

## READING ACTIVITY

### 1/4

### THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

**Read the excerpt from Chapter One and then do the activities below.**

At the end of the seventeenth century Pyncheon Street was known as Maule's Lane, because Matthew Maule had built a small, simple hut there. He was a wizard and practiced witchcraft, which was a crime in the Puritan community.

Colonel Pyncheon was a clever and powerful man in town. He liked Matthew Maule's property and wanted it for himself, but Maule refused to sell it to him. The Colonel was a very determined man and Maule was very stubborn so the disagreement lasted a long time. After several years, Colonel Pyncheon accused Matthew Maule of witchcraft and decided to hang him. It was a horrible death sentence. On the day of the hanging, all the important people from the town came to watch and cried out passionately against witchcraft. Colonel Pyncheon was there sitting on his horse shouting loudly too. Matthew Maule pointed a finger at him and said, "God will give him blood to drink!" This was Maule's curse, which followed the Pyncheon family for centuries.

After Maule's death Colonel Pyncheon built a huge family home where Maule's small hut had been. The townspeople couldn't understand why he wanted to build a house on a place which was cursed. But the Colonel was a determined man and he began living there.

One day when the governor went to visit Colonel Pyncheon, he found him dead in his study. The Colonel was sitting at his desk with a pen in his hand and some letters and other papers in front of him. There was blood on his beard, shirt collar and neck. The doctor said he had died of a heart attack, but people talked about murder since the window near the Colonel's chair was open and a man was seen running away. The Pyncheon family became less important over the years. Most of the Colonel's family were not happy about owning the House of the Seven Gables, because they knew about Maule's curse.

At the time of our story, Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon, a direct descendant of Colonel Pyncheon, was a rich and important member of society. He was similar to his ancestor because he was a clever and powerful politician. There were few other Pyncheons left: a seventeen year old girl, a murderer who was in prison and his sister.



## READING ACTIVITY

2/4



### EXERCISES

#### 1 Choose the correct answer—a, b, or c.

##### 1. Matthew Maule was

- a. a clever and powerful man.
- b. a wizard.
- c. a murderer.

##### 2. Before the hanging, Matthew Maule

- a. cried out passionately.
- b. was very frightened.
- c. cursed Colonel Pyncheon.

##### 3. The House of the Seven Gables

- a. was built by Matthew Maule.
- b. was built by Colonel Pyncheon.
- c. belonged to seventeen year old girl.

##### 4. Jaffrey Pyncheon was

- a. a judge.
- b. the Colonel's son.
- c. a doctor.



## READING ACTIVITY

3/4



### 2 Are the following sentences true (T) or false (F)?

1. Maule's Lane was the old name of Pyncheon Street.  T  F
2. Witchcraft was considered a crime in the Puritan community.  T  F
3. Matthew Maule wanted a lot of money for his property.  T  F
4. Colonel Pyncheon built a small house on Maule's property.  T  F
5. The doctor found Colonel Pyncheon dead in his study.  T  F
6. A murderer was part of the Pyncheon family.  T  F

