

## **What's the Buzz?**

### **Purpose**

To strengthen reading comprehension skills and learn about the importance of honeybees to agriculture and our society.

### **Competencies**

Students will practice locating information in text to strengthen informational and argumentative communication skills.

### **Vocabulary**

honeybees   hobbyist   cultivated   temperament   colony

pollination   beekeeper   attrition

### **Materials Provided**

- article from May/June 2008 *North Carolina Farm Bureau* magazine (Vol.79 No. 3 page 22),
- copy of "Three Facts and a Fallacy" for students

### **Teaching Strategy**

*Preparation:* Make copies of article, *Busy Bees* for students. Make copies of "Three Facts and a Fallacy" worksheet for students.

1. Conduct a brief discussion with the class about honeybees and the work humans depend on them to.
2. Distribute copies of "Three Facts and a Fallacy". Challenge students to locate the one statement in each group that is not factual about honeybees and mark it.
3. Assign independent reading of the article, *Busy Bees*.
4. Direct students to use information gleaned from reading the article to correct their answers on the worksheet.
5. Conduct a class discussion related to what students learned from reading the article. Develop a list of questions students have about honeybees, pollination, and food production. Allow students to design their own work projects from their experience reading the article, *Busy Bees*.

## Three Facts and a Fallacy

Directions:

Each group of statements below contains three facts and one statement that is not true. Read each group of statements and circle the one that you believe is not factual. Then read the article, *Busy Bees*, and locate information to confirm your guesses. Be prepared to discuss the article and what you learned with your classmates and your teacher.

1.

- Bees have 5 eyes.
- Individual bee hives have personalities.
- There is only one queen bee in each hive.
- The number of honeybees in the United States is increasing at the present time.

2.

- The leader of a bee colony is the king bee.
- Bees have two sets of wings.
- Russian queen bees can destroy harmful mites.
- North Carolina bee colonies are not yet affected by Colony Collapse Disorder.

3.

- The life expectancy for a queen bee is about 5 years.
- During cold winter months female worker bees live only about six weeks.
- Many plants depend on bees and other insects to pollinate their flowers so that food can be made.
- Honeybees are an important part of agriculture.

4

- If you want bees to leave you alone, wear black clothing.
- Female honeybees are the only ones with stingers.
- The average population of a beehive is about 60,000 bees.
- The honeybee population in North Carolina is about 50, 000,000.

5.

- The amount of money bees contribute to North Carolina's economy each year is in the millions of dollars.
- Populations within honeybee colonies decrease during the winter months
- If a bee loses its stinger, a new one will grow in about three days.
- Only one bee in each colony lays eggs.

6.

- Bees communicate using chemicals called pheromones.
- A strong worker bee can produce a cup of honey each week.
- It takes nectar from about 2 million flowers to make one pound of honey.
- Bees fly at a speed of about 20 miles per hour.

Make a list below of at least 5 things you would like to learn about honeybees. After each question or statement, list sources you will consult to find out what you would like to know.