

The Secret Life of Bees

Chapters 13–14

by Sue Monk Kidd

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: demoralized, exasperated, forfeited, hasten, immobilized, intimacy, melancholy, muddled, stupefied, tarnished

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

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

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

1. After losing every game, the team felt **demoralized**.

- A. stripped of spirit and hope
- B. furious with the coach
- C. drained from the effort

2. She grew **exasperated** after repeating herself five times.

- A. deeply embarrassed
- B. intensely irritated
- C. utterly exhausted

3. By missing the deadline, he **forfeited** his prize.

- A. gave up or surrendered
- B. set aside for later
- C. demanded back again

4. We must **hasten** if we hope to catch the last train.

- A. to travel more lightly
- B. to hurry or move quickly
- C. to choose a better route

5. Fear **immobilized** her at the top of the stairs.

- A. made unable to move
- B. left her trembling hard
- C. made her dizzy and weak

6. The **intimacy** of the small dinner put everyone at ease.

- A. calm, quiet atmosphere
- B. close personal connection
- C. easy, playful humor

7. A **melancholy** tune drifted from the empty house.

- A. soft and soothing
- B. old and unfamiliar
- C. gloomy and sorrowful

8. Just after waking, his thoughts felt **muddled**.

- A. confused and foggy
- B. heavy and sleepy
- C. calm and unhurried

9. The long, sleepless drive left him **stupefied**.

- A. tense and irritable
- B. bored and restless
- C. dazed and unable to think

10. The old coins were **tarnished** after years in the box.

- A. worn nearly smooth
- B. bent and dented
- C. dulled and discolored

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

the Assumption — in Catholic belief, the Virgin Mary's being taken, body and soul, into heaven; celebrated as a feast day

August had turned into a griddle — the month had become oppressively hot, as if the days were cooking

all that thunderclap — his explosive anger and blustering force

ANSWER KEY

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

Vocabulary in Context

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

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

1 "... I would wake in the night to the same sound and, muddled with sleep and wanting, would imagine it was my mother out there among the trees, singing her bottomless love."

As it is used in the passage, the word 'muddled' most nearly suggests that Lily was...

- A. in a hazy, half-asleep state
- B. fully awake and alert
- C. angry at being disturbed

2 "She sounded exasperated, like she wanted to take me by the shoulders and shake me till my teeth fell out."

In the passage, Rosaleen is characterized as...

- A. frightened by the wound
- B. fed up to the edge of her patience
- C. calm and gently reassuring

3 "I began to work my hands into the wood, almost embarrassed at the intimacy of what we were doing."

It can reasonably be inferred that the act of bathing the statue...

- A. felt deeply personal to Lily
- B. made Lily distrust the women
- C. struck Lily as dull routine

4 "... she drew out a small oval picture frame of tarnished silver."

The author most likely describes the frame as 'tarnished' silver in order to...

- A. show it is costly and new
- B. stress its bright shine
- C. hint that it is old and dulled

5 "A queenless colony is a pitiful and melancholy community; there may be a mournful wail or lament from within ..."

The information in this bee epigraph primarily functions to...

- A. echo the grief of losing a mother
- B. praise the hive's productivity
- C. give beekeeping instructions

6 "... still everything about me was stunned and stupefied by the heat, everything except my heart."

According to the passage, the August heat leaves Lily...

- A. cool and refreshed
- B. numb most of all in her heart
- C. dazed everywhere but her heart

7 "They would stop work and go around completely demoralized."

The passage most strongly suggests that, without a queen, the bees...

- A. labor harder to replace her
- B. grow bolder and more active
- C. lose the spirit to keep working

8 "Not a smile of sweet adoring, I hasten to say, but the fat grin of a man who has been rabbit hunting all day long and has just now found his prey backed up in a hollow log with no way out."

In context, the phrase 'I hasten to say' emphasizes that the narrator is...

- A. reluctant to admit the truth
- B. quick to correct the impression
- C. unsure of what she saw

9 "I stood, immobilized, while he looked her over."

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. Fear left Lily unable to move
- B. Lily stayed calm and unafraid
- C. Lily stepped in front of the statue

10 "He had forfeited me over, hadn't he?"

It can reasonably be inferred that, in saying T. Ray had 'forfeited' her, Lily means he...

- A. had sold her for money
- B. gave up his claim to her
- C. planned to come back for her

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	B	
3	A	
4	C	
5	A	Theme comprehension. The queenless colony mirrors the section's grief over a lost mother.
6	C	
7	C	
8	B	'I hasten to say' is an idiom; the core sense of the word is to hurry or be quick.
9	A	Character comprehension. Lily's stillness comes from fear of T. Ray, the father she fled.
10	B	Event comprehension. The text's 'forfeited me over' is nonstandard; the standard sense is giving up a claim or right.

Teacher Context: Chapters 13–14

August finally tells Lily the truth about her mother, Deborah, and her connection to the Boatwright house. T. Ray arrives in Tiburon for a final confrontation, and Lily's future is settled. Section runs to the end of the novel.