Pre-K Comprehensive Lesson Plan

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

Overview

This comprehensive lesson plan uses "Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm" to help Pre-K students (ages 4-5) explore bees, overcome fears through learning, develop observation skills, and understand how bees help flowers grow. Through the story of Bella's journey from fear to fascination, children will engage in developmentally appropriate activities with frequent movement breaks to maintain engagement.

Learning Objectives

• Students will identify that bees are helpful insects, not scary • Students will recognize that learning can change scared feelings to happy feelings • Students will practice standing still and moving gently around insects • Students will understand that bees help flowers grow • Students will engage with sensory experiences related to the story • Students will learn simple vocabulary related to bees and feelings

Materials Needed

• "Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm" book • Simple picture cards showing Bella's feelings (scared, curious, happy) • Large, clear pictures of:

- A friendly cartoon bee
- Flowers (especially blue and purple ones)
- A beehive
- Honey in a jar • Materials for simple bee craft:
- Pre-cut yellow circles (bee bodies)
- Pre-cut black strips (bee stripes)
- Pre-cut clear wings
- Large glue sticks
- Chunky crayons • Sensory materials:
- Artificial flowers in blue and purple
- Small containers with honey for tasting (check allergies)
- Yellow and black fabric scraps
- Magnifying glasses

- Small watering dish with marbles (bee bath) • Gentle "buzzing" music • Transition song recording • Visual schedule cards showing each activity • Chart paper and thick markers

Simplified Vocabulary Focus

• Bee • Scared • Curious • Happy • Flowers • Honey • Hive • Still (standing still) • Gentle • Helper

Daily Schedule (with Movement Breaks)

This lesson is designed with frequent transitions and movement activities to accommodate Pre-K attention spans.

Morning Circle and Introduction (8 minutes)

1. Show students the visual schedule for the day's bee activities.
2. Introduce the bee topic: "Today we're going to learn about bees!"
3. **Quick Movement Break:** "Let's warm up our bodies! Buzz around like friendly bees, then freeze like statues!"
4. Show large picture of a friendly cartoon bee.
5. Simple emotion check: "How do you feel when you see a bee? Show me with your face!"

Story Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Show the book cover: "Our story is called 'Bella Brown Visits a Bee Farm'"
2. Ask: "What do you see on the cover?"
3. Briefly explain: "Bella feels scared of bees at first, but then she learns they're helpers."
4. **Transition Song:** Sing a simple "Story Time" song to help students settle for the read-aloud.

Reading the Book - Part 1 (7-8 minutes)

1. Read the first half of the story (through visiting the bee farm).
2. Use simple language to explain as you read.
3. Pause to show emotion cards that match Bella's feelings.
4. Ask simple questions: "How does Bella feel here?" "What is Grandma teaching her?"

5. **Movement Break:** "Let's practice standing very still like Bella learned to do!"

Reading the Book - Part 2 (7-8 minutes)

1. Briefly remind students where the story left off.
2. Read the second half of the story.
3. Make gentle buzzing sounds and hand movements as you read about bees working.
4. Emphasize how Bella's feelings changed from scared to happy.
5. **Emotion Check:** "How did Bella feel about bees at the end? Show me with your face!"

Bee Movement Activity (5 minutes)

1. Play gentle buzzing music.
2. Guide students through simple bee movements:
    - "Buzz gently around the room"
    - "Land softly on a flower" (crouch down)
    - "Stand very still when I say freeze"
    - "Fly to visit another flower"

Snack Break and Transition (10 minutes)

1. Have students wash hands.
2. During snack, remind them about the story: "We read about Bella learning that bees are helpers."
3. **Transition Song:** Sing a clean-up song to move to the next activity.

Simplified Feelings Journey Activity (8-10 minutes)

1. Sit in a circle with students.
2. Show three large emotion cards:
    - Scared face: "This is how Bella felt at first"
    - Curious face: "This is how Bella felt when she started learning"
    - Happy face: "This is how Bella felt at the end"
3. Place the cards in order on the floor.

4. Use a toy bee to "fly" from card to card, retelling the simple story.
5. Have students help show each feeling with their faces.
6. **Movement Transition:** "Let's buzz like happy bees to our craft tables!"

Simple Bee Craft (10 minutes)

1. Have all materials pre-prepared:
    - Pre-cut yellow circles
    - Pre-cut black strips
    - Pre-cut wings
    - Large glue sticks at each table
2. Show a completed sample: "We're making friendly bees like in our story!"
3. Simple instructions: "Glue the black strips on your yellow bee. Then add wings."
4. Assist children who need help with glue.
5. Talk about the story as they work: "Are your bees scary or friendly?"

Sensory Exploration (10 minutes total - 2-3 minutes per station)

Set up four very simple sensory experiences on a table:

1. **Blue and purple flowers:** "Touch the soft petals that bees love."
2. **Honey tasting:** "Taste the sweet honey that bees make." (tiny amounts, check allergies)
3. **Yellow and black fabric:** "Feel the bee colors - soft yellow and black."
4. **Bee bath with marbles:** "See how we can help bees get water to drink."

Guide small groups to each station for brief exploration, with the focus on connecting sensory experiences to helping bees.

Closing Circle (5 minutes)

1. Gather students with their bee crafts.
2. Briefly review: "Today we learned that bees are helpers, not scary."
3. Show the bee picture again and ask: "Are bees our friends or scary?"
4. End with a simple question: "What did you learn about bees today?"

5. **Final bee movement:** "Let's all be friendly helper bees and buzz around our circle one more time!"

Assessment Through Observation

Watch for: • Students' understanding that bees are helpful, not scary • Recognition of how Bella's feelings changed • Participation in "standing still" practice • Engagement with sensory materials • Completion of the simple craft activity

Adaptations for Different Learners

For Students Who Need Additional Support • Provide hand-over-hand assistance with craft materials • Use visual emotion cards throughout the lesson • Pair with a peer buddy during movement activities • Offer extra reassurance about bees being helpers

For Advanced Learners • Ask them to help retell more details of the story • Encourage them to name things bees do to help (make honey, help flowers) • Have them help demonstrate standing still for peers • Invite them to share if they've seen real bees before

For English Language Learners • Use pictures paired with words for key vocabulary • Emphasize hands-on activities and movement • Provide extra visual supports • Use gestures consistently with verbal instructions

Home Connection

Send home a simple note with: • A picture of a bee the child can color • 2-3 bee vocabulary words learned • Suggestion for families to look for bees on flowers outside together (from a safe distance) • Question for families: "What did your child learn about bees today?"

Teacher Reflection Questions

After the lesson, consider:

1. How did students respond to the message that bees are helpers?
2. Were students able to practice standing still effectively?
3. Were the movement breaks effective in maintaining engagement?
4. Which parts of the story seemed most interesting to students?
5. How might you adjust this lesson next time?