Name: _____ Date: _____

Winnie-the-Pooh and the Bees

Reading level 8 (4th grade) · 741 words

A bear named Winnie-the-Pooh lived all by himself in the middle of a forest, and he liked honey better than almost anything. One day he came to a big oak tree, and from the very top of it there came a loud buzzing noise.

Pooh sat down at the bottom of the tree to think, because he knew that a buzzing noise must mean something. "A buzzing noise means a bee," he said, "and a bee means honey, and honey means something for me!" So he began to climb the tree, singing a little song as he went.

He climbed and he climbed and he climbed, and he was nearly there when a branch went crack! Down he tumbled, bump, from branch to branch to branch, until he landed in a prickly gorse bush. "Oh, help!" said Pooh. "It all comes of liking honey so much."

So Pooh went to see his friend Christopher Robin, and he asked if Christopher Robin had such a thing as a balloon about him. "What do you want a balloon for?" Pooh looked around to see that nobody was listening, and whispered, "Honey!" "But you don't get honey with balloons!" "I do," said Pooh.

Christopher Robin had two balloons left over from a party. One was green and one was blue, and Pooh thought very hard about which one to choose. "A green balloon might look like part of the tree," he said, "and a blue one might look like part of the sky. Which is better for fooling bees?" He chose the blue one.

Then Pooh went to a very muddy place that he knew, and he rolled and rolled until he was black all over. "I shall look like a small black cloud," he said, "and the bees will never guess." Christopher Robin blew the balloon up as big as big. Then they both held on to the string.

"Let go!" cried Pooh, and Christopher Robin let go, and up floated Pooh Bear into the sky. He stopped level with the top of the tree, about twenty feet away from it. "Hooray!" shouted Christopher Robin. "What do I look like?" called Pooh. "You look like a bear holding a balloon."

"Not like a small black cloud in a blue sky?" asked Pooh anxiously. "Not very much." "Perhaps it looks different from up here," said Pooh. "You never can tell with bees." There was no wind to blow him any nearer, so he could see the honey and smell the honey, but he could not reach the honey.

"Christopher Robin!" he whispered loudly. "I think the bees suspect something!" "Perhaps they know that you want their honey." "Then please fetch an umbrella," said Pooh, "and walk up and down with it. Look up at me every now and then, and say, 'Tut-tut, it looks like rain.' That

will help to fool them."

So Christopher Robin walked up and down with his umbrella, and Pooh sang a cloud's song, high up in the air. Some of the bees flew out to buzz all around him, and one of them sat down on the end of his nose. "Christopher--ow!--Robin," called the cloud.

"I have made an important decision," said Pooh. "These are the wrong sort of bees, and they would make the wrong sort of honey, so I think I shall come down." But how could he come down? If he let go of the string he would fall, and falling was not a nice idea at all.

"You must hit the balloon with a stone," said Pooh at last. "But then it will spoil your balloon," said Christopher Robin. "And if you don't," said Pooh, "I shall have to let go, and that would spoil me." So Christopher Robin took a small stone and threw it, and it hit Pooh instead. "Ow!"

"Did I miss?" asked Christopher Robin. "You didn't miss me exactly," said Pooh. "You missed the balloon." So he tried again, and this time the stone hit the balloon. The air came slowly out, and down came Pooh, as gently as a leaf, to the ground.

Pooh had held on to the string for so long that his arms were stiff. They stayed straight up in the air for a whole week. Whenever a fly sat on his nose, he had to blow it off. And I think that this is why he was always called Pooh. But I am not quite sure.

Questions

1. Why did Pooh climb the tall oak tree?

A. To look at the view
B. To get honey from the bees
C. To find Christopher Robin

2. Why did Pooh roll in the mud?

A. He wanted to look like a small black cloud
B. He was playing a game
C. He was hot

3. Why did Pooh say, "You never can tell with bees"?

A. He knew all about bees
B. He was not sure what the bees would do
C. He did not like honey

4. Pooh said, "I think the bees suspect something." What does "suspect" mean here?

A. Are asleep
B. Want to play
C. Think something is not right

5. How did Pooh get back down?

A. He climbed down the tree

B. The wind blew him down

C. Christopher Robin hit the balloon with a stone

6. What does this story show about Pooh?

A. He is always very careful

B. He thinks up funny plans, even when they are silly

C. He is afraid of bees

Words to know

oak: a big tree

buzzing: humming sound

gorse: prickly bush

suspect: think something's up

decision: a choice

Answer key: Winnie-the-Pooh and the Bees

1. B. To get honey from the bees
2. A. He wanted to look like a small black cloud
3. B. He was not sure what the bees would do
4. C. Think something is not right
5. C. Christopher Robin hit the balloon with a stone
6. B. He thinks up funny plans, even when they are silly