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12 million bees on the loose in Canada

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0807/080702-bees.html>

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2nd July, 2008

THE ARTICLE

Authorities in Canada had to deal with the escape of 12 million bees on Monday. The bees buzzed off after the truck that was carrying them overturned. Most of the insects stayed close by, but enough were on the loose to cause a potential hazard to the public. Police told people to stay indoors and keep their windows closed. Bee expert Chris Maund said it was lucky the accident happened in the countryside: "Fortunately it happened in an area where there are no restaurants or houses around. If it happened in a heavily populated area, all the bees would have been killed right away." Mr. Maund said that people are not at risk as long as they keep their distance. People working at the scene to recover the bees were wearing full protective gear.

The bees were on their way back to their main beehives after being used to pollinate a crop of blueberries. Bees and the travelling pollination service are a vital part of Canada's fruit industry and regularly criss-cross Canadian highways. Maund said the truck and broken hives were being left on the highway overnight. He believes the bees will return naturally. The bees probably did not go very far because of the rainy weather. Bees breathe through their skin and can drown in the rain. Firefighters were at the scene making the bees wet to keep them from flying around. They also sprayed the bees with smoke to make them drowsy. The smoke can also make them think there is a fire, causing them to return to rescue their honey.

WARM-UPS

1. BEES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about bees. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

authorities / escape / insects / hazards / staying indoors / countryside / being at risk / beehives / crops / blueberries / fruit industry / highways / firefighters / smoke / honey

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. ON THE LOOSE: What would you do if 12 million animals were on the loose in your town? What damage or chaos would they cause? How could authorities get rid of them? With your partner(s), complete the table. Change partners and share your ideas.

	What would you do?	Damage?	Getting rid of them
bees			
elephants			
rats			
cockroaches			
bears			
sheep			

4. INSECTS: How useful are insects? With your partner(s), rate the following from 10 (= absolutely couldn't do without) to 1 (= remove them from the face of the Earth). Change partners and discuss and agree on your ratings.

_____ bees

_____ centipedes

_____ cockroaches

_____ snails

_____ ants

_____ spiders

_____ butterflies

_____ scorpions

5. HEADLINE PREDICTION: With your partner(s), use the words in the "Chat" activity above to predict what the news article will be about. Once you have your story, change partners and share them. Who was closest to the real story?

6. BEE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'bee'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Twelve million bees escaped from a high-security bee warfare centre. T / F
- b. All 12 million bees are spreading across Canada. T / F
- c. Authorities would have killed the bees if they escaped near a city. T / F
- d. People are not at risk if they as long as they don't go near the bees. T / F
- e. The bees are killer bees bred to destroy farms in enemy countries. T / F
- f. Bee-carrying trucks are a very rare sight on Canada's highways. T / F
- g. Bees hate rain because the rain makes it difficult for them to breathe. T / F
- h. In the event of a fire, bees will try to rescue their honey. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. authorities | a. equipment |
| 2. deal with | b. officials |
| 3. on the loose | c. business |
| 4. fortunately | d. handle |
| 5. gear | e. important |
| 6. crop | f. sleepy |
| 7. vital | g. luckily |
| 8. industry | h. traverse |
| 9. criss-cross | i. at large |
| 10. drowsy | j. harvest |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. deal with the | a. through their skin |
| 2. enough were on the loose to cause a | b. keep their distance |
| 3. If it happened in a heavily | c. Canadian highways |
| 4. people are not at risk as long as they | d. part of Canada's fruit industry |
| 5. wearing full protective | e. populated area |
| 6. pollinate | f. potential hazard to the public |
| 7. a vital | g. escape of 12 million bees |
| 8. regularly criss-cross | h. to make them drowsy |
| 9. Bees breathe | i. gear |
| 10. They also sprayed the bees with smoke | j. a crop of blueberries |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Authorities in Canada had to _____ with the escape of 12 million bees on Monday. The bees _____ off after the truck that was carrying them overturned. Most of the insects stayed close by, but enough were on the loose to cause a _____ hazard to the public. Police told people to stay _____ and keep their windows closed. Bee expert Chris Maund said it was lucky the accident _____ in the countryside: "Fortunately it happened in an area where there are no restaurants or houses around. If it happened in a _____ populated area, all the bees would have been killed right away." Mr. Maund said that people are not at _____ as long as they keep their distance. People working at the _____ to recover the bees were wearing full protective gear.

indoors
scene
potential
risk
deal
happened
buzzed
heavily

The bees were on their way _____ to their main beehives after being used to pollinate a _____ of blueberries. Bees and the travelling pollination service are a vital part of Canada's fruit industry and regularly _____ Canadian highways. Maund said the truck and broken hives were being left on the highway overnight. He believes the bees will return _____. The bees probably did not go very far because of the rainy weather. Bees breathe _____ their skin and can drown in the rain. Firefighters were at the scene making the bees wet to _____ them from flying around. They also sprayed the bees with smoke to make them _____. The smoke can also make them think there is a fire, causing them to return to _____ their honey.

keep
crop
rescue
back
naturally
drowsy
criss-cross
through

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Authorities in Canada _____ the escape of 12 million bees on Monday. The bees _____ the truck that was carrying them overturned. Most of the insects stayed close by, but _____ the loose to cause _____ to the public. Police told people to stay indoors and keep their windows closed. Bee expert Chris Maund said it was lucky the accident happened in the countryside: "Fortunately it happened _____ there are no restaurants or houses around. If it happened in a heavily populated area, all the bees would have been killed right away." Mr. Maund said that people _____ as long as they keep their distance. People working _____ recover the bees were wearing full protective gear.

The bees were _____ to their main beehives after being used to pollinate a crop of blueberries. Bees and the travelling pollination service _____ Canada's fruit industry and regularly criss-cross Canadian highways. Maund said the truck and broken hives _____ the highway overnight. He believes the bees will return naturally. The bees probably _____ because of the rainy weather. Bees breathe through their skin and can drown in the rain. Firefighters were at the scene making the bees _____ from flying around. They also sprayed the bees with smoke to make them drowsy. The smoke _____ think there is a fire, causing them to return to rescue their honey.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'potential' and 'hazard'.

potential	hazard

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deal• close• indoors• houses• heavily• distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• blueberries• vital• overnight• far• skin• smoke
--	--

STUDENT BEE SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about bees in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

BEES DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'bee'?
- c) What do you think of bees?
- d) What would you do if you were in an area with 12 million bees?
- e) Do you think it would be an interesting job to deal with things like this?
- f) What should authorities do if 12 million bees were on the loose in the city?
- g) How useful are bees?
- h) Have you ever been stung by a bee?
- i) Have you ever had a bee in your bonnet about something?
- j) Do you think beekeeping would be an interesting hobby?

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BEES DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think bees need to be transported around Canada on trucks to pollinate fruit farms?
- c) Do you think bees mind being transported on a truck?
- d) What kind of life do you think bees have?
- e) What interesting things did you learn about bees from this article?
- f) What would happen to the world if all of the bees disappeared?
- g) What three adjectives would you use to describe bees?
- h) Are bees used in your culture for stories, cartoons, songs, etc?
- i) What questions would you like to ask a bee?
- j) What do you think the bee's answers would be?

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LANGUAGE

Authorities in Canada had to deal (1) _____ the escape of 12 million bees on Monday. The bees (2) _____ off after the truck that was carrying them overturned. Most of the insects stayed close (3) _____, but enough were on the loose to cause a potential hazard to the public. Police told people to stay indoors and (4) _____ their windows closed. Bee expert Chris Maund said it was lucky the accident happened in the countryside: "Fortunately it happened in an area where there are no restaurants or houses around. If it happened in a (5) _____ populated area, all the bees would have been killed right away." Mr. Maund said that people are not at risk as long as they keep their distance. People working at the scene to recover the bees were wearing full protective (6) _____.

The bees were on their (7) _____ back to their main beehives after being used to pollinate a crop of blueberries. Bees and the travelling pollination service are a (8) _____ part of Canada's fruit industry and regularly criss-cross Canadian highways. Maund said the truck and broken hives were being left on the highway overnight. He believes the bees will return (9) _____. The bees probably did not go very far because of the rainy weather. Bees breathe through their skin and can (10) _____ in the rain. Firefighters were at the scene making the bees wet to keep them from flying around. They also sprayed the bees (11) _____ smoke to make them drowsy. The smoke can also make them think there is a fire, causing them to return to rescue their (12) _____.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) for | (b) by | (c) with | (d) in |
| 2. | (a) buzz | (b) buzzed | (c) buzzing | (d) buzzes |
| 3. | (a) by | (b) in | (c) of | (d) to |
| 4. | (a) deep | (b) beep | (c) peep | (d) keep |
| 5. | (a) heavy | (b) heavier | (c) heavily | (d) heaviest |
| 6. | (a) geared | (b) gears | (c) gear | (d) gearing |
| 7. | (a) lane | (b) way | (c) path | (d) road |
| 8. | (a) vital | (b) viral | (c) virus | (d) vitally |
| 9. | (a) naturalist | (b) naturally | (c) natural | (d) naturalness |
| 10. | (a) drown | (b) drowned | (c) drowning | (d) drowns |
| 11. | (a) on | (b) into | (c) for | (d) with |
| 12. | (a) family | (b) wax | (c) money | (d) honey |

WRITING:

Write about **bees** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about bees. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. BEES: Make a poster about the different kinds of bees in the world. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. STILL ON THE LOOSE: Write a magazine article about the adventures some of the escaped bees had. Include imaginary interviews with two bees.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. DIARY / JOURNAL: You are a bee. Write your thoughts on your daily life. Include your opinions on global warming. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. F c. T d. T e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. authorities | a. officials |
| 2. deal with | b. handle |
| 3. on the loose | c. at large |
| 4. fortunately | d. luckily |
| 5. gear | e. equipment |
| 6. crop | f. harvest |
| 7. vital | g. important |
| 8. industry | h. business |
| 9. criss-cross | i. traverse |
| 10. drowsy | j. sleepy |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. deal with the | a. escape of 12 million bees |
| 2. enough were on the loose to cause a | b. potential hazard to the public |
| 3. If it happened in a heavily | c. populated area |
| 4. people are not at risk as long as they | d. keep their distance |
| 5. wearing full protective | e. gear |
| 6. pollinate | f. a crop of blueberries |
| 7. a vital | g. part of Canada's fruit industry |
| 8. regularly criss-cross | h. Canadian highways |
| 9. Bees breathe | i. through their skin |
| 10. They also sprayed the bees with smoke | j. to make them drowsy |

GAP FILL:

12 million bees on the loose in Canada

Authorities in Canada had to **deal** with the escape of 12 million bees on Monday. The bees **buzzed** off after the truck that was carrying them overturned. Most of the insects stayed **close by**, but enough were on the loose to cause a **potential** hazard to the public. Police told people to stay **indoors** and keep their windows closed. Bee expert Chris Maund said it was lucky the accident **happened** in the countryside: "Fortunately it happened in an area where there are no restaurants or houses around. If it happened in a **heavily** populated area, all the bees would have been killed right away." Mr. Maund said that people are not at **risk** as long as they keep their distance. People working at the **scene** to recover the bees were wearing full protective gear.

The bees were on their way **back** to their main beehives after being used to pollinate a **crop** of blueberries. Bees and the travelling pollination service are a vital part of Canada's fruit industry and regularly **criss-cross** Canadian highways. Maund said the truck and broken hives were being left on the highway overnight. He believes the bees will return **naturally**. The bees probably did not go very far because of the rainy weather. Bees breathe **through** their skin and can drown in the rain. Firefighters were at the scene making the bees wet to **keep** them from flying around. They also sprayed the bees with smoke to make them **drowsy**. The smoke can also make them think there is a fire, causing them to return to **rescue** their honey.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - c 2 - b 3 - a 4 - d 5 - c 6 - c 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - a 11 - d 12 - d