

The Buzzworthy Bond: Bees and Humanity

Materials Needed

- Computer or tablet with internet access
- Notebook or paper
- Pens, pencils, and markers or colored pencils
- Optional: A large sheet of paper or poster board for the final activity

IB Learner Profiles

- **Inquirers:** Develop curiosity about the historical and ecological significance of bees, asking questions to deepen understanding.
- **Caring:** Show empathy and respect for bees as a vital part of our environment, motivating a commitment to action.
- **Communicators:** Express ideas and information confidently and creatively through discussion and a final project.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Analyze the historical and mythological relationship between humans and bees.
- Articulate the critical role bees play in global ecosystems.
- Create a persuasive piece of media (e.g., a poster, poem, or script) that advocates for bee conservation, integrating facts and creative expression.

Lesson Activities (60 minutes)

1. Introduction: The Ancient Buzz (5 minutes)

Teacher's Instruction: "Let's start with a puzzle. Bees are tiny insects, yet they appear in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, Greek myths, and religious texts from around the world. Why do you think humans have been so fascinated with them for thousands of years? Let's brainstorm a few ideas together."

Activity: Engage in a brief discussion. Guide the student to think about honey, wax, the structure of the hive (community), and pollination (life). Write down their initial ideas. This sparks curiosity and sets the stage for historical inquiry.

2. Activity 1: Myths, Legends, and History (15 minutes)

Teacher's Instruction: "You were right on track! Bees were seen as magical, divine messengers. Let's explore some of these stories. I want you to read this short text summarizing how different cultures viewed bees. As you read, look for one fact or story that surprises you the most."

Activity:

- **Part A (10 mins):** The student reads a short, curated article or watches a brief video about bees in history and mythology (e.g., the Greek myth of Melissa, the "Bee Priestess," or the use of honey in Egyptian rituals). A good resource is the "History of

Bees" section on the American Beekeeping Federation website or a similar educational source.

- **Part B (5 mins):** After reading/watching, the student shares the most surprising fact they learned. Then, they complete a creative writing prompt: "If you were to create a new myth about bees for the modern world, what would their superpower be and what lesson would your story teach humans?" Have them jot down a 2-3 sentence summary of their myth idea.

3. Activity 2: Unsung Heroes of the Planet (15 minutes)

Teacher's Instruction: "So we know bees were important to ancient people, but their 'superpower' is very real and more critical today than ever before. Let's shift from myth to science. We're going to investigate why scientists call bees a 'keystone species'."

Activity:

- **Part A (10 mins):** Explore an interactive infographic or watch a short, engaging video about pollination (e.g., from National Geographic or TED-Ed). Focus on how pollination works and which foods depend on bees (apples, almonds, blueberries, etc.).
- **Part B (5 mins):** After watching, ask the student to create a "chain of impact." Start with a bee pollinating a flower. What happens next? (e.g., Bee pollinates apple blossom -> Apple grows -> Farmer harvests apples -> We eat apples/drink juice -> Farmer earns a living -> Birds eat fallen apples). This visualizes the far-reaching importance of a single bee's actions.

4. Main Activity: "Bee an Advocate!" Creative Campaign (20 minutes)

Teacher's Instruction: "We've seen how bees were once worshipped as gods and how they are now essential for our survival. Unfortunately, their populations are in danger. Your mission is to use your creativity to help save them. You will create a piece of advocacy to convince others to help bees. You can choose the format that you find most powerful."

Activity: The student chooses **one** of the following projects to complete. The goal is to combine the emotional power of mythology/history with the urgent facts of their environmental importance.

- **Option A: Design a Poster.** Create a visually striking poster with a powerful slogan (e.g., "Once Gods, Now Ghosts? Save Our Bees"), a key fact about pollination, and one simple action people can take (like planting wildflowers).
- **Option B: Write a Poem or a Short Story.** Write from the perspective of the last bee on Earth, or write a modern myth that carries a message of conservation, drawing on the idea from Activity 1.
- **Option C: Draft a Public Service Announcement (PSA) Script.** Write a 30-second video or audio script. It should have a compelling hook, state the problem, and provide a clear call to action.

Spend this time working on the chosen project. The teacher is available to help brainstorm ideas and refine the message.

5. Conclusion: Reflection and Action (5 minutes)

Teacher's Instruction: "This is a fantastic start to a powerful campaign! Let's take a moment to look at what you've created."

Activity: The student presents their poster, reads their poem/script, or explains their idea. Discuss the choices they made. End with a reflective question: "Thinking about our IB Learner

Profiles today, how did being an 'inquirer' help you become more 'caring' about this topic?
What is one small, real-world action you feel inspired to take this week to help bees?"

Assessment

- **Formative:** Observe the student's participation in discussions, their brainstorming ideas for the myth, and their ability to connect concepts in the "chain of impact" activity.
- **Summative:** The "Bee an Advocate!" creative project serves as the main assessment. Evaluate it based on:
 - **Clarity of Message:** Is the call to action clear?
 - **Synthesis of Information:** Does the project effectively blend creative elements with factual information learned during the lesson?
 - **Creativity and Effort:** Does the final piece show thoughtful engagement with the task?

Differentiation and Extension

- **For Support:** Provide templates or sentence starters for the creative project (e.g., a poster layout, a fill-in-the-blank poem structure). Offer a curated list of "5 Facts About Bees" to choose from instead of having the student pull them from the resources themselves.
- **For Extension:** Challenge the student to research a specific type of bee (like the mason bee or bumblebee) and incorporate its unique traits into their project. They could also research local, native plants that help bees in their specific area and add that information to their campaign.