Name: Date: Score: / 6

Honeybees in Trouble: Comprehension

Nonfiction: Animals · about 255 words

Read the passage. Then answer each question. Circle the best answer or write your answer on the lines.

Honeybees in Trouble

About one out of every three bites of food you eat depends on pollinators, and honeybees are among the most important of them. As bees travel from flower to flower collecting nectar, they carry pollen, which helps plants make fruits and seeds. Crops like almonds, apples, blueberries, and cucumbers depend heavily on bee pollination. California's almond orchards alone need well over a million beehives each spring.

In recent years, beekeepers have noticed a worrying problem. Many lose a large share of their colonies each year. Scientists have found that there is no single cause. Instead, several problems work together.

One threat is a tiny mite called the varroa mite. It attaches to bees, feeds on them, and spreads viruses. Another is pesticides, chemicals used to kill insects that damage crops. Some pesticides can harm bees, too, even in small amounts. Bees also suffer from a lack of food. When large areas are planted with just one crop, bees may have plenty of flowers for a few weeks and then almost none for the rest of the season. Changes in weather can also cause flowers to bloom at times when bees are not ready.

People are working to help. Beekeepers are breeding bees that can better fight off mites. Farmers are planting strips of wildflowers between fields. Some cities have encouraged rooftop beehives.

You can help, too. Plant flowers that bloom at different times of the year, avoid using pesticides in your yard, and leave a few dandelions and clover patches for bees to enjoy.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?

   A. why honeybees are important and what is harming them B. how to make honey

   C. the history of almonds D. why flowers bloom in spring

2. **Detail:** About how much of our food depends on pollinators?

   A. about one out of every three bites B. one out of every hundred bites C. all of it D. almost none

3. **Detail:** What does the varroa mite do?

   A. pollinates flowers B. builds hives C. makes honey

   D. attaches to bees, feeds on them, and spreads viruses

4. **Vocabulary:** Pesticides are...

   A. kinds of flowers B. chemicals used to kill insects that damage crops C. tiny mites

   D. types of beehives

5. **Inference:** Why can planting only one crop hurt bees?

   A. One crop is poisonous. B. Bees do not like crops. C. It makes the bees too fat.

   D. Bees may have flowers for a few weeks and then almost none.

6. **Detail:** Name one way kids can help bees.

ANSWER KEY

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6. **Detail:** Name one way kids can help bees.

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