

English I

Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Teacher: Ms. Bradbury: mbradbury@salesian.com

Required Reading: *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

This novel explores themes of identity, belonging, courage, and the power of relationships. Your assignment is designed to help you engage with the story while preparing you for the types of thinking and writing we will do in class.

Projects for Summer reading: After reading *The Secret Life of Bees*, select **two** of the following projects to complete.

These projects are due on the first day of school - Wednesday, August 12th.

All assignments are graded on thoroughness, clarity, creativity, and adherence to the guidelines. **All writing must be in *your own words*.**

Option 1: Reading & Annotation

As you read, keep a record of the following in a notebook.

- **3 Important Characters**
- **2 Important Symbols**
- **1 Important Theme**
(Examples: identity, belonging, racism, motherhood)

For EACH entry, include:

- **3 direct quotes** (with page number)
- **2–3 sentences of explanation** about why it is important

Writing responses should be **handwritten** and written on binder paper.

Part 2: Personal Reflection (Choose ONE)

Write a **2 page response** to **ONE** of the prompts below:

- **Option A: Identity & Belonging:** Lily is searching for a place where she belongs. Describe a time when you felt like you did—or did not—belong. How does your experience connect to Lily's?
- **Option B: The Power of Influence:** The Boatwright sisters have a strong impact on Lily's growth. Who is an important influence in your life? Compare them to one character in the novel.
- **Option C: Courage & Growth:** Lily makes difficult choices throughout the story. Identify one moment where she shows courage. How does this moment change her?

Writing responses should be **handwritten** and written on binder paper.

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Part 3: Creative Component (Choose ONE)

Select one of the following options to demonstrate your understanding in a creative way:

- Create a **symbolic piece of art** representing a theme from the novel
 - You must Include a paragraph response explaining your art piece and how it connects to the novel
 - Design a **playlist (5–7 songs)** inspired by the novel
 - Explain how each song connects to the story in a 3-4 sentence response
 - Write a **letter from Lily to her mother** after the end of the novel
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Reminder: You are given three options to choose from. You **MUST** complete **two** of the following assignment options.

Assignment Grade : ____ / 80 points

Rubrics:

Part 1: Reading & Annotation (40 points total)

Criteria	Exemplary 10 points	Proficient 8 points	Developing 6 points	Beginning 4 points	Points
Completion	All 3 characters, 2 symbols, and 1 theme are included	One component missing	Two components missing	Incomplete or minimal effort	/20
Use of Text	Strong, relevant quotes with correct page numbers for all entries	Mostly relevant quotes; minor errors in citation	Some quotes missing or not clearly connected	Little to no textual evidence	/10
Explanation & Analysis	Clear, thoughtful explanations showing strong understanding	Adequate explanations with some insight	Basic or unclear explanations	Limited or no explanation	/10

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Part 2: Personal Reflection Rubric (40 points total)

Criteria	Exemplary 10 points	Proficient 8 points	Developing 6 points	Beginning 4 points	Points
Response to Prompt	Fully addresses prompt with depth and insight	Addresses prompt clearly	Partially addresses prompt	Off-topic or unclear	/10
Connection to Text	Strong, specific connections to the novel	Clear connection with some support	Limited or general connection	No clear connection	/10
Organization & Development	Well-organized, detailed, and fully developed ideas	Organized with adequate development	Some organization; ideas underdeveloped	Disorganized or difficult to follow	/10
Writing Quality	Clear, polished writing with minimal errors	Mostly clear with minor errors	Noticeable errors that affect clarity	Frequent errors that make it hard to read	/10

Part 3: Creative Component (40 points total)

Criteria	Exemplary 10 points	Proficient 8 points	Developing 6 points	Beginning 4 points	Points
Creativity & Effort	Highly creative, thoughtful, and original	Shows creativity and effort	Some effort; limited creativity	Minimal effort or incomplete	/20
Connection to Novel	Strong, clear connection with explanation	Clear connection with some explanation	Basic or unclear connection	No clear connection	/20