



Jake and his Bee Hives

Set 8 (288 words)

Text written by Sandy Russo and illustrated by Dick Weigall

Special words

who, honey, live, ask, they, one, work, worker,
autumn, when, scarce, their, build, combs,
regulate, temperature, water, stored

Jake is a keen bee keeper who strives to produce the best honey in the state of Queensland.

The bees live in hives at the bottom of Jake's garden. The children next door know they must keep away when they see Jake in his bee keeping outfit.

One day, the children ask Jake to tell them about his bees and how they make honey. Jake explains that all the bees in the colony work together for the good of the hive. Each has a job to do. A hive has one queen. Her job is to lay eggs.

Drones are larger than workers, but smaller than queen honey bees. The drones are male and their sole job is to mate with the queen bee. After mating, they die.

In autumn or winter, the drones are driven out of the hive to minimize the number of bees that need to be fed, when food is scarce.

Worker bees live for about 6 weeks. It is their job to maintain and operate the hive. They perform a range of tasks which change as they get older. They clean the hive; care for the baby bees, the drones and the queen; repair and build new wax combs; regulate the temperature inside the beehive; defend the hive and forage for pollen, nectar and water. When they get back to the hive, they make the nectar into honey, to use as food, and store it in the honeycomb.

Jake tells the children that he only keeps native bees in his bee hives. Jake shows the children a honeycomb and invites them to taste the honey.

Jorji shows the children her bee hive. Jorji thought it important to show that women have bees too!

Questions

After reading the text ask students one or more of the following questions. If students are working in pairs, alternate Partner 1, then Partner 2.

- What do these words /phrases mean: produce, colony, sole, minimize, scarce, maintain, operate, repair, regulate the temperature, defend, forage, pollen, nectar ?
- Describe what happens in a bee hive.
- What valuable job do bees do for people?
- Describe a honeycomb.
- How do you think worker bees stop the hive from getting too hot?
- Why do the children keep away when they see Jake in his bee keeping outfit?
- Put the bees in order of size: drone, queen, worker.
- Are the bees, we see flying from flower to flower, the youngest or the oldest worker bees?