



MINIS AT HOME

volume 1, issue 26

Greetings kids, parents, grandparents, guardians, friends and neighbors!

Welcome to issue 26 of Minis at Home newsletter. Each newsletter features a special theme and offers pertinent information, a craft, and recommended reading. Grownups: please work on projects together with your children. Your pARTicipation is important! We will offer hints and tips for ways to create art as a twosome or a family.

This week's theme = Bees



When spring, flowers and warm weather arrive, so will bees! Bees are one of the most important insects in the world. They are important for humans, plants and animals. Every living creature has a special job or purpose, and bees are no exception!

There are many kinds of bees in the world, but the most common bees we might see here in our backyards are honey bees, carpenter bees and bumblebees. Honey bees are a golden-brown color with brownish stripes and are the smallest of the bees. Carpenter bees are a dark blue-black color. They are larger than honey bees. Carpenter bees are important because they visit and pollinate plants and flowers that honey bees don't like. Bumblebees are black with yellow stripes and are much brighter in color than honey bees. Can you tell which one is which?



Bees are known as **pollinators**. This means that they help plants live, grow and reproduce. Many plants have flowers too, and these flowers carry **pollen**, the yellow-orange powder-like substance you might find on the inside of flower petals. Pollen is important because when it is spread to other plants, it helps the plants reproduce and stay strong and healthy. How does pollen get from flower to flower or plant to plant? It can be blown by the wind or it can hitch a ride on bees. When bees visit flowers to drink their **nectar**—or sugar—pollen will stick to their legs and bodies. Bees go from flower to flower drinking nectar, collecting pollen and spreading the pollen along the way. If you look closely at a bee, you may see the yellow-orange pollen sticking to their legs and bodies. If there were no bees, it would be really difficult for plants and flowers to survive.



Did you know that bees live in colonies inside hives? A colony contains thousands and thousands of bees who all work for one queen bee. The 3 types of bees that make up a colony are **workers**, **drones** and a **queen**. The workers do all the "work" of collecting nectar from flowers and caring for the hive. The queen stays in the hive and lays eggs, and the drones' job is to take care of the queen and reproduce with her. Worker bees are all female bees and drones are all male. The queen is the only female who is able to lay eggs.

Worker bees collect nectar with their tongues and store it in a special stomach called the honey stomach until they take it back to the hive. They make nectar into honey by chewing it up to reduce the moisture. This honey feeds the bees in the hive, and any extra is stored away in wax honeycombs for the winter. There are a lot of bees in a hive, so they can make a lot of honey, even enough for humans to have some!



A **beehive** is made of beeswax or honeycomb, which consists of thousands of hexagon (6-sided) shaped “rooms.” Would you like to live in a hexagon-shaped room? I think that would be such fun! A beehive can be home to as many as 50,000 bees! You can think of a beehive as a hotel with many rooms. The largest hotel in the world has just over 7,000 rooms (that’s really big), so each room would need to have 7 guests in order to house as many people as there are bees in some hives. Each **honeycomb** room in a beehive is made out of nectar and pollen. The hexagonal cells are used to store the honey as well as to house the entire colony. Honey bees can live throughout the winter in their cozy condos with lots of honey to eat when there are no flowers.

Bees are important for a healthy world. If you see bees "working" in the garden or if you find a hive in a tree or around your house, watch from a distance as you don't want to scare the bees. If a bee gets scared because you are too close to it, it may try to sting you, which can hurt! BE kind to BEES by planting flowers that make a lot of nectar and pollen such as **lavender**, **bluebells**, **goldenrod** and **bee balm**.

When you see a bee flying from flower to flower, you'll know they are doing their very important work of making honey to feed their colonies and helping plants and flowers grow and survive. When you take a bite of your dinner, remember that bees helped to grow the food you eat!

Bee Facts:

Bees have 2 stomachs: a honey stomach, just for storing nectar until it is made into honey, and a food stomach for when they eat the honey for energy.

It takes at least 8 bees their entire lives to make a teaspoon of honey.



Bees are responsible for pollinating over 100 types of crops and plants in the United States.

Bees have 5 eyes and 6 legs.

Bees can see every color except for red, helping them find the flowers from which to collect pollen.

Bees also have an excellent sense of smell, so they can smell the flowers they need to pollinate.

In a single trip out of the hive, a bee will visit 50 to 100 flowers to collect nectar

Activity: Craft

Beehive and Bee

(this craft has several steps. Each step involves process art techniques that kids love)



Materials:

Bubble wrap

Scissors

Rolling pin (optional) OR paintbrush

Tape

Yellow and orange paint

Paper plate or tray

White card stock, construction paper or other heavy paper

Wax or parchment paper for the bee's wings

Black and yellow tissue paper

Black construction paper scrap for bee's head

Black or brown pipe cleaner or construction paper scraps

White glue or glue stick

Small googly eyes

Toothpick

Procedure:

For the Hive: Cut out a piece of bubble wrap and wrap it around a rolling pin, bumpy side out, securing it with tape, OR you can just lay a piece of bubble wrap on a flat surface, bumpy side up

Pour yellow and orange paint onto a paper plate or larger surface such as a cookie sheet or tray

Roll the rolling pin into the paint OR use a paintbrush to apply paint to the bumps

Roll the rolling pin over the white card stock to make honeycomb shapes OR lay the white paper on top of the painted bubble wrap. Press down, smoothing the paper onto the painted side of the bubble wrap. Lift the bubble wrap up from the paper and discard.

Allow paper to dry and cut out a hive shape. (Great scissor practice for children)

For the Tissue Paper Bee:

(the scrunching of small pieces of tissue paper and placing them onto paper is great for fine motor development)

Cut out or tear small pieces of yellow and black tissue paper

Cut out the bee's body from an oval piece of white paper, adding slightly curving lines across it to use as a guide for the bee's stripes.

Cut out a small circle of black construction paper for the bee's head and 2 ovals from the wax paper for the bee's wings

To make the bee's striped body, have your child scrunch up each piece of tissue paper as they place it in a repeating pattern across the bee's back. (Your child can practice the concept of patterning). Make sure they place the scrunched up pieces of tissue very close together so that none of the white paper below is visible.

Glue on the bee's head and add the googly eyes

Tape or glue the wax paper wings to the back of the bee

Using small sections of a pipe cleaner or black paper strips, tape or glue on 2 antennae.

You can add 6 legs onto the bee's body if you want.

Tape the toothpick as a stinger onto the back of the bee's body.

Beehive Counting Rhyme: (adapted from supersimple.com)

Here is a beehive (make a fist with one hand if counting to 5 or 2 fists if counting to 10)

But where are the bees?

Hiding in their hive where no one can see

Here they come, flying out of their hive (pop fingers out from your fist one by one)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5! (Wriggle your fingers, so they appear to be buzzing all around)

The Buzzing Busy Bee (from iebees.com)

The bee is such a busy soul.

She buzzes all around.

You see her flit from flower to flower,

Making her sweet buzzing sound. Buzzz

She sips each flower's nectar sweet,

'Til she can drink no more.

Then back to her hive to prepare a treat

Of honey which she'll store. Buzzz

Once in her hive, she doesn't stop.

Her chores continue on.

Feeding the queen and taking care of the young

Singing her sweet buzzing song. Buzzz



Literacy: POEM TO SHARE

Bee Life by Constance Del Nero

The news about bees is

buzz buzz buzz

Their bodies are covered with

fuzz, fuzz, fuzz

Pollen will stick to their

legs, legs, legs

onto their bodies and

heads, heads, heads

They take the pollen back to their

hive, hive, hive

to keep their fellow bees

alive, alive, alive



Literacy: RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Snuggle up in a big comfy chair and read together

The Honey Makers by Gail Gibbons

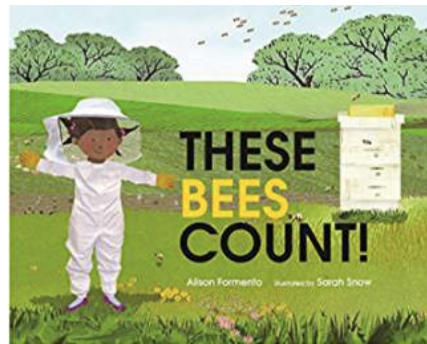
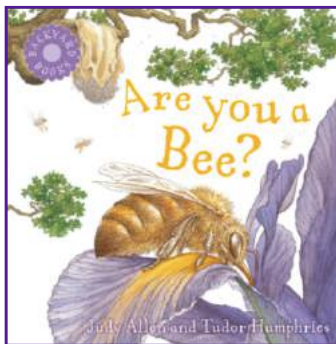
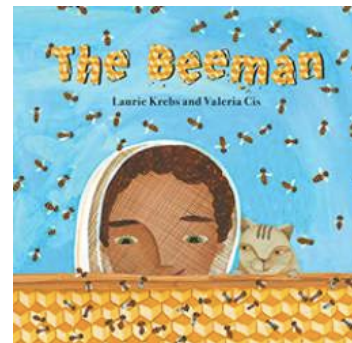
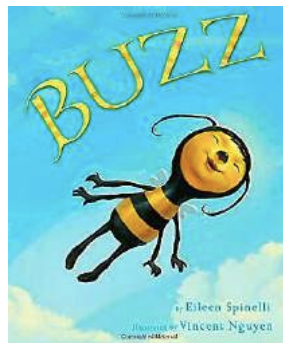
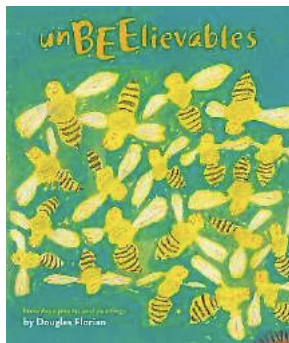
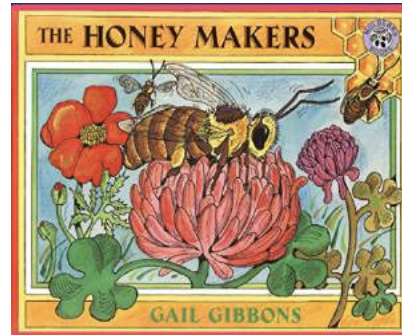
UnBEElievables by Doug Florian

Buzz by Eileen Spinelli

The Beeman by Laurie Krebs

Are you a Bee? by Judy Allen

These Bees Count! by Alison Formento



Creatively yours,

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See you next week with issue **27** of **Minis at Home!**

Share your work on <https://www.instagram.com/minimastersaam/>

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