

How would you like to take care of bees? Read the following selection and answer the questions that follow.

Watching a Beekeeper

by Joan Davis

I froze in place as a cloud of honeybees buzzed around my head and arms. My only hope was that the big fancy net I was wearing would keep the bees out. You see, my friend Frank is a beekeeper. He not only keeps bees but he loves them, too. I joined him on this warm spring day to see how a beekeeper starts a new hive.

Frank needed some more hives, so he called a nearby bee ranch to order two boxes of bees. A few days later, the buzzing, vibrating boxes arrived at the post office. Each box was filled with more than ten thousand bees. A postal worker called Frank and asked him to please hurry and pick them up!

③ Honeybees had always seemed scary to me. But as I watched Frank work, I learned something. I learned that if you know how to handle bees the right way, beekeeping can be a great hobby.

Frank and I each wore a helmet and a net to protect us from bee stings. We used string to tie our pants around our ankles to keep any lost honeybees from crawling up our legs.

For hives, beekeepers use boxes with narrow wooden frames hanging inside. On each frame is a sheet of thin wax. The honeybees produce more wax from their bodies to make six-sided boxes, called cells, on these sheets. The queen bee lays eggs in some of the cells, and the bees store honey

and pollen in others. Each cell is just big enough for a honeybee to squeeze inside.

Frank sprayed sugar water on the mass of bees in the center of the mailing box. For a few minutes, this makes their wings too sticky to fly. Then he reached in for the tiny box containing the queen bee.

“Aha,” whispered Frank, “and here she is.” His voice was quiet but excited.

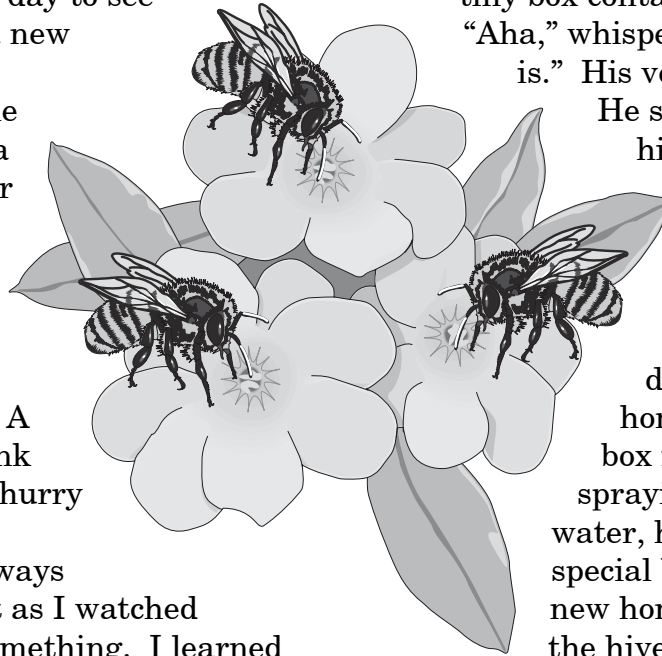
He slipped the queen’s box into his pocket to keep her safe.

The queen is important to the hive, and the other honeybees will attack to protect her.

Moving quietly, he dumped the rest of the honeybees from the mailing box into the hive. After spraying the queen with sugar water, he took her out of the special box and placed her in her new home. He covered the top of the hive with a lid. Then he smiled at me and said, “Not one sting. They must really like you!”

Next, Frank opened a little door at the bottom of the hive. This would let the honeybees fly in and out to gather nectar and pollen for the hive. Honeybees use nectar to make honey. They use honey and pollen as food. Soon the queen would start laying eggs, and the hive would grow. Frank’s work for the day was done.

Later in the summer, I saw Frank again. He proudly presented me with a big jar of sweet, tasty honey made by my friends the honeybees.



1. What is the **main** purpose of this selection?
- A to warn the reader about the danger of bees
 - B to entertain the reader with humorous stories about bees
 - C to inform the reader with interesting facts about bees
 - D to convince the reader to start raising bees
2. This selection begins with the author saying, "I froze in place as a cloud of honeybees buzzed around my head and arms." What does the word *froze* mean in this sentence?
- A stopped
 - B walked
 - C became cold
 - D became confused
3. What is the **main** idea of paragraph 3?
- A Working with bees is very difficult.
 - B Raising bees is financially rewarding.
 - C Handling bees is scary and very dangerous.
 - D Raising bees can be enjoyable if you know how.
4. Why does Frank spray sugar water on the bees?
- A to give them special food
 - B to make their wings shiny
 - C to keep them from flying
 - D to make them produce honey
5. What does the final paragraph suggest about making honey?
- A Making honey is an easy task.
 - B Making honey is a fun activity.
 - C It takes only a few days to make honey.
 - D It takes a few months to make honey.

6. What is the *main* job that Frank completed?
- A separating the queen bee from the other bees
 - B moving all the bees into their new home
 - C teaching the bees to make honey
 - D showing his bees and hives to a friend

End of Set

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*Answers to
Grade 5 Reading Comprehension Sample Items*

Passage Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Category	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Watching a Beekeeper	1	C	Cognition	Analyzing	2.04
Watching a Beekeeper	2	A	Cognition	Analyzing	1.02
Watching a Beekeeper	3	D	Cognition	Analyzing	2.04
Watching a Beekeeper	4	C	Cognition	Knowledge	2.02
Watching a Beekeeper	5	D	Interpretation	Generating	2.05
Watching a Beekeeper	6	B	Cognition	Analyzing	2.02