

## How Are These Stories Different?

Students have acted out and shared solution strategies for each of the following story problems:

*Four bees were buzzing around a flower. Three more bees were at the hive. They flew over to join the others at the flower. (Then how many bees were buzzing around the flower?)*

*Now there were seven bees buzzing around the flower. Two bees left the flower and flew back to the hive. (How many bees were still buzzing around the flower?)*

The teacher asks students to think about how the two stories are different.

**Teacher:** We just solved two problems about bees. In the first one, four bees were at the flower, and three more came and joined them. In the second one, seven bees were at the flower, and two flew away. How are the stories different? Who has an idea?

**Jason:** Some bees went away, and in the other story, the bees came and joined.

**Teacher:** Can you tell us what you mean by “joined”?

**Jason:** It’s like when you put things together.

**Carmen:** It’s like a puzzle. You put it together.

**Teacher:** In the first story, two groups of bees joined together, and in the second, one group of bees went away. Who else has another idea about how the two stories are different?

**Kaitlyn:** They have different numbers.

**Teacher:** Different numbers? Can you say more about that?

**Raul:** There was four and three, and there was seven and two.

**Tammy:** At first there were seven bees, and then there were only five because two flew away.

**Teacher:** There were fewer bees at the end of the second story because some bees left to go back to the hive. Were there fewer bees at the end of the first story, when some bees came and joined the group at the flower?

**Tammy:** No, there were three and then four came, and that’s seven.

Note that throughout the discussion, the teacher follows up students’ comments about the kinds of actions and the relationships among quantities in the stories. In this way, she begins to draw attention to which actions suggest combining and which suggest separating. The teacher points out that when quantities are combined, the result is more, whereas when they are separated, the result is fewer.