

How Does a Honeybee Make Honey?

Learning objective: To understand the structure and purpose of an explanation text, identifying how information is organised logically.

Read the text carefully below, then answer the questions that follow using evidence from the passage.

Have you ever wondered how Bea the honeybee turns simple flower nectar into delicious honey? It is a fascinating process that relies on teamwork within the hive. First, foraging bees fly out to flowers to collect nectar, a sugary liquid. They store this in a special honey stomach and return to the hive. Next, the foragers pass the nectar to house bees. These bees chew the nectar, adding special enzymes that help break down complex sugars. Once this is done, the bees place the nectar into hexagonal wax cells. However, the nectar is still too watery. To fix this, the bees fan their wings rapidly. This movement creates a strong breeze, which causes the water to evaporate. As the water disappears, the nectar thickens into the golden, sticky honey we recognise. Finally, the bees seal the cell with a wax lid to keep the honey fresh. This clever method ensures that the colony has a steady supply of energy-rich food to survive throughout the colder winter months when flowers are scarce.

Word bank: nectar · foraging · evaporation · enzymes · colony · process

1. According to the text, what is the primary purpose of the house bees adding enzymes to the nectar? (2 marks)

2. What are the two main steps the bees take to ensure the nectar is no longer too watery? (2 marks)

3. Why is it important for the bees to store the honey in sealed wax cells? (2 marks)

4. Why might the colony struggle to survive if they did not make honey? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the process of making honey is a good example of teamwork? Explain why using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram showing the transformation of nectar into honey, including the bees fanning their wings near the hexagonal wax cells.



Extension challenge: Research one other insect that creates something useful for its habitat and write a short paragraph in the style of an explanation text.