

English 2 Honors | Summer Requirement

METEA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT



Get the book!

- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd (purchase or borrow from library)

Increase your background knowledge!

The Secret Life of Bees is set in the American South against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement. Kidd intertwines historical events and the study of honey bees with the fictional lives of her characters. She begins the story on July 1, 1964, with her young protagonist, Lily Owens, laying in her bed “waiting for the bees” (2). On July 2, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Check out the following links for background on this landmark legislation and details about Monk’s inspiration for the novel.

- History.com video - <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-act>
- A Conversation with Sue Monk Kidd - <http://suemonkidd.com/books/the-secret-life-of-bees/reading-groups/>

Complete the following assignments:

- ❑ TAKE NOTES: The title of the novel comes from August Boatwright’s statement: “Most people don’t have any idea about all the complicated life going on inside a hive. Bees have a secret life we don’t know anything about” (148). Kidd’s story includes several characters who are not what they seem on the surface. Secrets and secret lives are major **thematic topics**. The novel also explores issues regarding coming of age, searching for identity, the meaning of family, the need for love, the resilience of the human spirit, discrimination & inequality (race, gender, class), power, and more. As you read, annotate for textual evidence that will help you figure out what Kidd is saying about the above issues.
 - ❑ Label **literary devices** such as simile, metaphor, imagery, allusion, personification, symbolism, motifs , etc. whenever possible.
- ❑ CHECK YOUR SKILLS: As you are reading the book, stop after chapters 2, 8, and 14 to complete an Annotation Skills Check (attached) *for that specific chapter*. This is in addition to the **annotations** you should be making throughout the novel.
- ❑ LOOK UP ALLUSIONS: Use the attached graphic organizer to keep track of Kidd’s **allusions**.
- ❑ PREPARE FOR DISCUSSION: Pick one of the novel’s thematic topics/issues that speaks to you as a reader (secrets, family, love, power, inequality, etc.). What do you think Kidd is saying about these issues? Use the graphic organizer to record your notes.

If you have any questions regarding these assignments, please feel free to contact any of the teachers below for clarification.

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Annotations Skills Check Directions:

1. Read **chapter 2**.
2. In addition to **literary devices** and **theme**, make sure you are annotating the text for the following elements: **self-questions, inferences, predictions, vocabulary, summaries**. Highlight, underline, or otherwise note areas of the text you deem valuable to your reading. Please make appropriate annotations in the margins for these areas.
3. When you have finished reading and annotating the passage, answer the following questions.

SELF-QUESTIONING

Below, write a self-question you wrote on the passage annotated:

What is the **purpose** of that self-question? How is this question **valuable** in your **understanding** of the text?

INFERENCES

Below, write an inference you made in the text.

Reflect on your inference. **Why** did you make this inference? What **background knowledge** are you bringing to the text to make this inference?

PREDICTIONS

What **prediction** can you make from the text?

Provide the **textual support** from which you made this prediction.

SUMMARY

Provide a **summary** of the text in no more than 10 words.

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Annotations Skills Check Directions:

1. Read **chapter 8**.
2. In addition to **literary devices** and **theme**, make sure you are annotating the text for the following elements: **self-questions, inferences, predictions, vocabulary, summaries**. Highlight, underline, or otherwise note areas of the text you deem valuable to your reading. Please make appropriate annotations in the margins for these areas.
3. When you have finished reading and annotating the passage, answer the following questions.

SELF-QUESTIONING

Below, write a self-question you wrote on the passage annotated:

What is the **purpose** of that self-question? How is this question **valuable** in your **understanding** of the text?

INFERENCES

Below, write an inference you made in the text.

Reflect on your inference. **Why** did you make this inference? What **background knowledge** are you bringing to the text to make this inference?

PREDICTIONS

SUMMARY

What **prediction** can you make from the text?

Provide the **textual support** from which you made this prediction.

Provide a **summary** of the text in no more than 10 words.

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Annotations Skills Check Directions:

1. Read **chapter 14**.
2. In addition to **literary devices** and **theme**, make sure you are annotating the text for the following elements: **self-questions, inferences, predictions, vocabulary, summaries**. Highlight, underline, or otherwise note areas of the text you deem valuable to your reading. Please make appropriate annotations in the margins for these areas.
3. When you have finished reading and annotating the passage, answer the following questions.

SELF-QUESTIONING

Below, write a self-question you wrote on the passage annotated:

What is the **purpose** of that self-question? How is this question **valuable** in your **understanding** of the text?

INFERENCES

Below, write an inference you made in the text.

Reflect on your inference. **Why** did you make this inference? What **background knowledge** are you bringing to the text to make this inference?

PREDICTIONS

What **prediction** can you make from the text?

Provide the **textual support** from which you made this prediction.

SUMMARY

Provide a **summary** of the text in no more than 10 words.

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Summer Assignment: Allusions Graphic Organizer

Textual evidence (with page numbers) of allusions in the novel	What does this allusion refer to? Explain it in your own words.	Why do you think Kidd includes this allusion in her novel?
Ralph Waldo Emerson (16)		
President Johnson, his beagles, & Lady Bird (20)		
Martin Luther King getting arrested in Florida for wanting to eat at a restaurant (21)		
Shakespeare, Thoreau, <i>Walden Pond</i> , & Eleanor Roosevelt (57)		
Walter Cronkite, integration parade in St. Augustine, etc.		
The plagues, Moses, "Let my people go" (151)		
Ranger 7		
Others...		

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Preparing for Academic Conversation

Big Question: What is Sue Monk Kidd saying about secrets, family, love, power, inequality or one of the other thematic topics in the novel? How do you know?

Initial Thematic Claim:

What is Kidd saying about secrets?

Evidence:

Warrant:

Evidence:

Warrant:

What is Kidd saying about family?

Evidence:

Warrant:

Evidence:

Warrant:

What is Kidd saying about love?

Evidence:

Warrant:

Evidence:

Warrant:

What is Kidd saying about power and/or inequality?

Evidence:

Warrant:

Evidence:

Warrant:

More you want to say? Add it to the back! :-)