



Read the story carefully. Then answer each question below in a full sentence.

In nature, one change causes many more. Trace the entire chain and think about how each link depends on the one before it.

Meadow's Early Bloom



One year, a strange warm spell arrived in early spring, much sooner than usual. The sun shone brightly for days, tricking the sleepy wildflowers in Farmer McGregor's meadow. Tiny green shoots pushed up from the soil, and soon, colorful blossoms like buttercups and clover opened their petals, thinking summer was already here.

But the busy bumblebees, who usually waited for a bit more warmth, were also tricked. They buzzed out of their nests, ready to collect nectar and pollen from the meadow. To their surprise, many of the early flowers had already bloomed and faded quickly in the unexpected heat. There wasn't enough fresh pollen for all the hungry bees.

With fewer bees finding enough food, their numbers grew smaller. Later in the spring, when Farmer McGregor's apple trees finally bloomed, there weren't enough bees to pollinate all the blossoms. That autumn, the farmer noticed his apple harvest was much smaller than usual. The early warm spell had set off a chain reaction, from the meadow's wildflowers to his very own orchard.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(1) Which of these **BEST** explains why the farmer's apple harvest was smaller than usual? Circle the correct answer.

- A The early warm spell caused the apple trees to bloom too early.



- B There were not enough bees to pollinate all the apple tree blossoms.
- C The farmer planted fewer apple trees that year.
- D Other animals ate the apples before they could be picked.

(2) Complete the sentence: Because the early warm spell tricked the wildflowers,

_____.

(3) What happened to the bumblebees when they came out of their nests?

(4) Describe how the early warm spell led to fewer bees and then to a smaller apple harvest for Farmer McGregor.

(5) What might have happened if the early warm spell had NOT occurred? Explain.



