

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 10–12

by Sue Monk Kidd

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: accord, anguish, concoct, delicacy, feverish, foraging, industrious, neurotic, semblance, submerged

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview 3

Caution: share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context 5

Caution: do not share with students

About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz (use after reading, or skip):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.

Vocabulary Sections for this Book:

Section 1 · Chapters 1–3 · Lily's life on the peach farm

Section 2 · Chapters 4–6 · A new home in Tiburon

Section 3 · Chapters 7–9 · Summer life at the pink house

Section 4 · Chapters 10–12 · Trouble reaches the pink house

Section 5 · Chapters 13–14 · Learning about Lily's mother

Bold = this section. Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.



verbalworkout.com

(all resources free)

Vocabulary Preview

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 10–12

by Sue Monk Kidd

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. The old gate swung open of its own **accord**, though no one had touched it.

- A. by its own power
- B. according to a plan
- C. on its own; spontaneously

2. Her face was twisted with **anguish** when she heard the news.

- A. bitter anger
- B. deep suffering
- C. sudden surprise

3. He tried to **concoct** an excuse for being late to class.

- A. quickly memorize
- B. carefully rehearse
- C. make up or invent

4. Fresh oysters are considered a **delicacy** in many coastal towns.

- A. a prized treat
- B. a common food
- C. a healthy snack

5. The fans grew **feverish** as the final seconds ticked away.

- A. wildly excited
- B. tense and anxious
- C. weak and exhausted

6. Squirrels were **foraging** beneath the oak trees all morning.

- A. fighting over territory
- B. searching for food
- C. digging out a burrow

7. The **industrious** student finished her project a week before it was due.

- A. hardworking and diligent
- B. neat and organized
- C. clever and gifted

8. She grew **neurotic** whenever she had to speak in front of a crowd.

- A. quiet and withdrawn
- B. anxiously obsessive
- C. angry and impatient

9. After the storm, the town slowly returned to some **semblance** of order.

- A. clear sign
- B. small amount
- C. outward appearance

10. The flood left the entire field **submerged** for days.

- A. under the water
- B. swept away
- C. covered in mud

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

what is bound will be unbound — what is held captive or constrained will be set free

spitting image — a person who looks almost exactly like someone else

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 10–12

by Sue Monk Kidd

#	KEY
1	C
2	B
3	C
4	A
5	A
6	B
7	A
8	B
9	C
10	A

Vocabulary in Context

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 10–12

by Sue Monk Kidd

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 *“Threatened by all kinds of dangers during their foraging flights, many workers die before they have reached even that age.”*

As it is used in the passage, the word “foraging” most nearly suggests that the worker bees are...

- A. ranging out to gather food
- B. guarding the hive from intruders
- C. resting through the winter

2 *“A night bird was singing from a tree branch, just singing its heart out, urgent and feverish, like it was put there to sing the moon up to the top of the sky.”*

The information in the excerpt primarily functions to...

- A. build a mood of restless urgency
- B. create a calm, peaceful scene
- C. show the bird is truly ill

3 *“I was surprised when the prayer we said after dinner each night, the one with the beads, started up of its own accord ...”*

It can reasonably be inferred that Lily began reciting the prayer...

- A. only after August told her to
- B. so she could teach it to the others
- C. without consciously choosing to

4 *“The only parts of her not submerged were her hands.”*

The passage most strongly suggests that May...

- A. is swimming beneath the surface
- B. has drowned and lies dead
- C. is hiding in the shallow water

5 *“You aren’t the only one who can concoct lies at the drop of a hat.”*

In the passage, Rosaleen is characterized as someone who...

- A. is too afraid to face the police
- B. refuses to tell anything but truth
- C. can quickly invent a lie

6 *“Mostly, though, I saw the blaze of love and anguish that had come so often into her face.”*

The passage most strongly suggests that May was someone who...

- A. rarely revealed her feelings
- B. absorbed others’ pain as her own
- C. stayed untroubled by suffering

7 *“They don’t know a delicacy when they see one, do they, Lily?”*

According to the passage, August considers Cokes-and-peanuts to be...

- A. a specially prized treat
- B. a poor substitute for dessert
- C. an unhealthy indulgence

8 *“... I’d been falling into lazy habits without the honey house to keep me industrious.”*

According to the passage, the honey house had kept Lily...

- A. busy and hard at work
- B. lonely and homesick
- C. calm and well rested

9 *“Rosaleen, on the other hand, had stopped all semblance of work ...”*

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. Rosaleen kept working without pause.
- B. Rosaleen gave up pretending to work.
- C. Rosaleen had never been working.

10 *“If the queen were smarter, she would probably be hopelessly neurotic.”*

As it is used in the passage, the word “neurotic” most nearly suggests a smarter queen would be...

- A. calm and confident
- B. clever and content
- C. anxious and unstable

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 10–12
by Sue Monk Kidd

#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	A	'Feverish' is figurative here — frenzied, not literally sick.
3	C	'Of its own accord' is an idiom — the prayer surfaced on its own; the literal word would mislead.
4	B	Event comprehension. The stone on her chest and August's 'We've lost her' confirm she has drowned, not gone under by choice.
5	C	Character comprehension.
6	B	Character comprehension. May 'couldn't distinguish other people's suffering from her own' — that is the anguish the line names.
7	A	
8	A	
9	B	
10	C	

Teacher Context: Chapters 10–12

The household is shaken by tragedy in the wake of the town's troubles, and the family grieves together through a difficult stretch. As life slowly steadies, August begins to draw closer to the questions Lily has carried about her mother. Grouped to span the aftermath; the break before Chapter 13 reserves the full revelation for the final section.