



# The Honey Bee — A Tiny Worker With a Huge Job

*Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com*

The honey bee is one of the most remarkable insects on the planet. This tiny creature plays an absolutely **essential** role in keeping our food supply alive. There are more than 20,000 known **species** of bees worldwide, but only about seven are true honey bees. These small workers can be found on every continent except Antarctica.

Honey bees live together in huge family groups called a **colony**. A single colony can contain 20,000 to 80,000 bees, all sharing one home: the **hive**. Inside the hive, bees build perfect six-sided cells out of beeswax, which they produce from special glands. The **wax** is shaped into the honeycomb, where they store honey, pollen, and their growing young. The queen lays eggs, worker bees collect nectar and care for the young, and drones help produce new queens.

Bees create honey by visiting thousands of flowers each day. They use their long tongues to drink nectar and store it in a special "honey stomach." Back at the hive, the nectar is passed from bee to bee until it slowly turns into thick, golden honey. A single worker bee makes only about one twelfth of a teaspoon of honey in her entire life. Yet a strong colony can produce over 25 kilograms a year — far more than the bees need to **survive** the winter.

The most **valuable** thing bees do, however, is not making honey but pollination. As they move from flower to flower searching for nectar, they carry pollen with them. This process allows plants to produce seeds and fruit. About one third of every meal we eat depends on bee pollination, including apples, almonds, strawberries, and many important food **crops**. Without bees, our diets would become far less nutritious.

Sadly, honey bees are now under serious **threat**. Habitat loss, pesticides, disease, and climate change are making it harder for bees to **survive**. In some regions, entire colonies have disappeared in a phenomenon called Colony Collapse Disorder. Protecting these tiny workers is one of the biggest **environment** challenges of our time. Every flower planted and every beekeeper supported helps keep this remarkable insect — and our food supply — alive.



## A. Vocabulary Matching

Match each word with its definition.

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. <b>essential</b> _____    | a. a group of similar living things that can produce young together    |
| 2. <b>species</b> _____      | b. the structure where a colony of bees lives                          |
| 3. <b>colony</b> _____       | c. to continue to live, especially in difficult conditions             |
| 4. <b>hive</b> _____         | d. the natural world; the surroundings in which living things exist    |
| 5. <b>wax</b> _____          | e. something likely to cause damage or harm                            |
| 6. <b>survive</b> _____      | f. absolutely needed; impossible to do without                         |
| 7. <b>valuable</b> _____     | g. a large group of animals or insects that live together in one place |
| 8. <b>crops</b> _____        | h. plants that farmers grow in large amounts for food                  |
| 9. <b>threat</b> _____       | i. extremely useful or important                                       |
| 10. <b>environment</b> _____ | j. a soft substance bees produce to build the honeycomb                |



## B. True or False

Write *T* (True) or *F* (False) for each statement.

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. There are about seven true species of honey bee in the world. _____ | 4. The honeycomb is built from a substance called wax. _____               | 7. Bees do not need honey themselves — they only make it for humans. _____         |
| 2. Honey bees are found on every continent including Antarctica. _____ | 5. A worker bee makes about one full kilogram of honey in her life. _____  | 8. Colony Collapse Disorder is a phenomenon where entire colonies disappear. _____ |
| 3. A single colony can contain up to 80,000 bees. _____                | 6. Around one third of every meal we eat depends on bee pollination. _____ | 9. Pesticides and climate change are threats to honey bees. _____                  |



### C. Fill in the Blanks

**Word Bank:** essential, colony, valuable, crops, environment

1. Honey bees play an \_\_\_\_\_ role in keeping our food supply alive.
2. A bee \_\_\_\_\_ can contain between 20,000 and 80,000 bees living together.
3. Pollination is the most \_\_\_\_\_ service bees provide — even more important than honey.
4. About one third of our food depends on bees pollinating apples, almonds, and other \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Protecting bees is one of the most important \_\_\_\_\_ challenges of our time.

### D. Comprehension Questions

1. How many species of bee exist worldwide, and how many are true honey bees?
2. Describe the structure of a bee colony and the different roles inside the hive.
3. How do bees produce honey, and how much can a single worker make in her lifetime?
4. Explain why pollination is described as more valuable than honey itself.
5. What are the main threats facing honey bees today, and why does this matter for humans?

### E. Discussion Questions

1. Some scientists say that if all bees disappeared, humans would only survive a few years. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
2. What can ordinary people do in their daily lives to help protect bees?
3. If you had the power to make one new law to protect honey bees, what would it be? Explain your reasoning.

# Answer Key

## The Honey Bee — A Tiny Worker With a Huge Job

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**A. Vocabulary:** 1-f, 2-a, 3-g, 4-b, 5-j, 6-c, 7-i, 8-h, 9-e, 10-d

**B. True/False:** 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-F, 8-T, 9-T

**C. Fill in the Blanks:** 1-essential, 2-colony, 3-valuable, 4-crops, 5-environment

**D. Comprehension Questions:**

1. There are more than 20,000 known species of bees in the world, but only about seven of them are true honey bees.

2. A colony can contain 20,000 to 80,000 bees living together in one hive. The queen lays eggs, worker bees collect nectar and care for the young, and drones help produce new queens.

3. Bees drink nectar from flowers and store it in a special 'honey stomach,' then pass it from bee to bee back at the hive until it thickens into honey. A single worker bee produces only about one twelfth of a teaspoon of honey in her entire life.

4. About one third of every meal we eat depends on bee pollination, including apples, almonds, strawberries, and many other crops — meaning bees support the food supply far more than they support honey production.

5. The main threats are habitat loss, pesticides, disease, and climate change, which together cause phenomena like Colony Collapse Disorder. This matters for humans because so much of our food depends on bee pollination.