



# QUIZ – QUIZ – QUIZ – QUIZ – QUIZ

## How Much Do YOU Know About Raising Queens?

Quiz prepared by Larry Connor –

Sorry for the pun, but all the buzz lately seems to be about raising your own queens, “cause the stuff you get is dead on arrival, doesn’t get accepted, or is superseded in a month.” I’ve been trying to teach people how to raise queens for years now, and I know some beekeepers are a whole lot better at it than others. So, stone sober, I promise, I’ve prepared an almost serious self-exam for you to check your aptitude for raising queens, getting them mated, and getting them introduced into a hive and staying there for a season or longer.

**1. Magazine readership:** Select ONE description that best represents your reading habits:

- a. Serious subscriber to this magazine for five years and have read every article (5 points)
- b. Subscriber to his magazine but only read the cooking section (0 points)
- c. Don’t subscribe to any bee magazines (Deduct 5 points)
- d. I’ve skimmed the queen rearing stuff, and only called a few of the authors idiots (1 point)
- e. Read another bee magazine all the time, but not this one (2 points)

**2. Books read:** This section is additive, the more you have read, the more points you get:

- a. Dewey Caron’s *Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping* (3 points)
- b. Roger Morse’s *Rearing Queen Honey Bees* (3 points)
- c. Laidlaw & Page’s *Queen Rearing & Bee Breeding* (5 points)
- d. Steve Taber’s *Breeding Super Bees* (3 points)
- e. Brother Adam’s *In Search of the Best Strains of Bees* (3 points)

**3. Experience:** One answer only. Queens introduced: How many queens have you introduced into colonies during your lifetime?

- a. None (DEDUCT 5 points)
- b. 1 to 50 (1 point)
- c. 51-500 (2 points)
- d. 500-2000 (3 points)
- e. Over 2000 queens (4 points)

**4. Skills:** (Skip this question if you answered “a” in #3 – you’ve never introduced queens). Of the queens you introduced, what was the average level of acceptance?

- a. 0% (DEDUCT 5 points)
- b. Under 25% (DEDUCT 4 points)
- c. 26-50% (0 points)
- d. 51-75% (3 points)
- e. 76-100% (5 points)

**5. Beekeeping skills:** This section is additive, but some of the values are negative! Sum the total of these management skills:

- a. I always wear gloves while working bees (Deduct 5 points)
- b. I work bare handed when handling queens and keep my hands clean as I work (5 points)
- c. I medicate to eliminate symptoms of American foul-brood (DEDUCT 25 points)
- d. I can clip and mark a queen without difficulty (5 points)
- e. I clean my hands, hive tool, and smoker surfaces when

I move apiary to apiary (5 points)

**6.:** Describe your **eye-hand coordination**. Select only one answer to describe your manual dexterity:

- a. Like a WORLD CLASS surgeon’s (10 points)
- b. Like a seamstress or fly fisherman (5 points)
- c. Like a good cook (3 points)
- d. Like a good auto mechanic (2 points)
- e. I sometimes miss my mouth with the spoon while eating cereal (DEDUCT 5 points)

**f. Bonus:** If you can catch WORKER bees returning to the hive with chopsticks, *and not hurt them*, ADD 5 points.

**7. Queen finding skills:** Select the **one statement** that best describes your ability in queen finding:

- a. I find the queen if she is on the frame in five seconds or less (5 points)
- b. I find the queen if she is on the frame in under a minute (2 points)
- c. I rarely find the queen (DEDUCT 15 points)
- d. I often spot the queen on the next frame—still in the hive – as I work the hive (10 points)
- e. I find the queen when I pinch her when she crawls up my pant leg (DEDUCT 5 points)

**8. Brood finding skills:** Select the **one statement** that best describes your ability in brood identification:

- a. I have trouble telling sealed brood from old honey (DEDUCT 10 points)
- b. I can identify brood, but only when sealed (DEDUCT 5 points)
- c. I can see older brood, but not young larvae (DEDUCT 2 points)
- d. I can see eggs and larvae without difficulty (3 points)
- e. I can spot an egg as it starts to lay down as a larva (10 points if you’re telling the truth, – 100 if you’re fibbing).

Add up your points, find the comment that applies to you, and follow the instructions carefully:

**Your score was negative.** Thank your Mom for reading this exam to you. It was nice that she added your score. Oh say, isn’t there some honey you need to extract – left over from last year? You may want to finish that soon.

**Your score was between zero and 14.** Maybe you should find some teenager to mentor and have them read the queen rearing books and help you with queen production, but only if you split the profits 50:50. Both of you should enroll (you pay both registration fees) in a queen rearing class (offered by Marla Spivak, Sue Coby, the author and others) and have fun with trying to raise a few queens.

**Your score was between 15 and 40.** Okay. It is worthwhile for you to try to raise some queens this year. I recommend you start small and try producing some of your own queens within your own operation. Sign up for a queen rearing class and take a buddy, girlfriend, or a local teenager (maybe one of each?) to work with you.

**Your score was over 40 points.** I hereby grant unto you permission to receive the full blast of humility that queens and bees are about to bestow upon you as you walk into the apiary with all your bravado and confidence. You may think you have all the answers, but the bees have their own version of this exam, and they keep rewriting their exam! And you thought this was so easy . . .

