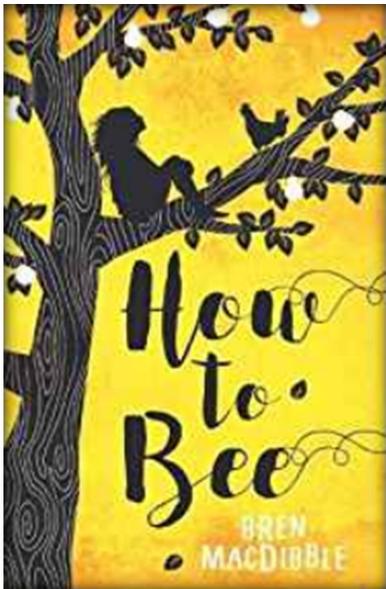


## LoveReading4kids Reader reviews of **How To Bee** by Bren MacDibble

Below are the complete reviews, written by the LoveReading4kids members.



**Seren Daly, age 11**

***A magical book about friendship and helping to overcome obstacles.***

*'How to Bee' is about a girl called Peony. Her mum lives in the city and she lives on a farm. It's set in Australia and bees don't exist. Peony is set on being a child bee like the other kids, but when her ma comes to visit things take a drastic turn and her life is changed forever.*

***This book is sad and happy and exiting and an adventure I couldn't put down. It's beautiful - I absolutely loved it. The plot is beautiful and twists and turns when you least expect it. It is a story of friendship and trying to***

*get back home. I loved all of it, especially the friendship born between the servant and the mistress. I love how Peony is just the right person to encourage Es to be free. It has fear and excitement and Peony has fantastic ideas. I think this book is perfect for 9+. I loved this book and hope others enjoy it as much as I did.*

**Cecilia Barth von Wehrenalp, age 9**

***A novel for all ages with a serious message for the future.***

*This is an exciting allegorical story set in the future. Peony (9) is trying to become a Bee - because the real bees are extinct, killed by farm poisons, so now children have to do their work instead, pollinating the flowers and fruit. Famine has drawn people back to farms where they live in sheds and are paid in food instead of money, but Peony thinks that's a good thing and doesn't want to join her mum in the city. She's brave and a hard worker and thinks she might*

*make it to Foreman one day - though her mum says people like her never do. Life in the city is hard - there are hungry people everywhere but her mum has a job that pays a little cash and believes if they both work hard, they can get a place of their own one day.*

*I think anyone, even adults, would enjoy this because there is so much going on. And even though it is set in the future, it could be true based on what I hear on the radio. When there's a famine, people are desperate and will work for nothing, or next to nothing. It could happen to any of us if we don't take better care of the planet.*

### **Maia Fuller, age 13**

*I really loved reading 'How to Bee' by Bren MacDibble. It was so good I couldn't put it down!*

*The storyline was so clever and heart-warming, it really showed the true meaning of family but it was exciting and daring at the same time. My favourite character was Peony because she was so brave and clever and she never gave up on her dream. I loved how quirky and happy she was, even when she was faced with danger she was full of energy and always willing to help a friend. I think this book is good because it is telling readers what the world will be like with no bees and encouraging them to save the bees. This book is so wonderful to read and I think children and adults will both love the kind and loving character of the book.*

***I would definitely recommend this, I think Bren MacDibble has written a really beautiful book that encourages children to be courageous and stand up for the environment and what's right.***

### **Sue Wilsher**

*Set in a future where there are no bees, Peony is desperate to be a 'bee', a hand pollinator, but others have different plans. **A beautifully written, compelling story about what truly matters.***

*Set in an Australia of the future where there are no bees and children have to do the job of pollinating the crops, Peony is desperate to be a 'bee' instead of being a 'pest', killing insects that threaten the fruit. Living on the farm with her grandfather and her sister, Magnolia, she is content with her tough, but happy life.*

*Things change, however, when Peony's mother returns from the city, determined to take Peony with her so her daughter can earn 'real' money. Not wanting to leave Gramps and Magnolia or the farm life she loves, Peony fights*

*to stay. However, her mother returns, kidnapping her and taking her to a very different life in the city.*

*Peony is tough, loyal and determined. Living a hard life with very little in the way of material comforts, she is content with what she has – the family shed and people she loves. If she is chosen to be a bee, then everything will be 'super-cherries'. She is a very engaging and original character whose energy and enthusiasm are infectious and whose willingness to make the best of every situation and ability to relate to others is endearing. Peony's loyalty in the face of betrayal and desertion, clinging to the hope her mother will ultimately choose her children over all else is very moving, making this an excellent book for developing and encouraging empathy.*

*Through her eyes, we learn about how most of the real bees have been killed, causing great hunger and hardship. Her story warns us of an all too-possible future, giving the story a strong environmental theme which is woven into the story, not driving it.*

<http://www.northsomersetteachersbookaward.com/>

You can follow Sue on Twitter: @Scoobiesue2

**Cerys Davies. age 14 - YLolfa Gcg Library**

***It contains all that is dreamed of in a book; plot twist, excitement, happiness, sadness and so much more.***

*How to Bee by Bren MacDibble is an exciting book aimed at 9-12 year olds. It contains all that is dreamed of in a book; plot twist, excitement, happiness, sadness and so much more. Although the language used was quite immature (e.g 'coz', 'soz') this book is simple and an easy read with an eye-catching cover.*

*The main character, Peony, is one of two daughters that live with their grandfather whilst their mother works away. The mother, Rosie, kidnaps Peony on a terrifying adventure and Peony has to find her way back to her sister and grandfather. The plot twist is huge and thrilling. This book is full of love, happiness and imagination. I highly recommend this book.*

You can follow YLolfa Gcg Library on Twitter: @Ylofagcg

**Matilda Knox Cartwright, age 11 - Red Maid's Junior School,**

***A story of true friendship, understanding and courage that is so engrossing that you won't ever want to put it down!***

*In a future Australia, bees are extinct. On farms being a bee is the greatest*

*achievement that can be reached by anyone aged 10 or over. The holder of a bee vest will earn fruit for their family in return for pollinating the trees, and as food is scarce this is more than anyone could have hoped for. Peony wants that honour just like everyone else. However she is only nine, but convinced that she can be better than anyone else. This isn't the only problem though. Peony's mother works in the city and earns money. When she comes home every month Peony, her sister Mags and her Gramps beg for her to come home but she wants Peony to come and earn money with her. One day, at dawn, Peony is dragged into the car and taken to the city.*

*If Peony wants to ever become a bee then she will have to choose between her new friend Esmeralda and her mother or her home, Gramps and Mags. She will have to wander her way back to her farm finding her own food and water without any certainty that she will ever get anywhere. Without any certainty that she will survive.*

*Peony shows that she is as brave, loyal and trustworthy as a bee but will she ever get to be one?*

*A story of true friendship, understanding and courage that is so engrossing that you won't ever want to put it down!*

You can follow Redmaid's School on Twitter: @reddmaidshigh

### **Bea Whithear, age 10**

*Peony lives on a fruit farm in Australia with her Gramps and her sister Mags. All Peony wants to be is a Bee but at the moment she is just a Pest.*

*I loved the title of this book and I knew I wanted to read it. I was worried though as I thought it was going to be futuristic but I absolutely loved it! Peony wants to be a Bee but she is too young, so she has to be happy being a Pest, collecting the Pests from the trees so the fruits can grow.*

*A Bee gets to climb the trees with their wands to pollinate the blossoms. The Bees get to wear Bee vests and are more important.*

*There is so many characters that I liked, Peony of course, Ez, AJ, MJ, Gramps. The book does have some sad parts and some nasty bits, The Ape is not a nice person.*

*My favourite part was when Peony meets Esmeralda and Peony leaves her shoes at the top of the stairs.*

*I could really imagine the places and characters. I love the way the book is written, it's like how Peony would talk. I love how feisty she is and how she*

*fights back, can be rude and isn't afraid. **I want to be just like Peony and face any difficulties or challenges with her determination.***

***I was disappointed when I finished the book, I didn't want it to end.***  
*A definite 10/10.*

**Toby Little, age 10**

*'How to Bee' is about a world that has no bees, because they became extinct, so, instead, there are human bees, who collect the nectar and pollinize plants, but can't make honey. Nobody except grandparents have ever eaten honey, and the world has realised that the jobs the bees would do is necessary for their survival, so humans have to take over their role. The book begins where the main character, Peony, is trying to become a Bee (as in the job), but she doesn't succeed. Peony lives with her grandfather and her sister on a farm, but one day, her mother visits and wants Peony to move into the city to earn money – money matters in the city, but not in the countryside. Peony loves the farm and doesn't want to leave. When she is forced, her time in the city takes a turn she did not expect.*

***The book is all about being brave, being yourself, and not taking orders from other people, and I loved it!***

[www.fantasticbooksandwheretofindthem.fun](http://www.fantasticbooksandwheretofindthem.fun)

**Josh Parcell, age 10**

***'How to Bee' is a wonderful roller-coaster of emotions sometimes you will feel joyful and sometimes you will cry in your sleep. The book was a real page turner.***

*So join Peony on her wild adventures and her desire to become a bee, which is better than a pest!!*