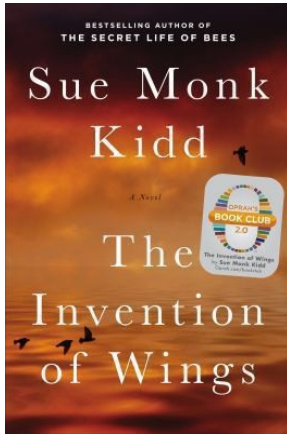


# Lillie M. Evans Library District Book Club

March 30, 2015

## Biography:



Sue Monk Kidd was born in Sylvester, Georgia in 1948. She received a B.S. in nursing and worked as a registered nurse and college nursing instructor. She got her start in writing at the age of 30 when she became a contributing editor at *Guidedposts*. Although she writes primarily non-fiction, she is best known for her novel, The Secret Life of Bees. The book was made into a movie in 2008. Her other works include God's Joyful Surprise, When the Heart Waits, The Dance of the Dissident Daughter, Firstlight, and Traveling with Pomegranates: A Mother-Daughter Story. Her second novel, The Mermaid Chair won the 2005 Quill Award for General Fiction and was adapted into a television movie by Lifetime. The Invention of Wings, was selected as the Oprah Book Club 2.0 read in January, 2014. (Bowker Author Biography)

## Similar Resources:



## Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the title an apt one for Kidd's novel? What are some of the ways that the author uses the imagery and symbolism of birds, wings, and flight?
2. What were the qualities in *Handful* that you most admired? How did *Handful* continue her relentless pursuit of self and freedom in the face of such a brutal system?
3. After laying aside her aspirations to become a lawyer, Sarah remarks that the Graveyard of Failed Hopes is "an all-female establishment." What makes her say so? What was your experience of reading Kidd's portrayal of women's lives in the nineteenth century?
4. In what ways does Sarah struggle against the dictates of her family, society and religion? Can you relate to her need to break away from the life she had in order to create a new and unknown life? What sort of risk and courage does this call for?
5. Were you aware of the role that Sarah and Angelina Grimke played in abolition and women's rights? Have women's achievements in history been lost or overlooked? What do you think it takes to be a reformer today?
6. How would you describe Sarah and Angelina's unusual bond? Do you think either one of them could have accomplished what they did on their own? Have you known women who experienced this sort of relationship as sisters?
7. **The Invention of Wings** takes the reader back to the roots of racism in America. How has slavery left its mark in American life? To what extent has the wound been healed? Do you think slavery has been a taboo topic in American life?
8. Are there ways in which Kidd's novel can help us see our own lives differently? How is this story relevant for us today?