



## When the de la Cruz Family Danced

by Donna Miscolta

### Book Club Discussion Questions

1. What does the title *When the de la Cruz Family Danced* refer to? What meaning does dance have in the lives of this family? Why does Tessie take dance lessons? Why does she keep them secret?
2. In many cultures, sons are coveted more than daughters. Both Johnny and Tessie have felt the lack of a son. Beyond this lack based in their cultures, is there something else that motivates each of them to yearn for a son?
3. How do the multiple points of view contribute to the development of the story and how information is revealed?
4. How did the circumstances of Johnny's departure from the Philippines affect his assimilation into a new life in America?
5. How has Johnny's sense of detachment from his past affected his relationship with the present?
6. How has Johnny's sense of himself affected his relationship with his daughters?
7. Winston is looking for a sense of family. What are the de la Cruzes looking for?
8. What role does Hector Cabrera play in the story?
9. Describe the de la Cruz family members in terms of their aspirations and expectations in life. How do they differ from how Winston moves about in the world? What are the sources of these differences?
10. Discuss assimilation, identity, and belonging as they relate to the characters in the novel.