How Does a Honeybee Make Honey?

Learning objective: To identify and understand the features of an explanation text.

Read the text carefully, then answer the questions below using full sentences.

Have you ever wondered how honey is made? It is a fascinating process that begins with Bea, the honeybee. First, a foraging bee flies from flower to flower, using her long tongue to collect a sugary liquid called nectar. She stores this in a special 'honey stomach' before returning to the hive. Once inside, she passes the nectar to a house bee.

Next, the house bees add special enzymes to the nectar. These enzymes help to break down the sugars. The bees then deposit the nectar into hexagonal wax cells. To turn the runny nectar into thick, golden honey, the bees work together as a team. They flap their wings rapidly to create a breeze. This warm air causes the water in the nectar to evaporate, leaving behind the sticky, delicious honey we enjoy. Finally, the bees seal the cell with a tiny wax lid to keep the honey fresh. This amazing process ensures that the colony has enough food to survive the cold winter months when no flowers are blooming.

Word bank: nectar · colony · evaporate · enzyme · foraging · hive

1. What does the foraging bee use to collect nectar from flowers? (2 marks)

2. What do the bees do to the nectar once it is inside the wax cells to make it thicker? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think the bees seal the honey cells with a wax lid? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what might happen to the colony if the bees did not flap their wings? (2 marks)

5. Do you think honey production is a difficult task for the bees? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram showing the journey of nectar from a flower to a sealed wax cell inside a beehive. Add labels to show the different stages of the process.

Extension challenge: Research why honeybees are important for our environment. Write three sentences explaining why we need bees to help plants grow.