

Reading Group Guide

THE SEED KEEPER

Discussion Questions

1. Did you enjoy this book? Why or why not?
2. Which storylines or characters from *The Seed Keeper* resonated with you most deeply? How did they affect your overall impression of the novel?
3. Throughout the novel, characters have different relationships with the land. Some view the land as something to master and exploit, while others see it as something to respect and protect. How would you describe your own relationship with the natural world and how has this book influenced your perspective?
4. *The Seed Keeper* grapples directly with themes of environmental degradation, specifically at the hands of corporate agriculture and genetically modified seeds protected by copyright. Ultimately, this corporate agricultural industry impacts the entire community in which Rosalie and her family are living. What elements of this conflict struck you? What impacts are industries like this one having on communities today?
5. Water and rivers appear as recurring symbols throughout the novel. How do these symbols function differently for various characters, and what do they reveal about each character's connection to place and heritage?
6. In the Author's Note, Diane Wilson tells us that this story was inspired by the true story of Dakhóta women hiding seeds in their skirts while being forcibly removed from their homelands, noting that they are "the reason why we have Dakhóta corn today." What does this story suggest about the nature of sacrifice and tradition?
7. Examine the tension between isolation and community in the novel. What drives characters like Rosalie, John, and Gaby to seek connection or solitude at different points in their lives?
8. If you were to design a seed basket to pass down to future generations, what seeds would you include and why?

About the Author

Diane Wilson

Diane Wilson (Dakota) is a writer and educator, who has published five award-winning books as well as essays in numerous publications.

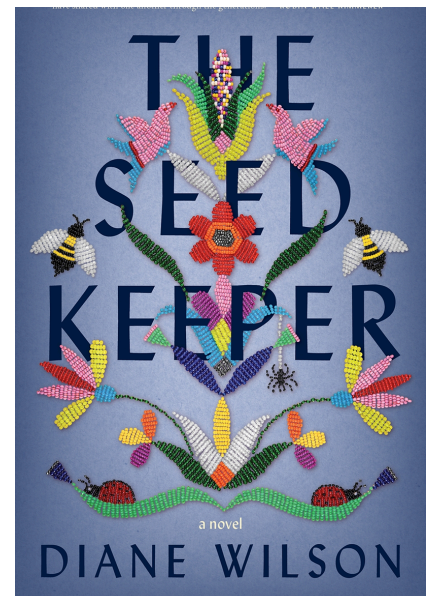
Wilson's 2021 novel, *The Seed Keeper*, (Milkweed Editions) received the 2022 Minnesota Book Award for Fiction, was selected for the 2025-26 NEA Big Read, and is published in France. Her memoir, *Spirit Car: Journey to a Dakota Past* (Borealis Books) won a 2006 Minnesota Book Award and was selected for the 2012 One Minneapolis One Read program. Her 2011 nonfiction book, *Beloved Child: A Dakota Way of Life* (Borealis Books) was awarded the 2012 Barbara Sudler Award from History Colorado. Wilson's middle-grade biography: *Ella Cara Deloria: Dakota Language Protector*, was an Honor selection for the 2022 American Indian Youth Literature Award. She is a co-author of a picture book, *Where We Come From*, (Lerner Publishing), winner of the 2023 Carter G. Woodson award.

Her most recent essays—which explore seed advocacy, food sovereignty, social justice, and cultural recovery—have been featured in acclaimed anthologies, including: *Kinship: Belonging in a World of Relations* (2021); *We Are Meant to Rise* (2021); and *A Good Time for the Truth* (2016) as well as in notable environmental publications, including *Orion: Nature and Culture* and *Emergence*.

Wilson is the former Executive Director for Dream of Wild Health, an Indigenous non-profit farm, and the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance, a national coalition of tribes and organizations working to create sovereign food systems for Native people.

Wilson is enrolled on the Sicangu Oyate (Rosebud) reservation in South Dakota, and is a Mdewakanton descendent. She lives near the St. Croix River in Minnesota, where she cares for an Indigenous seed garden, native perennials for pollinators, and a Tamarack bog.

*Biography taken from dianewilsonwords.com



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Reads

