

3RD GRADE • READING

Main idea and evidence: How Bees Make Honey

FOR YOU How to use this in 5 minutes

1 **Preview. SAY:** “This is nonfiction, so everything in it is true. Read the title. What do you think we’ll learn?”

2 **Read it through. SAY:** “Read it once all the way through. Then tell me what each paragraph is mostly about, in a few words.”

3 **Find the proof. SAY:** “For each answer, put your finger on the sentence that proves it.”

Tip. The main idea is what the whole passage is about. Ask, “Does every paragraph help tell this?” If the answer is yes, it’s the main idea.

1 Read the passage

How Bees Make Honey



① A jar of honey starts with flowers. Honeybees visit flowers to drink a sweet liquid called nectar. A bee sips it up with its long tongue and carries it home in a special pouch called a honey stomach.

② Back at the hive, the bee passes the nectar to other bees. They pass it from bee to bee, and each one adds something from its own body that begins to change the nectar into honey. Then the bees put it into the tiny six-sided rooms of the honeycomb, called cells.

③ Fresh nectar is mostly water, so it is thin and runny. To thicken it, the bees fan their wings over the cells. The moving air dries the nectar until it turns thick and sticky. Then the bees seal each cell with a cap of wax, which they make with their own bodies.

④ Why do bees work so hard? Honey is their food for the winter, when there are no flowers to visit. A strong hive can make more honey than it needs, and that extra honey is what beekeepers gather.

2 Answer the questions

1. What is the main idea of the passage? Circle it.

Bees have long tongues.

Honeybees work together to turn nectar into honey.

Beekeepers sell honey in jars.

2. Underline the sentence in paragraph 3 that tells why bees fan their wings.

3. In paragraph 3, what does seal mean? Circle it.

a sea animal to close tightly to fan

4. Why do bees store honey? Use the passage.

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Answer key

Main idea and evidence: How Bees Make Honey

2 Answer the questions

1. Honeybees work together to turn nectar into honey.
2. “To thicken it, the bees fan their wings over the cells.” (The next sentence, about the moving air drying the nectar, is a fine answer too.)
3. to close tightly
4. Honey is their food for the winter, when there are no flowers to visit.

If it's hard

- If your child picks one fact as the main idea, ask, “Is paragraph 2 about that? Is paragraph 3?”
- Let your child underline while reading the first time. Marking the page makes the questions much easier.



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