

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

English Language Arts, 10th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Spunky 14-year-old Lily Owen and her black nanny, Rosaleen, flee their world of an abusive father and racial volatility of small town South Carolina in 1964. Armed with the feeblest of memories and a picture of a black Madonna, they find the quirky and loving world of three beekeeping sisters. As Lily discovers the complexity of beekeeping, she allegorically finds the home and family she's longed for and gains insight into the nuances of adolescence, family, race, and motherhood.

CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM

The following are some, but not all, of the connections to curriculum for this novel.

- **Unit 1: Environment and Identity**
 - Essential Question: "How do adversity and environment influence an individual's behavior and identity?"
- **Unit 2: Impacting Others**
 - Essential Question: "How does an individual shape his or her environment? How does one influence others?"
- **Unit 4: Conscientious Objections**
 - Essential Question: "To what extent do multiple viewpoints influence our perception of societal issues? To what extent do those issues become our responsibility?"

KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. RL.10.1
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development. RL.10.2
- Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. RL.10.3
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. RL.10.4
- Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. RL.10.5
- Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature. RL.10.6
- Analyze and evaluate the representation of a subject or a key scene in multiple media-- including media, artistic, and other visual formats. RL.10.7

- Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work. RL.10.9
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. RL.10.12
- Read and comprehend high quality dramas, prose, and poetry of appropriate quantitative and qualitative complexity for grade 10. RL.10.13
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. RL.10.10
- Read and comprehend high quality dramas, prose, and poetry of appropriate quantitative and qualitative complexity for grade 10. RL.10.13