

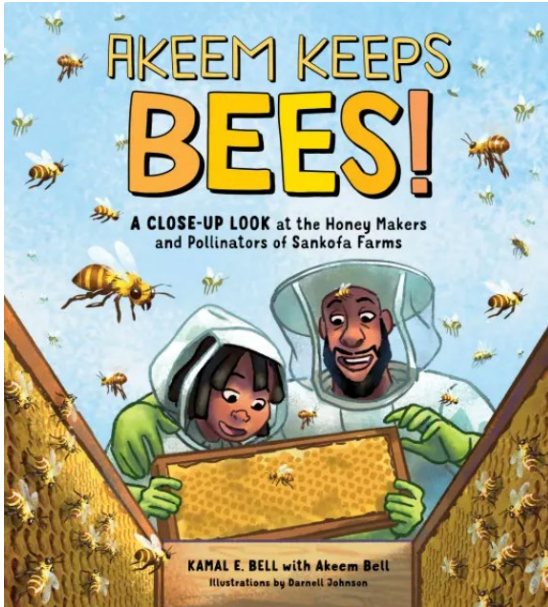


The Book Planter



Ag in the Classroom

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Akeem Keeps Bees! A Close-up Look at the Honey Makers and Pollinators of Sankofa Farms

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Told from Akeem's perspective, *Akeem Keeps Bees!* begins with the arrival and installation of a package of bees and follows Akeem and his Dad throughout the year as they inspect the hive, find the queen, deal with a swarm, harvest honey, and prepare for winter. Every part of the process is illustrated for young readers, teaching them the special role

that bees play on a farm. The author, Kamal Bell, is a leading voice among Black farmers educating and inspiring Black youth about farming and beekeeping, and is from North Carolina! Young readers will learn the basics of beekeeping with this vibrantly illustrated book that takes place on the Sankofa Farms apiary.

After-Reading Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about beekeeping from this book?
2. How does the book portray the relationship between Akeem and his father?
3. How does Akeem's curiosity and interest in bees shape his relationship with his father?
4. What are some of the challenges and rewards of beekeeping, as depicted in the story?
5. How can you be inspired by honeybees?

Activity 1: What is a Honeybee?¹

1. Ask students, "What is a honeybee?" (an insect)
2. Say, "How do we know honeybees are insects?" Allow students to brainstorm. Once you've allowed them to answer, review the following points:
 - Insects have a 3-part body structure that includes a head, thorax, and abdomen.
 - They have 6 legs (3 on each side of the body).
 - Insects have two wings.
 - Insects have antenna.
3. Define the words that might be unfamiliar to the students:

- **Thorax:** the anchor point for the legs, wings and helps the honeybee move from place to place
 - **Antenna:** help the bee smell, sense different temperatures and touch objects
 - **Abdomen:** the site for food to be digested and where the process of breathing takes place
4. Give each student a *Parts of a Honeybee Worksheet*, and allow them to test their knowledge.
 5. Pass out a *Honeybee KWL Chart*², and allow students to fill out the *Know* and *Want to Know* sections. Some might have some facts to add to the *Learned* section.

Activity 2: What Do You Do?²

1. Hand out a copy of the Honeybee Worksheet to each student. Discuss the three roles of the three types of honeybees and have the students complete the worksheet. Integrate the following facts into the discussion:
 - a. Bees live in groups called colonies.
 - b. Each colony has one **queen**. The queen has a longer body than all of the other bees in the colony.
 - c. **Drone** bees are smaller than the queen. They are male bees and their only job is to mate with the queen so she can lay more eggs. One colony will have about 100 drone bees.
 - d. **Worker** bees are the smallest bees in the colony. They are all female and have lots of different jobs including feeding the larvae; cleaning the hive; creating wax and using it to make new cells; grooming and feeding the queen; guarding and protecting the hive; and leaving the hive to collect pollen, nectar, and water. There are thousands of worker bees in the colony
2. Use the information on the [Amazing Bees Online Poster](#) to help students discover the ways in which bee colonies work together as a community.
3. Use a Venn Diagram or T-Chart Organizer to compare and contrast how bees in a hive and students in a classroom work together as a community. Examples include:
 - The bees in a hive live in large groups called colonies. In our school, our class is a large group of students.
 - In the hive, there is one bee who is the leader—the queen. In our classroom, the teacher is the leader.
 - In the hive, the worker bees have special jobs—take care of the young bees, guard the hive, create wax to build the honeycomb where eggs are laid, forage or find pollen and nectar to feed the bees in the hive, and make honey. In our classroom, we all have jobs. (Students can list jobs specific to their classroom.)
 - If a bee doesn't do his/her job, the whole hive is affected. For example, if the bees that are supposed to look for pollen and nectar decide not to, some or all of the bees will not have the proper nutrients. In our classroom, if someone doesn't do their job, it affects the entire

class. For example, if one person does not put away their books in our library, other students won't be able to read those books.

Activity 3: KWL Follow-Up: Revisit the KWL Charts with the students, and allow time to fill out the remaining sections.

Extension Activities

1. [In the Hive with the Beekeeper](#) – Online learning model that takes the learner through the process of beekeeping.
2. [Up-Close Experience: Bees](#) – 360 Video Series that explores a beehive
3. [Pollination Simulation](#)

Sources

1. <https://www.agfoundation.org/files/in-the-hive-with-the-beekeeper/#/lessons/waGs4ZRQLhmgbuSJMplqUD3-1pc0kBUN>
2. <https://agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/686/>

K-5 Subject Areas: English Language Arts, and Science

English Language Arts

- RL.K.1 With guidance and support, identify a detail in a familiar text.
- RL.K.2 With guidance and support, identify the main topic of a familiar text.
- RL.1.1 Identify details in a familiar text.
- RL.1.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- RL.2.2 Identify the main topic of text.
- RL.2.4 Identify words that relate to the topic of a text.
- RL.3.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- RL.3.4 Identify key words that complete sentences in a text.
- RL.3.5 Locate key facts or information in a familiar text.
- RL.4.1 Identify explicit details in an informational text.
- RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words in a text.
- RL.5.1 Identify words in the text to answer a question about explicit information.

Science

- PS.K.1 Understand how objects are described based on their physical properties and how they are used.
- LS.K.1 Understand the characteristics of living organisms and nonliving things.
- LS.K.2 Understand characteristics of organisms that make them alike and different.
- LS.1.1 Understand the basic needs of a variety of plants and animals in different ecosystems.
- LS.2.2 Understand that organisms differ from or are similar to their parents and other offspring based on characteristics of the organism.
- LS.5.2 Understand the interdependence of plants and animals within their ecosystem.

Name: _____

Parts of a Honeybee



Instructions: Write the parts of the honeybee below, corresponding to each number.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Name: _____

Parts of a Honeybee – Answer Key



Instructions: Write the parts of the honeybee below, corresponding to each number.

1. Antenna

2. Head

3. Thorax

4. Legs

5. Abdomen

6. Wings

Name

Honeybee Worksheet

What Do Bees Do?

The queen, workers and drones look very different and have different jobs in the hive. Identify each bee (queen, worker or drone) pictured below and then list the jobs of each bee.



Which Bee?	Which Bee?	Which Bee?
Job?	Job?	Job?

Name _____

The Amazing Honeybee

KWL Chart

Know	Want to Know	Learned

Venn Diagram

Name(s) _____

