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 **Prestwick House**
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Literature Made Fun!



The Secret Life of Bees

BY SUE MONK KIDD



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Anticipation Guide**

Objectives: Making predictions about the novel
Thinking about themes of the novel before reading

Activity

Complete the following Anticipation Guide.

An Anticipation Guide is a series of questions or statements that relate to the novel you are getting ready to read. It is a way of considering some of the themes or ideas for yourself before you see how they are treated in the novel.

On the line beside each statement, place an “A” if you agree with the statement or a “D” if you disagree with the statement. Then make your prediction about the plot of the play in the space provided.

ANTICIPATION GUIDE FOR *THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES*

1. _____ All children should grow up with a mother and a father.
2. _____ A successful relationship is based upon honesty.
3. _____ Children should always obey their parents.
4. _____ It is best for children to have large extended families.
5. _____ No relationship will last forever, so it is pointless to get married.
6. _____ Women hold society together.

Predictions about Plot:

In the space below, write down what you think could happen in the novel based on the statements above.

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapters 1 – 3

Recognizing Figurative Language

Objective: Recognizing similes, metaphors, and personification

Activity

In Chapters One through Three, there are a number of similes, metaphors, and examples of personification used to describe things, actions, and people. On the chart provided, list at least ten you find in this section, identify which term is used, and the page numbers on which you find them. We have found one for you.

RECOGNIZING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART

Chapter	Example	Figurative Language
Chapter One	"wings shining like bits of chrome"	simile

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapter 4**Setting Sketch****Objective:** Visualizing setting details**Activity**

In Chapter Four, Lily and Rosaleen arrive at the home of the Boatwright sisters. The chapter contains vivid details of the inside of the house, and Kidd paints a picture with descriptions of the uniquely decorated and furnished home.

Draw the setting of this scene, transforming Kidd's use of imagery into an actual image. First, on a sheet of notebook paper, jot down the words from the text that describe the scene or objects. Include any mention of colors, where items are positioned in relation to others, textures, and any other details that can be drawn.

Then, on a sheet of plain white paper, draw the setting. Pay close attention to the details that are provided in the novel, and fill in any informational gaps with your own ideas.

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapters 1 – 7**Point of View**

Objectives: Recognizing the point of view used in the novel
Rewriting a portion of the chapter in a different point of view

Activity

The entire novel is told in the first-person point of view by the main character, Lily Owens. As such, the reader must rely solely on Lily's interpretation of events, even those for which she is just an observer.

Choose one of the scenes listed from Chapter One through Chapter Seven to rewrite from another character's point of view. Include the thoughts, feelings, and comments of the character who now narrates the scene. Try to make your new version as long or longer than the origin. Use the chart on the following page.

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapters 1 – 14

Epigraphs

Objective: Making connections between the epigraph at the beginning of each chapter and the contents of the chapter

Activity

Sue Monk Kidd includes a short epigraph at the beginning of each chapter. She has pulled these paragraphs from various books about bees and beekeeping. Why do you suppose she includes these epigraphs—what is the connection between the epigraph and the chapter itself?

For this activity, you will examine this connection. As you read through this book, read the epigraph first, then read the chapter, and then re-read the epigraph. In the space provided on the chart, write how you think each epigraph relates to the chapter. We have done the first one for you as an example.

CHAPTER EPIGRAPHS

Chapter	Epigraph	Connection
Chapter One	“The queen, for her part, is the unifying force of the community; if she is removed from the hive, the workers very quickly sense her absence. After a few hours, or even less, they show unmistakable signs of queenlessness.”	Answers will vary. Sample response: In losing her mother, Lily has lost her “queen.”
Chapter Two	“On leaving the old nest, the swarm normally flies only a few metres and settles. Scout bees look for a suitable place to start the new colony. Eventually, one location wins favor and the whole swarm takes to the air.”	
Chapter Three	“New beekeepers are told that the way to find the elusive queen is by first locating her circle of attendants.”	
Chapter Four	“Honeybees are social insects and live in colonies. Each colony is a family unit, comprising a single, egg-laying female or queen and her many sterile daughters called workers. The workers cooperate in the food-gathering, nest-building and rearing the offspring. Males are reared only at the times of year when their presence is required.	

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapter 8

Researching History

Objective: Researching the history of the black Madonna

Activity

In this chapter, Lily helps August paste labels onto fresh jars of honey. She takes a moment to carefully study the picture of the Black Madonna she had seen so many times since arriving at August's house:

“I admired the fancy gold scarf draped over her head, how it was decorated with red stars. Her eyes were mysterious and kind and her skin dark brown with a glow, darker than toast and looking a little like it had been buttered... ‘I hope you don't take this the wrong way,’ I said. ‘But I never thought of the Virgin Mary being colored till I saw this picture.’”

August tells Lily that dark-skinned Marys are “not as unusual as you think. There are hundreds of them over in Europe.”

For this activity, research Black Madonnas to better understand their history and significance. Use the chart provided to guide your research, and write your notes on the chart.

BLACK MADONNA RESEARCH

Number in existence:

Geographic location of black Madonnas:

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading: Chapter 13**Letter Writing**

Objective: Synthesizing character traits by adopting a persona from the novel
Recognizing the impact of certain events on different characters

Activity

During Chapter Thirteen, Lily tries to understand why her mother abandoned her. August comes into Lily's room with a box of Deborah's belongings and, with some hesitation, Lily looks at each item and listens to what August has to say. Slowly, Lily starts to understand and forgive her mother, but many of her questions go unanswered. Her mother's identity, to a great extent, will remain a mystery that Lily has to accept. What Lily could really use at this time is a letter from mother.

For this activity, assume the identity of Lily's mother, and write a letter to Lily explaining your actions. Include your feelings for Lily, why you left and why you left.