Anticipation Guide
The Secret Life of Bees – Sue Monk Kidd
Teacher’s Key

Purpose

The anticipation guide will help incite curiosity and interest from the students while helping students make predictions about the text that they will read. The anticipation guide also introduces important themes throughout the book and generates thought on an issue. Through this exercise, students can practice defending their thinking while becoming open to new ideas. The students will be able to measure their predictions against the actual text of The Secret Life of Bees finding satisfaction when they guessed right and leading to reconsideration of ideas with the input from the text.

Directions

Prior to reading the second half of chapter nine of The Secret Life of Bees, have the students pause in their reading at page 177 and hand out the anticipation guide to the students. Instruct them to mark “true” or “false” – whether this idea will be supported in the text. Instruct them that they must be prepared to defend their answers. Each student should complete the anticipation guide individually. When completed, form the class into small groups and have the students discuss their answers with 2 to 3 classmates. Finally, open up discussion to the entire class. The questions in the anticipation guide will help direct the last chapters in the text and deal with the themes of loss, heartache, mourning, injustice, and death.

Further Discussion

While finishing the book, refer back to the anticipation guide. Discuss with the students how their opinions may have been different from what the book suggests. Use the anticipation guide as a jump-off to talk about important themes.

Answers: What will the author say about dealing with problems?

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**Applicable Quotes and Evidence from the Book:**

*People always deal with tragic events in the same way.*
The manner that May had of dealing with sorrow – her wailing wall. (pg. 187)
“It was May who did it, Zach” (pg. 204).

*It may take time for someone to come to grips with a hard experience.*
“I barely saw August except in the mornings when she crossed the yard headed toward the woods. She would wave at me, and if I ran over and asked where she was going, could I come, too, she would smile and say not today, that she was still doing her mourning” (pg. 214).
Mourning is a roadblock for progressing forward only when it goes on too long.
“After nonstop mourning all week, just when I thought we would go on forever in our private, grieving worlds . . . (pg. 217).

“August stood beside Our Lady and folded Mary’s suicide letter so it resembled . . . (pg. 218).

“Passing the telephone in the hallway, I had an urge to call Zach. To become part of the world again” (pg. 282).

Everyone who is hurt becomes a hard and closed person.
“Aangry at the world and it made them mean. You have to promise me, Zack, you won’t be like them” (pg. 230).

If you have done something to hurt another person, you become unlovable.
“Probably one or two moments in your whole life you will hear a dark whispering spirit, a voice coming from the center of things. . . (pg. 242).

It is acceptable to react poorly or lash-out because of your problems.
“I heard the bitter tone in my voice, and it came to me how I could lock that tone into my voice forever. From now on, every time I thought of my mother, I could, so easy, slip off in to a cold place where meanness took over” (pg. 264).

People can only find the strength to do what is right if they are religious.
“You don’t have to put your hand on Mary’s heart to get strength and consolation and rescue, and all the other things we need to get through life . . (pg. 288).

People don't always end up in the direction in which they started life.
“People can start out one way, and by the time life gets through with them they end up completely different . . (pg. 293).

The only grand purpose in life is not just to love, but to persist in love.
“And when you get down to it, Lily, that’s the only purpose grand enough for a human life. Not just to love – but to persist in love” (pg. 289).