Kindergarten Comprehensive Lesson Plan

"Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm" by J.W. Zarek

Overview

This Kindergarten lesson plan utilizes "Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm" to develop literacy skills, mathematical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and social-emotional growth through overcoming fears. The relatable story of Bella's journey from fear to fascination offers rich opportunities for learning through structured activities that align with Kindergarten standards while supporting diverse learners through multisensory approaches and meaningful movement integration.

Learning Objectives

• Students will identify and sequence Bella's emotional journey from fear to fascination • Students will practice counting objects up to 20 and create bee-themed patterns • Students will describe and use position words related to bee movements and behaviors • Students will identify beginning sounds and rhyming words from bee-related vocabulary • Students will write or draw about personal experiences with overcoming fears • Students will demonstrate problem-solving by learning safe behaviors around bees • Students will practice sight words from the text • Students will understand that bees are helpful insects that make honey and help flowers grow • Students will develop metacognitive strategies for managing fears through learning

Materials Needed

• "Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm" book • Chart paper and markers • Sentence strips with key sentences from the story • Picture cards showing Bella's emotional journey sequence • Number cards 1-20 • Small manipulatives for counting (yellow and black counters, bee erasers) • Writing/drawing paper • Pencils, crayons, markers • Emotion cards (scared, nervous, curious, fascinated, happy) • Paper for class book • Bee-themed task cards showing safe behaviors • Small prizes (bee stickers, bookmarks) • Magnifying glasses for bee observation activities • Tablet/device for recording student retellings • Phonics picture cards focusing on initial sounds B, H, F, N • Visual schedule cards for each activity • Self-assessment sheets with emoji faces • Pre/post assessment sheets • Diverse images of beekeepers and bee farms from different cultures • Multilingual labels for key vocabulary (if applicable) • Art supplies for bee craft:

- Yellow and black construction paper
- Coffee filters for wings
- Watercolor markers

- Spray bottles with water
- Clothespins
- Pipe cleaners • Sensory materials in bins:
- Artificial blue and purple flowers
- Small containers with honey for tasting (check allergies)
- Yellow and black fabric scraps
- Small wind chimes (gentle buzzing sounds)
- Magnifying glasses • Small watering containers with marbles for bee baths • Technology: tablets for digital activities • Music for movement breaks and "bee dance"

Pre-Assessment

Before beginning the lesson sequence, conduct a simple pre-assessment:

1. Show students images of bees and people's reactions (scared, calm, curious)
2. Ask them to:
    - Circle how they feel about bees
    - Draw or write one thing they know about bees
    - Sequence 3 simple pictures: person sees bee → person's reaction → outcome
3. Have them draw or write about a time they felt scared of something
4. Save these sheets to compare with post-assessment

Vocabulary Focus

• Emotion words: scared, nervous, curious, fascinated, excited, brave • Bee science: bee, hive, honey, nectar, pollination, worker bee • Position words (over, under, beside, around, through) • Ordinal numbers (first, second, third, etc.) • Problem-solving: observe, learn, practice, overcome • Safety: still, gentle, calm, respectful

Day 1: Reading, Comprehension & Emotional Awareness

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Show students the book cover and read the title.
2. Display a visual schedule of today's activities with picture cues.

3. Ask: "How do you think Bella feels about bees at the beginning? How might she feel at the end?"
4. Have students turn to a partner and share:
    - "Have you ever felt scared of something?"
    - "What helped you feel better about it?"
5. Create a quick chart of student ideas about "scared" and "brave."
6. Add labels in multiple languages if appropriate for your classroom.

Read Aloud (15 minutes):

1. Read the story aloud, using animated expressions to show Bella's changing emotions.
2. Pause at predetermined points to ask:
    - "What is Bella's problem?" (She's scared of bees)
    - "Who helps Bella?" (Grandma Yetta)
    - "What does Bella learn that changes her feelings?" (Bees are helpers, not scary)
3. Model "think-aloud" strategies: "I noticed Bella's feelings changed as she learned new information about bees."
4. Use specific social-emotional language: "Bella didn't let her fear stop her from learning. She showed courage."

Comprehension Activity (15 minutes):

1. Display 5-6 picture cards showing Bella's emotional journey on an interactive whiteboard or pocket chart.
2. Work together to arrange them in sequential order.
3. Introduce vocabulary: first, next, then, after that, finally.
4. Have students use these words to retell Bella's emotional transformation.
5. Take photos of the completed sequence to add to the digital class book.

Phonological Awareness Activity (10 minutes):

1. Create a list of rhyming words from the story:
    - bee/see/me

    - hive/alive
    - fear/near/clear
2. Play a rhyming game: "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with 'bee' and means what we do with our eyes."
3. Focus on initial sounds: "Let's find words that start with the /b/ sound like bee." (buzz, brave, brown)
4. Create a simple alliterative sentence together: "Brave Bella became a bee buddy."

Emotion Word Activity (10 minutes):

1. Use emotion cards to practice feeling words from the story.
2. Demonstrate each emotion from Bella's journey:
    - "Scared when she first saw the bee"
    - "Nervous about visiting the bee farm"
    - "Curious at the observation hive"
    - "Fascinated learning bee facts"
    - "Happy and grateful at the end"
3. Have students practice showing each emotion with facial expressions and body language.
4. Create visual emotion cards with pictures and words for classroom reference.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Review Bella's emotional journey using the sequencing cards.
2. Have students complete a quick self-assessment using emoji faces:
    - "I can remember what happened in the story" (😊/😐/☹️)
    - "I can show different feelings with my face" (😊/😐/☹️)
3. Preview tomorrow's activities: "Tomorrow we will count and explore like the bees in Bella's story!"

Day 2: Mathematics & Bee Science

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Review the visual schedule for today.
2. Revisit the story, focusing on the parts with numbers and counting:
    - "Bees have 5 eyes"
    - "Bees can fly 15 miles per hour"
    - "A bee makes less than a teaspoon of honey"
3. Ask: "What other numbers or amounts did we learn about bees?"
4. Introduce the math vocabulary: count, measure, compare, pattern, more, less.

Counting Activity (15 minutes):

1. Create "bee farm" counting stations with different materials (bee erasers, yellow/black counters, flower cutouts).
2. Divide students into small groups.
3. Each group counts their collection and records the number.
4. Practice counting like the bee facts in the story: "1 eye, 2 eyes, 3 eyes, 4 eyes, 5 eyes!"
5. Introduce ten-frames to organize counting for students who need support.
6. Challenge advanced students to create addition problems: "5 bees in one hive plus 3 bees in another hive equals how many bees?"

Problem-Solving Math (15 minutes):

1. Present simple word problems based on the story with visual supports:
    - "Bella saw 6 bees at the first hive and 4 bees at the second hive. How many bees did she see altogether?"
    - "If a bee visits 8 flowers in the morning and 5 flowers in the afternoon, how many flowers did it visit in total?"
2. Model solving with manipulatives and drawing pictures.
3. Have students solve problems with partners.
4. Provide sentence frames: "First, I counted _____. Then, I added _____. The answer is _____."

Bee Pattern Activity (15 minutes):

1. Create patterns using yellow and black materials (bee colors).

2. Start with simple ABAB patterns: yellow, black, yellow, black.
3. Have students continue patterns and create their own.
4. Advanced students can try ABC patterns: bee, flower, hive, bee, flower, hive.
5. Connect to bee movement: "Bees fly in patterns from flower to flower to flower."

Sensory Math Stations (20 minutes): Set up 4 stations that rotate every 5 minutes:

Station 1: Bee Counting • Count bee erasers and match to number cards • Use ten-frames for organization • Activity: "How many bees fit in our hive?" (small box)

Station 2: Flower Measuring • Use non-standard units to measure artificial flowers • Activity: "How many paper clips long is this flower?"

Station 3: Honey Estimation • Small containers with different amounts of honey (for viewing) • Activity: Estimate "more," "less," or "same" amounts

Station 4: Bee Pattern Making • Yellow and black materials for creating patterns • Activity: Make patterns and have friends continue them

Technology Integration (10 minutes):

1. Use simple math apps on tablets to practice counting and patterns.
2. Take turns using an interactive whiteboard to sort virtual bees and flowers.
3. Record students solving bee math problems using a recording device.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Review counting and pattern strategies.
2. Ask: "How does counting help us understand bees better?"
3. Complete self-assessment: "I can count objects up to ___." (Students circle a number they feel comfortable counting to)

Day 3: Literacy & Writing

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Review visual schedule for today.
2. Revisit specific phrases from the book that show Bella's learning.
3. Display sentence strips with key sentences from the story.
4. Identify sight words students recognize.

5. Introduce the writing goal: "Today we will be authors like Mr. Zarek and write about overcoming fears."

Sight Word Hunt (15 minutes):

1. List common sight words from the story (the, and, to, in, was, said, etc.)
2. Provide copies of selected sentences from the text.
3. Have students circle the sight words they find.
4. Create a class chart of sight words from the story.
5. Play a quick sight word game: when you point to the word, students read it aloud and act out being a brave bee.

Letter-Sound Connection (10 minutes):

1. Focus on initial consonants found in the book:
    - B (Bella, bee, brave, buzz)
    - H (honey, hive, happy)
    - F (farm, fear, flower, fly)
    - N (nectar, nervous, nice)
2. Sort picture cards by beginning sounds.
3. Create alphabet links: "B is for Bella who became brave around bees."
4. Have students draw pictures of things that start with these sounds.

Writing Activity (25 minutes):

1. Prompt: "Draw and write about a time when you felt scared but then learned something that helped you feel better."
2. Model with a simple drawing and sentences: "I was scared of _____. I learned that _____. Now I feel _____."
3. Support students in writing/drawing their experiences.
4. For early writers: Provide sentence frames connecting to Bella's experience.
5. For advanced writers: Encourage multiple sentences describing their journey from fear to understanding.
6. Conference with individual students using Bella's courage as inspiration.

Class Book Creation (15 minutes):

1. Begin creating both a physical and digital class book titled "Our Brave Learning Stories."
2. Each student contributes one page with their fear-to-learning drawing/writing.
3. Take photos of student work to include in the digital version.
4. Add a cover page referencing Bella's story: "Inspired by Bella Brown's Bee Farm Adventure."
5. Record some students reading their pages for the digital book.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Share a few pages from the developing class book.
2. Discuss how writing helps us share our brave moments like Bella did.
3. Self-assessment: Students color a bee if they wrote/drew about overcoming a fear.

Day 4: Problem-Solving, Bee Science & Cultural Connections

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Review visual schedule for today.
2. Discuss: "How did Bella solve her fear of bees problem?"
3. Create a chart: "Bella's Problem-Solving Steps"
    - Identify the problem (fear of bees)
    - Ask for help (Grandma Yetta)
    - Learn new information (bees are helpers)
    - Practice new behaviors (standing still, observing)
    - Celebrate success (feeling grateful to bees)
4. Introduce vocabulary: observation, patience, respect, curiosity.

Diverse Beekeeping Discussion (10 minutes):

1. Show images of beekeepers and bee farms from various cultures around the world.
2. Discuss: "How might beekeeping look different in different places?"

3. Share: "Some families have kept bees for many generations."
4. Ask: "What do you think bees mean to different cultures?"
5. Create a chart of diverse beekeeping traditions and bee importance globally.

Safe Bee Behavior Stations (25 minutes): Set up 4 stations around the room with visual instructions:

Station 1: Standing Still Practice • Practice statue poses and calm breathing • Visual cards showing "safe" vs "unsafe" behaviors around bees • Activity: Role-play meeting a bee calmly

Station 2: Bee Observation • Magnifying glasses and bee pictures • Activity: Draw detailed observations of bee body parts (like Bella at the farm)

Station 3: Flower Helper Connection • Pictures of fruits/vegetables that need bees for pollination • Activity: Sort foods into "needs bees" and "doesn't need bees"

Station 4: Bee Communication • Learn about the "waggle dance" from the story • Activity: Practice bee dances to "tell" others where flowers are

Students rotate through each station in small groups (6 minutes each).

Technology-Enhanced Learning (15 minutes):

1. Use tablets to research simple bee facts with visual apps.
2. Take virtual "tours" of bee farms using appropriate websites.
3. Record students explaining one bee fact they learned, inspired by Bella's fascination.

Environmental Stewardship Activity (10 minutes):

1. Discuss how Bella learned to help bees.
2. Plan classroom bee-helping projects:
    - Create bee baths with shallow water and marbles
    - Plant bee-friendly flowers (if possible)
    - Make "Thank you bees" signs for school garden
3. Connect to being environmental helpers like Bella became.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Reflect: "How did learning new information help Bella solve her problem?"

2. Introduce homework: "Notice one thing in nature this week and observe it like Bella observed bees."
3. Self-assessment: "I can learn about things that seem scary at first." (Students circle 😊/😐/☹️)

Day 5: Integration, Assessment & Celebration

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Review visual schedule for today.
2. Have students share their nature observations from the week.
3. Add their discoveries to the class learning collection.
4. Introduce today as "Celebration of Learning Day."

Bee Helper Art Project (20 minutes):

1. Create coffee filter bees using the technique from the butterfly lesson:
    - Color coffee filters with watercolor markers in bee colors
    - Spray with water to create blending effects
    - Pinch in middle with clothespins
    - Add pipe cleaner antennae
2. While working, review the journey from fear to fascination.
3. Students can write or dictate what they learned about bees on bee-shaped papers.
4. Display completed bees in a "Bella's Bee Farm" classroom exhibit.

Story Retelling Assessment (15 minutes):

1. In small groups, have students retell Bella's story using sequence cards and emotion cards.
2. Record students retelling for assessment purposes.
3. Listen for:
    - Correct sequence of Bella's emotional journey
    - Use of vocabulary from the story
    - Understanding of problem/solution through learning

4. Provide feedback using specific praise: "You remembered how Bella's feelings changed when she learned new information!"

Brave Learning Reflection Activity (15 minutes):

1. Create a class "Brave Learning Garden" bulletin board.
2. Each student creates a flower with:
    - Center: Something they used to be scared of
    - Petals: What they learned that helped them
    - Stem: How they feel now
3. Display flowers in the garden, inspired by how bees help flowers grow.
4. Take photos for families and digital portfolios.

Post-Assessment (10 minutes):

1. Complete the same assessment given at the beginning of the unit.
2. Compare results to measure growth in:
    - Understanding of emotional regulation through learning
    - Sequencing abilities
    - Bee science knowledge
3. Have students reflect: "I used to think _____ about learning scary things, but now I think _____."

Closing Celebration (15 minutes):

1. Complete the class book "Our Brave Learning Stories" with all student contributions.
2. Read the completed book together, connecting each story to Bella's journey.
3. Share the digital version on the interactive whiteboard.
4. Award each student a "Brave Learner" certificate featuring a bee design.
5. Establish classroom "bee helpers" roles for ongoing environmental care.
6. Celebrate with a gentle "Bee Dance Party" using the waggle dance moves.

Assessment Framework

• **Pre/Post Assessment:** Compare growth in emotional regulation, bee knowledge, and problem-solving • **Observational Checklist:**

- Emotional vocabulary use (can identify and express 4-5 feeling words)
- Sequencing abilities (can arrange 4-5 events in correct order)
- Problem-solving approach (identifies problem, seeks information, applies learning)
- Bee science understanding (knows 3-5 bee facts)
- Fear management strategies (demonstrates calm observation techniques) • **Work Samples:** Collect and date writing samples showing fear-to-learning progression • **Digital Portfolio:** Compile photos, recordings, and student reflections • **Self-Assessment:** Gather student reflections using emotion faces and simple statements • **Exit Tickets:** Simple drawings showing "one way I can be brave when learning something new"

Differentiation Strategies

For students needing support: • Provide picture cues for all emotional vocabulary and story events • Use hand-over-hand guidance for craft activities • Offer sentence frames for writing and speaking • Partner with peer helpers during station activities • Provide step-by-step visual guides for bee behavior practice • Use color-coding systems for sequencing activities • Break activities into smaller chunks with movement breaks

For advanced students: • Extend bee science learning with additional facts and research • Encourage complex emotional vocabulary (anxious, determined, fascinated) • Create detailed problem-solving scenarios • Design their own "helping bees" plan for the school • Research beekeeping in different cultures • Create a "How-To Guide for Being Brave Learners" • Assign "expert helper" roles during station activities

For English Language Learners: • Use pictures paired with words for all key vocabulary • Emphasize hands-on activities and movement • Provide extra visual supports and gestures • Use consistent language patterns and repetitive structures • Allow physical responses and demonstrations • Create multilingual emotion word cards

Executive Functioning Support

• Visual schedules for each day and activity • Clear beginning and ending signals with bee-themed music • Consistent language for emotional regulation and learning strategies • Self-monitoring checklists with bee graphics • "Brave Learning Strategies" poster:

- "I can take a deep breath like Bella"

- "I can ask questions to learn more"
- "I can observe carefully and safely"
- "I can remember that learning takes courage" • Celebration of effort and curiosity, not just results

Culturally Responsive Elements

• Diverse images of beekeepers and bee farms from various cultures • Discussion about different cultural relationships with bees and nature • Multilingual labels for key vocabulary • Recognition of varied cultural approaches to fear and courage • Opportunities for students to share family perspectives on bees/nature • Acknowledgment that different cultures may have different comfort levels with insects

Home Connection

• Send home a family letter explaining the brave learning theme (in multiple languages if needed) • Include a simple "Brave Learning Chart" template for home use showing progression from scared to curious to confident • Request photos of children observing nature at home for class display • Share the digital class book with families • Invite family members to share cultural traditions related to bees or overcoming fears • Provide bee-friendly gardening tips for families

Technology Integration

• Interactive whiteboard sequencing and sorting activities • Digital class book with recorded student voices • Video reflections on brave learning experiences • Simple apps for bee science exploration and counting practice • Photo documentation of learning progression and emotional growth • QR codes linking to bee science resources for families

Standards Alignment

This lesson addresses kindergarten standards in: • **Reading:** Story elements, character development, sequencing, comprehension, phonological awareness • **Writing:** Drawing and writing to convey experiences and learning • **Speaking/Listening:** Participating in collaborative conversations about emotions and learning • **Phonics:** Initial sounds, rhyming words • **Math:** Counting, comparing quantities, problem-solving, patterns • **Social-Emotional:** Emotional regulation, courage, persistence, problem-solving through learning • **Science:** Observing living things, understanding animal-plant relationships • **Technology:** Using digital tools to communicate and learn

Extension Ideas

• **STEM Connection:** Design a "Bee-Friendly Garden" for the school • **Art Integration:** Create a mural showing Bella's emotional journey • **Dramatic Play:** Set up a "Bee Farm" dramatic play area with observation hives • **Community Connection:** Invite a local beekeeper to visit (virtual or in-person) • **Literature Connection:** Read other books about overcoming fears and compare characters' journeys • **Virtual Field Trip:** Explore bee farms and apiaries around the world • **Service Learning:** Create bee habitat areas or educational materials for younger students

Teacher Reflection Questions

After teaching this unit, consider:

1. How effectively did the lesson support students in connecting learning to emotional regulation?
2. Which combination of sensory stations and structured activities worked best?
3. How did the 5-day format allow for deeper exploration compared to shorter lessons?
4. Which executive functioning supports had the greatest impact on student learning?
5. How did students respond to the cultural connections and diverse perspectives?
6. What evidence showed students applying Bella's brave learning strategies to their own challenges?
7. How did the integration of movement and hands-on exploration enhance comprehension?
8. Which elements from previous lesson plans were most successfully incorporated?
9. What adjustments would improve the flow between academic content and social-emotional learning?
10. How might this lesson framework be adapted for other Bella Brown books in the series?