

English I Summer Reading - *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

- 1) Read the novel to prepare for your first test
- 2) Note-taking on the following thematic and comprehension questions in preparation for the summer reading test and other classroom discussion will help you with the Summer Reading Test and will count as Ten (10) Extra credit points on the test.

Study Questions

Please answer all questions in at least one complete sentence on notebook paper. Be sure to answer all questions thoroughly. Bring questions and answers stapled together neatly on the first day of class.

Chapter 1

1. What does the narrator (Lily) seem to long for at the very start of the novel?
2. What year did the bees come?
3. Who is Rosaleen?
4. Who is T Ray?
5. How old was Lily when her mother died? How did She die?
6. What did Lily hope to get from charm school and what really happened?
7. Describe the relationship between Lily and Rosaleen.
8. What items did Lily find in the attic?
9. What dreams did Lily have for her future? Who influenced these dreams?
10. Why did Rosaleen go into town on the 4th of July?
11. What did Rosaleen take from the church? Why did Rosaleen get arrested?

Chapter 2

12. Who caused Rosaleen's head injury and why?
13. Why was Lily so insistent that Rosaleen leave the hospital? Where do they plan to go?
14. When Lily shows Rosaleen the picture that says Tiburon, S. Carolina on it, what does Rosaleen comment on?

Chapter 3

15. What problem do Lily and Rosaleen confront when trying to figure out food and lodging?
16. What does Lily steal from the store?
17. What on the honey jar gets Lily's attention?
18. Who is August Boatwright?

Chapter 4

19. Describe June and May Boatwright.
20. Describe August Boatwright.
21. What surprised Lily about what she revealed to August?
22. What appears odd about May's behavior?

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23. What reason does Lily give August for running away?
24. Where did Lily and Rosaleen stay while with the Boatwright sisters?
25. Describe the stone wall.

Chapter 5

26. What was the mystery of “Oh Susanna?”
27. What were May’s talents?
28. What were June’s talents?
29. What did Lily overhear June and August talk about one night on the back porch?
30. Explain the purpose of the pieces of paper stuck into the stone wall.
31. How and why did April die?
32. What is the historical event that took place on Sept. 15 in Birmingham?
33. What does Lily put in the wall?

Chapter 6

34. Who is Neil?
35. Who are the Daughters of Mary?
36. According to the legend, why was it assumed that the statue was that of Jesus’ mother, Mary?
37. What was the “amazing secret” Lily stumbled upon?
38. Why is August critical of the NASA mission?

Chapter 7

39. Who is Zach Taylor?
40. Why does Lily break down crying with Zach?
41. Why was Rosaleen leaving the honey house?
42. What are Neil and June fighting about?
43. What gift did Zach bring Lily?

Chapter 8

44. Why does August use the Black Madonna on her honey jars?
45. What educational background do June and August have?
46. Explain the title of the book as it applies to the story lines.
47. What event surrounded the arrival of Jack Palance?
48. What one question does Lily ask her father and what’s his response?
49. What upset Lily about the Father’s Day card she made him when she was nine?
50. To whom does Lily pay a visit the night she goes to the house to use the bathroom?

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Chapter 9

51. What playful event broke the tension between June and Lily?
52. What event made Lily believe even stronger that her mother may have been in the pink house?
53. What prevents Lily from telling August the truth?
54. How did May learn about Zach's arrest?
55. What foreshadowing occurs at the end of chapter 9 by the imagery of its last line?

Chapter 10

56. What request does Lily make of May?
57. What were the circumstances surrounding the release of Zach from jail?
58. Why does Zach blame himself for what happened to May?
59. What was the reason behind covering the bee hives?
60. What does August explain is the reason for rituals?
61. Why is June afraid to marry Neil?
62. What is significant about the bees buzzing around the day of May's burial? Chapter 11
63. How much time has past since Lily ran away from home?
64. How had Zach changed since his arrest?
65. Why couldn't June go for a ride with Neil?
66. What happened that later allowed her to go?
67. What story does Lily reveal to Zach about the boys back home?

Chapter 12

68. What same poem did Lily and her mother have to learn for school?
69. Explain the quote, "August chewed more than she bit off." (244)
70. Who is Tica Tee?

Chapter 13

71. What question about her mother torments Lily?
72. What is the reason that the Daughters spread honey all over the statue?
73. What items (be specific) does August share with Lily?
74. What one item that August shares, helps heal Lily's broken heart?

Chapter 14

75. What new venture was Zach undertaking in the fall?
76. From whom does August say Lily can get her strength, consolation, and rescue?
77. What is the only purpose grand enough for human life?

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78. How did T Ray find Lily?

79. What item on Lily caught T Ray's attention and why?

80. What utterance snapped T Ray out of his trance?

81. What finally made T Ray decide to leave Lily with the women?

82. Who is Clayton and how is he helping Lily and Rosaleen?

83. Who is the wall keeper and why?