Interpretive Community Discussion

Instructor Guide

*Most of these questions allow for multiple interpretations. Answers will vary, but listed below are possible responses.*

**Understanding the Central Person**

1. What seems to drive Sebastian to action?
   1. Sebastian is thrown into the world “outside of the dome” by the illness of his grandmother.
   2. Meeting the Whitcomb family changes Sebastian’s worldview and idea of people who live differently than he does.
2. What incidents tell us most about Sebastian?
   1. When his Grandmother kicks him out of the house, he follows her instruction without question.
   2. Sebastian steals the guitar from the church without remorse, showing his skewed sense of morality.
   3. For Jared’s health and self-efficacy, Sebastian goes behind his back to promote “The Rash”.
   4. Even though he is in love with Meredith, Sebastian respectfully stays away from her out of respect for Jared.
3. Would you be friends with Sebastian? If so, what would you have in common?
   1. Sebastian is vary talented in math and sees the world around him as an engineer would.
   2. Although he is new to punk music, he absolutely loves it.
   3. Sebastian is interested in finding new and interesting bands.
4. If you could ask Sebastian one question, what would it be?
   1. What was it like living in a dome with your grandmother?
   2. Do you ever wish you had privacy?
   3. I know that you are good at math, but do you like it?
   4. What would you do with your time if it were your last day on Earth?

**Exploring the World of Characters**

1. What other characters in *The House of Tomorrow* attract your special attention?
   1. Meredith, the love interest.
   2. Jared, the punk-rocker friend.
   3. Nana, the lunatic old woman.
2. Do some of the other characters represent values or ideas beyond themselves?
   1. Meredith and Jared show childhood trauma – Meredith displays her frustration physically, where Jared turns inward and is consistently angry.
   2. Janice Whitcomb represents the nurturing mother that Sebastian has never had.
3. Which character is the most mysterious and hardest to understand?
   1. Mr. Whitcomb is mysterious, as he never appears in the novel.
   2. Meredith has a lot of secrets regarding her nightly affairs. Why does she let people think she is promiscuous only to kick them out?
4. Does any character that seems peripheral or mysterious or minor play an important role in the story?
   1. Mr. Whitcomb never appears in the novel, but is responsible for much of the heartache in the Whitcomb family.
   2. Bucky’s philosophy controls the lives of Sebastian and his grandmother, although he is dead once the novel takes place.

**Imagining Characters in Our World**

1. Choose a character in *The House of Tomorrow*: what serious matters could you talk about with this person?

a. Nana – sustainable energy and architecture.

b. Whitcomb family – divorce, religion, and heart transplant issues.

2. Choose any character in *The House of Tomorrow*: what television program or movie (if any) would be most appealing to this person? Why?

a. Sebastian – Myth Busters or the SciFi channel to consider whether or not the things shown were actually possible.

**Considering Any Discussion of Characters**

1. Has the text done justice to the audience – in other words, is the character believable?
2. Have we done justice to the complexity of this person in the text through discussion?