Name: _____ Date: _____

# A Sip, a Fan, a Lid

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 357 words

A bee landed on a purple flower. Oona stood very still. What was it doing in there?

The bee pushed its head deep into the flower. It was having a drink.

Inside the flower is a sweet juice called nectar. The bee sips it with a long tongue. It works like a straw.

The nectar goes into a special tummy, just for carrying. It is called the honey stomach.

Then the bee flew to another flower, and another. On one trip, it can visit hundreds of flowers.

Oona saw yellow dust on its fuzzy legs. "That is pollen," said Aunt Mabry. "The bee packs it into baskets on its back legs."

Some of the dust rubs off on the next flower. Now that flower can make seeds. Some flowers grow into fruit.

Moving pollen from flower to flower is called pollination. Bees help grow many fruits and vegetables we eat.

At last the bee flew home. Home was a wooden box in the garden. It was Aunt Mabry's hive.

Thousands and thousands of bees live inside one hive. They all work together, and each one has a job.

Aunt Mabry lifted out a frame. The bee did not keep the nectar. It gave it to a house bee, mouth to mouth.

The house bee put it in a tiny wax room. Each room has six sides.

Nectar is very wet. Most of it is water. Honey is thick, so the water has to go.

So the bees fan their wings, fast, fast, fast. The moving air dries the nectar out.

Slowly the nectar gets thicker and stickier. Now it is honey! Oona could see it shine.

When a room is full, the bees close it up. They put a lid of wax on top.

Why do bees save honey? It is their food for winter, when few flowers bloom.

Aunt Mabry gave Oona a spoon of honey. It tasted a little like flowers.

Honey from different flowers looks and tastes different. Some is pale, and some is dark.

If you see a bee, stand back and watch. Look at its back legs. Do they have yellow lumps?

## Questions

**1. What does a bee drink from a flower?**

A. Nectar
B. Milk
C. Rain

**2. Why do the bees fan their wings over the nectar?**

A. To keep warm
B. To dry it out
C. To scare birds

**3. In this book, what does "pollination" mean?**

A. Making wax rooms
B. Sleeping in winter
C. Moving pollen from flower to flower

**4. What do bees put on top of a full room of honey?**

A. A leaf
B. A lid of wax
C. A stone

**5. Why do bees save honey?**

A. It is their food for winter
B. They give it to birds
C. They use it to build the hive

## Words to know

nectar: sweet flower juice
pollen: yellow flower dust
hive: bee home
wax: bee-made building stuff
pollination: moving pollen

# Answer key: A Sip, a Fan, a Lid

1. A. Nectar
2. B. To dry it out
3. C. Moving pollen from flower to flower
4. B. A lid of wax
5. A. It is their food for winter