kind and decent, you grow into a kind and decent man. If you're like El Patrón...just think about it." Considering that Matt is the clone of El Patrón, debate whether environment influences evil more than genetics. 9. What is the role of Mariá, Celia, and Tam Lin in helping Matt escape his prison.
	10-14	10. El Patrón celebrates his 143rd birthday with a large party. Though Matt was "harvested," and doesn't really have a birthday, the celebration is for him as well, since he is El Patrón's clone. How does Matt imitate El Patrón's power when he demands a birthday kiss from Mariá? 11. At what point does Matt realize that Tom is dangerous? He remembers what Tam Lin had told him, "If you didn't know Tom well, you'd think he is an angel bringing you the keys to the pearly gates." 12. Why does Celia feel that Matt deserves the truth once he has seen the clones? Explain how this is a turning point for Matt in regards to his identity.
	16-21	13. Write one "thick" question that can be answered in a paragraph of 50 words. Answer this question. 14. Write one "thin" question that can be answered in one sentence. Answer this question.
	22-27	15. What gives Celia the courage to stand up to El Patrón and refuse to let Matt be used for a heart transplant? 16. What does El Patrón mean when he says to Celia, "We make a fine pair of scorpions, don't we?" Explain why she is insulted by this comment. 17. How does Tam Lin know that Matt's future lies in finding the Convent of Santa Clara?
	28-30	18. Describe Matt's journey to the convent. What does he discover along the way?
	31-34	19. Discuss Esperanza's role in helping Matt gain his ultimate freedom -- to live as a human.
	35-38	20. Relate this novel to bullying or stereotyping others.
200		You have answered 20 questions with clarity, completeness, and understanding. There are few grammatical mistakes.
190-170		You answered at least 19-17 points of emphasis with clarity, completeness, and understanding. There are few grammatical mistakes.
160-140		You answered at least 16-14 points of emphasis with clarity, completeness, and understanding. There are several grammatical mistakes.
130-111		You answered at least 13-11 points of emphasis with little clarity and little understanding. You may not have completed some of them. (You may add to your assignment for 10 points.)
100-0		You answered less than 10 points of emphasis, or you did not complete some of them.

Observations – On Task= 100 points

Average of all written questions & observations _____ Total out of 300 _____