

## Reading Guide

### *OldEarth Melchior Encounter*

#### Secondary

- 1 The novel, *OldEarth Melchior Encounter*, is set in the fifth century, AD. Which elements show how different that time was from modern society? Are there any elements similar to modern times?
- 2 Which characters seemed the most vivid? What made them come alive?
- 3 How are the five senses called into play in the novel? Do they help to set the novel in its era or do they emphasize human commonalities throughout time and place?
- 4 What are some of the key parent and child relationships examined in the story? Are they relatable in today's world?
- 5 How does the alien world view humanity? Is there a sense of closure to the story despite the fact that the aliens will live beyond the human lifetime?

#### Adult/Book Clubs

- 1 Marriage can be a complicated human relationship. How is that reality exposed throughout the novel?
- 2 Could any aspects of the main storyline take place in the modern world? How might that look? Where might it happen?
- 3 Who are the real enemies in the novel? Does everyone identify the same enemy? How do friends and enemies change places in the novel?
- 4 What were some of the worst decisions made in the story? What were some of the best decisions?
- 5 Who is your favorite alien character? Why?

#### Paperback/Journal Reflections

- 1 Were there any aspects of the story that hit a nerve with me? Why?
- 2 Who did I hate in the story? Who did I love? Did he or she remind me of anyone in my real life?

**3** If I were born in the fifth century, which character would I most relate to?

**4** Though slavery isn't legal in civilized societies today, we realize that slavery still exists in many forms. How could anyone justify it at any time? Do I face the reality of it as a scourge on humanity or ignore it? How does the reality of slavery or human abuse affect me? How can I best deal with this issue?

**5** Did I feel closure at the end of the novel, though the aliens will live beyond the humans? If I were able to continue the story, who would I follow, and what would happen next?