

How a Honeybee Makes Honey

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

Read the passage carefully about how honey is produced. Then, answer the questions below to show your understanding of the process and the features of explanation writing.

Have you ever wondered how a honeybee creates the golden honey we find in a jar? It is a fascinating process that relies on teamwork within the colony. First, a worker bee goes foraging. She uses her long, straw-like tongue to collect sugary nectar from the centres of colourful flowers. Once the nectar is collected, it is stored in a special 'honey stomach' where natural enzymes begin to break down the complex sugars.

When the worker bee returns to the hive, she passes the nectar to the house bees. These bees chew the nectar for about half an hour, which further helps the breakdown process. Finally, the nectar is placed into hexagonal wax cells. The bees then flap their wings incredibly fast to create a breeze. This causes the water in the nectar to undergo evaporation, thickening the liquid until it becomes the sticky honey we recognise. Once it is thick enough, the bees seal the cell with a wax lid to keep it fresh.

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

1. Identify two technical verbs used in the text that explain the process of honey-making. (2 marks)

2. According to the text, why do the house bees flap their wings over the nectar? (2 marks)

3. Explanation texts often use time connectives to show the order of events. List two time connectives found in the passage. (2 marks)

4. Why is the information in this text organised into a sequence rather than being a random list of facts? (3 marks)

5. If a small jar of honey costs £3.50, how much would it cost to buy 4 jars for a class baking project? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a labelled diagram showing the journey of the nectar from the flower to the hexagonal cell in the hive. Include arrows to show the direction of the process.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph explaining why the bees choose to build their honey cells in a hexagonal shape. Use the word 'pattern' in your answer.