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## Suggested Reads

*Braiding Sweetgrass*  
Robin Wall Kimmerer

*There There*  
Tommy Orange

*The Night Watchman*  
Louise Erdrich

*Where the Dead Sit Talking*  
Brandon Hobson

*Winter Counts*  
David Heska Wanbli Weiden

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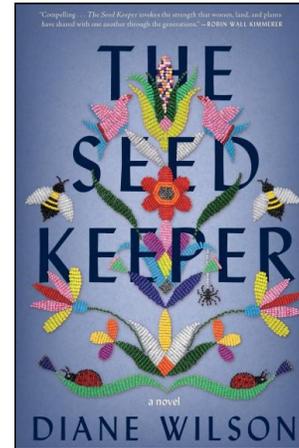
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## A Novel Idea Book Club Kit

### *The Seed Keeper*, by Diane Wilson



#### From the Author's Website

Rosalie Iron Wing has grown up in the woods with her father, Ray, until, one morning, he doesn't return. Told she has no family, Rosalie is sent to live with a foster family in nearby Mankato — where she meets rebellious Gaby Makespace, in a friendship that transcends the damaged legacies they've inherited. Years later, Rosalie returns to her

childhood home and begins to confront the past, on a search for family, identity, and a community where she can finally belong. In the process, she learns what it means to be descended from women with souls of iron — women who have protected their families, their traditions, and a precious cache of seeds through generations of hardship and loss, through war and the insidious trauma of boarding schools.

Weaving together the voices of four indelible women, *The Seed Keeper* is a beautifully told story of reawakening, of remembering their original relationship to the seeds and, through them, to their ancestors.



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## Discussion Topics

1. How does Wilson feature storytelling within Rosalie's community and personal story (in linear and non-linear ways) to enrich history and legacy within in the characters?
2. Consider the way the various timelines and characters are tied together in the conclusion of the novel. In what ways can readers of *The Seed Keeper* use these interwoven stories to reflect on intergenerational trauma, and more broadly, the role the past plays in the present and future, particularly in Indigenous communities?
3. Rosalie and Ida's friendship is a powerful reminder that while we inherit a past legacy from those who came before us, we each get to choose the way we allow that legacy to influence how we conduct our lives. Can we glean lessons on reconciliation, with others and with the earth, from this relationship? If so, what might they be? If not, why do you think that is?
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 agriculture 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. Which tribes and Indigenous communities live near your home? Which crops and harvests do they hold sacred and are they able to still grow them? Have you eaten these foods?



## Author Biography

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

Wilson's 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. Her most recent essay, *Seeds for Seven Generations*, is featured in the 6450 anthology, *A Good Time for the Truth* (MN Historical Society Press).

Wilson is the Executive Director for the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance, a national coalition of tribes and organizations working to create sovereign food systems for Native people.

Wilson is a Mdewakanton descendent, enrolled on the Rosebud Reservation.

**BIO FROM AUTHOR'S WEBSITE**  
**PHOTO FROM AUTHOR'S WEBSITE**  
**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM PUBLISHER**

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