

These notes are for:

- Years 3, 4, 5 & 6
- Primary

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- HSIE/SOSE
- Science & Technology

Example of:

- Junior Fiction
- Non-Fiction

Experience of:

- Environment
- Animal narrators
- First person
- Natural history
- Text-types – diary entry

Values addressed:

- Understanding, Tolerance & Inclusion
- Honesty & Trustworthiness
- Care & Compassion

Themes:

- Conservation
- Hope
- Survival
- Working together/cooperation
- Other cultures

*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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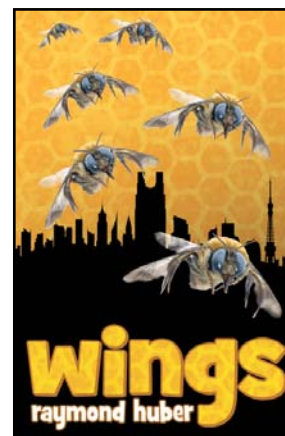
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Wings - Overview

Wings

By Raymond Huber
 ISBN: 9781921720208
 ARRP: \$15.95
 NZRRP: \$17.99
 No. of Pages: 153
 July 2011



Outline:

In this thrilling sequel to *Sting*, the adventurous honey bee, Ziggy, embarks on another adventure with his new family. They travel to Japan for a special mission – to try and find out what is causing the bees of Tokyo to disappear. While investigating, Ziggy comes across new friends, a colony of honey bees with a very different way of protecting their hive; and a new terrifying enemy – the huge hornet, Torgo. Will Ziggy be able to solve the mystery of the missing bees?

Told from a bee's point of view, this exciting eco-adventure raises awareness of conservation issues and of man's relationship with animals. Ziggy's narrative is interspersed with diary entries from Sophie, his "human", giving students an understanding of different text types.

Author Information:

Raymond Huber grew up in Christchurch, New Zealand. His mother worked in a library so he grew to love books. His favourite childhood books were *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Tintin* and *The Hobbit*. As a teenager he loved science fiction. His first jobs included working as a social worker at the City Mission, a gardener, an insect research assistant and then a primary school teacher for 15 years. He is now a full-time writer and editor and also runs writing workshops.

He has always enjoyed writing, including poems, textbooks for children, magazine articles and picture books. Science fascinates him and he has written many short science books for children. *Sting*, his first novel for Walker Books Australia, was short-listed for the NZ Post Book Awards for Children & Young Adults, Junior Fiction Category, 2010; and the Sir Julius Vogel Awards, Young Adult Category, 2010; as well as being a Storylines Notable Book, Junior Fiction Category, 2010.

Raymond's hobbies include children's literature, sculpture, and beekeeping. More information can be found on his website:
<http://www.raymondhuber.co.nz/>

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

**Raymond Huber on writing *Wings***

When I watched some of my bees die from pesticide poisoning I knew this would be Ziggy's mission. Bees and humans have been partners for ages (we give them homes and they pollinate our crops) but the world's bees are now endangered by the toxic chemicals people use. I wanted my characters to work as a team to solve challenges like this. The Earth's problems can seem overwhelming but I love Ziggy because he's a hopeful character who just won't give up.

I wanted Ziggy to experience human life close up so I set the story in busy Tokyo. It was exciting to write because there's so much action in a mega-city. The characters are all a part of me in some way: Torgo the giant hornet grew from my love of sci-fi movie monsters; Fang the snake appears because I enjoy puzzles; Wiri has my impatience; Ash has my sense of humour; and I share Mitsu's love of wise sayings.

Classroom activities for *Sting* – Chapter by Chapter :

- “Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.” – Ryunosuke Satoro. Discuss what this saying might mean. Why might it have been included at the start of the book?

Chapters 1-2

- A simile is where one thing is compared to another using the word “like” or “as”. For example, “glowing like a candle” or “as bright as the sun.” What similes can you find in chapter 1? What is the author trying to emphasise in each of these similes?
- Mitsu says of her human on page 19, “We call him Wax, because he is soft but strong.” Choose three friends or family members and make up new names for them which emphasise key aspects of their personality. Explain why you have chosen each one.
- On page 22 Florian says, “... humans can't live without us ... They need bees to help make their food.” What does he mean by this? Brainstorm a list of other ways animals help humans to survive.

Chapters 3-4

- In chapter 3, how does Mitsu communicate the location of the field of flowers to the other bees? What are some of the ways humans have communicated information to each other both in the past and today? Think about communicating both face-to-face and across distances.
- Imagine you were a bee and develop your own bee dance. Perform this to the class.

Chapters 5-8

- In chapter 6, Ziggy encounters a “huge worm”. What is he referring to? Choose another object and describe it as a bee might. Read your description out to a partner and see if they can guess what you're describing.
- What explanation does Ash give for betraying Calluna and the other bees in chapter 8? Do you sympathise with him at all, or do you still consider him a villain (evil character)? Revisit your response at the end of the novel and see if your attitude towards him has changed at all.
- At the end of chapter 8, Dr Sophie mentions a new insecticide called “Peace”. Why is the name of this insecticide surprising? If you were asked to choose a more appropriate name for it, what would you choose?

Chapters 9-12

- What is the main message of the ice orchid legend related in chapter 9? Why do the bees want to find this orchid?
- Write your own myth or legend involving bees. You may like to set it in Japan!
- How do Florian and Sparkles communicate? Choose another animal and develop your own method of communicating with them. (You will need to do some research first on the animal's intelligence, sensory abilities and how it communicates with other members of its species.) Present your method to the class, explaining why it would be effective.
- Who is the “Mantis”? Why do the bees give her this name? Are there any other reasons this name might be appropriate?
- In chapter 12, Mitsu says, “... all creatures great and small need each other.” Look up the meaning for the word “symbiotic”. What are some examples of symbiosis in the world?

Chapters 13-16

- In chapter 13 and 14, Fang asks the bees a number of riddles. In pairs, read each riddle aloud and see if you can work out the answer before reading on.
- According to the riddle asked in chapter 14, what is “the heaviest thing in the world”? Do you agree with this answer? What are some other possible responses?
- Make up your own riddles and read them out to the class. Alternately, visit Raymond Huber's website for more riddles.
- In chapter 14, Wiri makes a set of wings to replace Ash's damaged pair. What things does he need to consider when making these wings?
- Design and make your own set of bee wings using cellophane, wire or any other materials you think would be effective.
- What does Florian say saved his life in chapter 16? How else has teamwork helped in the novel? Discuss the benefits of teamwork as a class. When have you used teamwork in your life?
- In Sophie's final diary entry, she writes about the “Peace” story breaking in the news and Joji being interviewed. In groups of three, present a news report about these events, including Joji's interview. Make sure you consult the book to ensure your facts are correct!



Further activities :

- Write a new adventure for Ziggy and his friends set in another foreign city. Make sure you describe the city from a bee's perspective and include information about the local culture.
- In small groups, create a character map for a character from the book. Each group should look at a different character: make sure you include Ziggy, Wiri, Calluna, Mitsu, Ash, Florian, Sophie/Sparkles and Torgo.

Draw a picture of the character in the centre of the page and then around them include:

- adjectives to describe their personality
- information about their background, family, special skills, strengths and weaknesses, etc.
- what role they play in the novel
- how/if they change throughout the novel
- two quotes from the book which give insight into their character (make sure you use quotation marks).

Re-form into new groups made up of one member from each of the original groups. Each group member should present their character while the other members of the group take notes. At the end, students should have notes on all of the characters in the book.

- Each of the bees have their own unique gifts. What gift does each bee have? Which would you find most useful in your life?
- Design a new character for the novel. What would their personality be like? What special gift would they have?
- Locate Japan on a map of the world. Then, locate Tokyo. What information do we learn about Japan from the book? What else do you know about Japan? Have any class members visited there?
- Create an orientation guide for bees arriving in Tokyo for the first time. Include information about local culture, food, places to visit and dangers to beware of. Include pictures and maps.
- Ask a parent or member of your local Japanese community to teach the class some simple phrases in Japanese. (Alternately, you may like to look at a website such as <http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/language/index.html>)
- Make a list of the sayings Mitsu uses in the book. Explain what each means in your own words. Choose your favourite and present it on a poster to display on the classroom wall.
- Mitsu uses the saying "little beats big" to explain how the bees were able to defeat the hornet in chapter 2. What are some other examples of little beating big in the book? Can you think of any other examples of little beating big in books you've read or films you've seen?
- How do we see "little beating big" in the world today? Some examples could be trade unions, political protests or countries where the the population has united to overthrow a dictator.

- Research the use of pesticides in Australia or New Zealand? Why are they used? What are the most common types of pesticides? What are some of the side effects or negative consequences of using pesticides?
- In small groups, plan an organic school vegetable garden (ie. one in which no pesticides or chemicals are used.) Include a scaled diagram of your garden showing what plants you would put where. For each plant, research natural ways of keeping away pests and preventing disease. Display your work in a portfolio. If possible, present it to the Student Representative Council or Principal for consideration.
- A list of "Bee Sayings" is given at the back of the book. In small groups, complete the animal sayings below by inserting the appropriate animal name. Discuss what each saying means. Can you think of any others?

As sick as a

Curiosity killed the

A in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Like a in a china shop.

When fly.

You can lead a to water but you can't make him drink.

The early catches the worm.

I'm so hungry I could eat a

As blind as a

A can't change its spots.

There are plenty more in the sea.

A in clothing.

- View a film with insect protagonists. Some possibilities could include *Bee Movie*, *Antz* and *A Bug's Life*. Draw a Venn diagram showing how this film is similar and different to *Wings* in terms of characters, themes and plot. As a class, discuss why you think the creators of both texts have decided to set their films in the insect world.
- View the documentary "Silence of the Bees" (available on Youtube). What extra information do you learn about bees from this film?
- Read the collection of bee creation myths on Raymond Huber's website. Choose one and convert it into a different text type. For example, a play script, comic strip or poem.

Check out Raymond Huber's website for more information about the author, bees and *Wings*, as well as for a range of great activities!

www.raymondhuber.co.nz



Fact Finding

Use the factual information at the end of the book to answer the questions below.

1. What story do the ancient Egyptians tell about bees?
2. Why was honey-hunting a dangerous job in the past?
3. How did the Australian Aboriginals track bees?
4. Name two famous beekeepers.
5. How can you avoid being stung by a bee?
6. What are some of the healing powers of honey?
7. How do humans and bees help each other?
8. What are some things we can do to help stop bees disappearing?

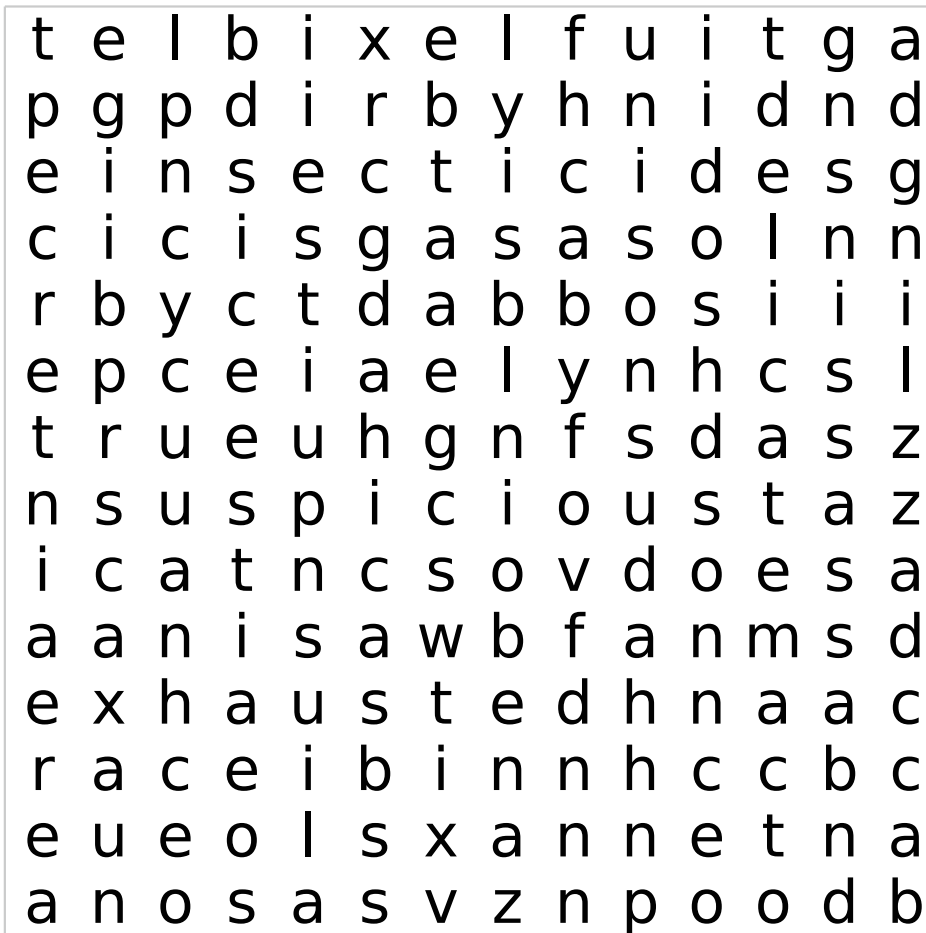
Spelling Bee

Look up the meaning of the following words then learn to spell them. You may like to test them in a class spelling bee at the end of the unit! Use the word search below to help you revise.

- assassins (p12)
- navigating (p15)
- delicate (p19)
- unison (p24)
- dazzling (p29)
- hybrid (p31)
- suspicious (p39)
- antenna (p50)
- swooshing (p60)
- abandoned (p64)
- intercept (p73)
- insecticide (p80)
- exhausted (p87)
- abyss (p110)
- camouflaged (p112)
- flexible (p117)

Word Search

Revise your "Spelling Bee" words by completing the word search below.



Word List

assassins
navigating
delicate
unison
dazzling
hybrid
suspicious
antenna
swooshing
abandoned
intercept
insecticide
exhausted
abyss
camouflaged
flexible



Also by Raymond Huber

Sting

ISBN: 9781921150890
AU\$15.95/NZ\$17.99
April 2009

In this thrilling forerunner to *Wings*, Ziggy feels as though he is an outsider in his own hive. Sent by the Queen on a mission to discover how other bees live, Ziggy begins to unravel the clues to his own identity and the role of the bees in a secret military project.

- Short-listed for the NZ Post Book Awards for Children & Young Adults, Junior Fiction Category, 2010
- Short-listed for the Sir Julius Vogel Awards, Young Adult Category, 2010
- Storylines Notable Book, Junior Fiction Category, 2010

For information about new releases, the latest awards news and links to a range of teacher resources, sign up to our education newsletter at www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers