



Reading Guide for The Secret Life of Bees and Three Cups of Tea

During the 2009-2010 school year, teachers will incorporate some activity, project, discussion, or other assessment, based on the book chosen for the semester. The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd will be investigated in the first semester and Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin will be explored in the second semester. Consequently, students will encounter each book 3 or 4 times in their classes. Therefore, we offer the following suggestions to help you prepare for those activities. You may think of other ways to prepare as you read the book. The assessments in each class will count as 2% of the final grade.

- Don't see the movie until you have read the book! Then, compare and contrast the movie and the book.
- Form a book club with parents and friends and talk about the book.
- Keep a Reading Log or Reader Response Journal as you read the book, and record your thoughts, ideas, reactions and questions.
- Take notes on such things as setting, plot, characters, and themes as you read. Try this after reading each chapter.
- If you have purchased your own copy of the book, highlight passages about which you might have thoughts, ideas, reactions or questions.
- If you have not purchased your own copy of the book, use Post-It Notes to mark passages about which you might have thoughts, ideas, reactions or questions.
- Keep a list of the moral/ethical decisions the characters make. How do they compare with the teachings of the Catholic Church?
- Create a timeline or outline of the events of the book.
- Use the discussion questions to talk about the book with friends and parents. (You may have discussion questions in your book, and they are also available online.)
- Critique the book after reading each chapter.
- Write your own discussion questions.
- Pay attention to news headlines and current events that connect with the themes of the book.
- Imagine you are the teacher. Write out a list of questions that you would include on a test, or try to think of other ways your teacher might evaluate your understanding of the book. Then, email your ideas to the teacher!
- Visit the following websites and find out more about the author and the book.

The Secret Life of Bees: <http://www.suemonkkidd.com/SecretLifeOfBees/default.aspx>

Three Cups of Tea: <http://www.threecupsoftea.com/>