



The Beehive: Year 1 English, Geography and Science

Authors/illustrators: Megan Daley and Max Hamilton

Publisher: Walker Books Australia

Synopsis: It's finally hive day! Willow has been waiting all year for groundskeeper Tom to split the school's native stingless beehive in two so she can take home her very own hive. Everything needs to be just right to help so that the bees forage and thrive in their new home. The dual text results in a charming story alongside an abundance of fascinating facts about Australia's native bees. (Publisher's synopsis)

Cross-curriculum links: Science; Geography

Rationale: In this unit students will explore the similarities and differences between imaginative and informative texts. They will make connections between the text and their personal experiences and express their opinion about the text. Students will learn a range of technical and subject specific words relating to Australian native bees and use this knowledge to add detail to their writing. They will develop their understanding of persuasive texts, and the vocabulary used to persuade.

English concepts: Argument; Perspective; Narrative

Overarching questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences between imaginative and informative texts?
2. What language can we use to create a persuasive argument?
3. What adjustments do we need to make to our school environment to create a native bee friendly garden?

Rich assessment task: Students will work in small groups to create a multimodal group presentation for their school principal to persuade them to create a native bee friendly garden in their school environment. Students may like to create a persuasive poster, draw a design for the proposed garden and (or) write a presentation using persuasive language.

 **Additional teacher resources:**

1. Article: [Seeing scientifically: The importance of visual literacy in science classrooms](#)
2. Video: [Teaching writing: Persuasive texts](#)

Curriculum codes, links and descriptions

NSW Syllabus

Stage 1

English

[EN1-OLC-01](#) communicates effectively by using interpersonal conventions and language to extend and elaborate ideas for social and learning interactions

[EN1-VOCAB-01](#) understands and effectively uses Tier 1, taught Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to extend and elaborate ideas

[EN1-RECOM-01](#) comprehends independently read texts that require sustained reading by activating background and word knowledge, connecting and understanding sentences and whole text, and monitoring for meaning

[EN1-CWT-01](#) plans, creates and revises texts written for different purposes, including paragraphs, using knowledge of vocabulary, text features and sentence structure

EN1-SPELL-01 applies phonological, orthographic and morphological generalisations and strategies when spelling words in a range of writing contexts

EN1-HANDW-01 uses a legible, fluent and automatic handwriting style, and digital technology, including word-processing applications, when creating texts

EN1-UARL-01 understands and responds to literature by creating texts using similar structures, intentional language choices and features appropriate to audience and purpose

HSIE: Geography

GE1-1 describes features of places and the connections people have with places

GE1-2 identifies ways in which people interact with and care for places

Science

ST1-1WS-S observes, questions and collects data to communicate and compare ideas

ST1-4LW-S describes observable features of living things and their environments

Learning intention: We can explore the features of stories by discussing the characters, settings and plot

Exploration

Begin the lesson by displaying the double-page cover of the book and allow time for students to look closely at the illustrations. Ask students to '[think and pair](#)', sharing with their partner what they can see. Invite students to share their predictions of the text and any connections

Response

Teacher to display the [story map template](#) and explain the different components to the students. Students will independently complete the story map by recording their understanding of the text including the characters, setting, beginning, middle and end.

Evidence of Learning

Students:

- *make predictions about the text*
- *make connections*

they may have to bees.

For the first reading of the text, teacher will only read the narrative/fiction part of the story. Pause throughout the read to allow time for students to confirm and adjust their understanding of the text and to continue to share their existing knowledge and personal experiences.

Key questions:

- What can you see on the cover of the book?
- What do you think this book will be about?
- What can we learn about the main character from the front cover?
- Do you have an experience with bees?
- What do you already know about bees?

Learning intention: We can use information read in texts to enhance our learning about specific topics

Exploration

Begin by recapping the previous lesson and discussing the plot of the narrative part of the text.

Read the informative part of the text, pausing throughout to discuss the new vocabulary. Create a class display with the topic-specific vocabulary that can be added to throughout the unit.

Adjustments

Support: Students record their understanding using pictures and key words.

Extension: Students to make their sentences more specific by including adjectives, adverbs and precise verbs.

Guiding questions:

- Who are the characters in the book?
- What is the setting? How would you describe it?
- What happened in the beginning?
- What happened in the middle?
- What happened at the end?
- Was there a problem and solution in this story?

by sharing experiences
• share their understanding of the text by writing about the characters, setting and plot

Response

Using the sites in the exploration lesson and the illustrations in the text, students are asked to draw a detailed illustration of an Australian native stingless bee. Around the illustration, students will write a range of facts they have learnt about the Australian native stingless bee from the text and the sites.

Evidence of learning

Students:
• identify new topic-specific vocabulary
• draw an Australian native stingless bee
• write facts about

Explore a range of the following sites to further develop student's understanding of Australian native bees.

- [Australian Museum](#)
- [Native Bees Australia](#)
- [Australian Native Bees](#)
- [Tetra Native Bee Blog](#)
- [ABeeC Hives](#)

Key questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between the European honey bee and the Australian native stingless bee?
- What insect does the native stingless bee sometimes get mistaken for?
- Why are native stingless bees so important?
- What are some factors that are dangerous to bees?
- Can you share your understanding of the new vocabulary about bees?

Learning intention: We can study a text to compare the similarities and differences between imaginative and informative texts

Exploration

Ask students to think about the type of text this book is. Allow time for students to discuss with each other and encourage them to provide reasons for why they believe it is that type.

Adjustments

Support: Students can record key words rather than full sentences. Students can dictate their facts for the teacher to scribe.

Extension: Students write comparative sentences about the European honey bee and the Australian native stingless bee.

Guiding questions:

- What do you need to include in your illustration of an Australian native stingless bee?
- What important facts have you learnt?

the Australian native stingless bee

Response

Following the discussion in the exploration, students will complete a [Venn diagram](#) comparing the similarities and differences between imaginative and informative texts.

Evidence of learning

- Students:*
- *identify the genre of a text*
 - *compare*

Explain to the class that an imaginative text is one that represent ideas, feelings and mental images in words or visual images. Imaginative texts entertain or provoke thought through their creative use of literary elements and make connections between ideas and experiences. Explain that an informative text is one whose primary purpose is to provide information through explanation, description, argument, analysis, ordering and presentation of evidence and procedures.

Ask if based on these definitions, their thinking has changed from their initial thoughts. Explain that this book is a hybrid of fiction and non-fiction. Ask students if they have previously read any hybrid books and if available, read another book that explores this genre.

Key questions:

- What type of book is The Beehive? Why do you think this?
- What is an imaginative text?
- What is an informative text?
- Have you read any other hybrid texts?

Learning intention: We can share our opinion about texts by providing specific reasons for our likes and dislikes

Exploration

Adjustments

Support: Teacher will provide students with the key words for each section.

Extension: Students to summarise the key differences between imaginative and informative texts. Students could also record their preference for the type of text, including reasons for their preference.

Guiding questions:

- What are the features of an imaginative text?
- What is the purpose of an imaginative text?
- What are the features of an informative text?
- What is the purpose of an informative text?
- What is similar between an informative text and an imaginative text?
- What are the differences between an informative text and an imaginative text?

Response

similarities and differences between text types

Evidence of learning

Introduce students to the '[Four Corners](#)' learning strategy in which the teacher provides a range of statements and/or asks a range of questions and students respond with their opinion. Create four different opinions (for example, strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) related to the statement or four possible answer choices to the question. Display these on paper in four different areas of your classroom.

The teacher will provide the first statement (for example, *I love eating green vegetables*) and students will move to the corner of the room that corresponds with their choice. Once there, allow time for students to discuss their opinion and provide reasons. Students may like to use comparative words to express the degree of preference (for example, I like orange vegetables better than green vegetables or I prefer orange vegetables to green vegetables).

Repeat this activity by providing a range of statements/questions suitable to your context.

Read *The Beehive* and share the following statements for students to give their opinion on.

"Native bees are vital for pollination."

"Native bees like to live in very hot environments."

"I would like to have a native beehive at my house."

Key questions:

- What is an opinion?

Teacher to display the [Responding to Texts template](#) and explain the different components to the students.

Students will independently complete each section by recording what they like about the book, what they dislike about the book, what puzzled them about the book and the connections they have made with the book.

Adjustments

Support: Teacher will provide sentence stems to the students and discuss possible answers before they begin.

Extension: Students to include comparative language in their responses as well as share who they feel this book is suited to and why.

Guiding questions:

- What do you like about this book?
- What do you dislike about this book?
- Is there anything that puzzles you about the book? Is there anything you would ask the author if you had the chance?
- What connections can you make with this book? Do you relate to the main character in some way? Do you have an animal that you take care of?

Students:

- *use interaction skills to contribute to discussions*
- *share their opinion and provide reasons for their choices*

- What language can we use when we share our opinion?
- How can we ensure we show respect if we disagree with someone's opinion?

Learning intention: Authors make deliberate language choices to persuade their audience



Recommended professional learning to support this learning intention: [Joint construction - Persuasive texts](#) by Joanne Rossbridge

Exploration

Explain to students that they are going to be 'Word Detectives' in this lesson. Ask students to have a whiteboard and pen ready, and as you turn through the pages of the book write down any words that have the 'ee' spelling pattern – *bee, teeny, cheered, queen, Groundskeeper, sweet, beeswax, week, tree.*

Adjustments

Students can build word families using the 'ee' words. Students find words that have the 'ee' sound, but use alternate spelling – *creature, each, species.*

In the second 'Word Detective' activity, students are asked to look for powerful/persuasive language that the author uses, e.g. *most favourite creatures in the world, the bees would love the most, vital for the pollination of flora, crucial for pollination of crops, native bees thrive when people...*

Response

Using examples from the text, model writing a paragraph to persuade.

Did you know some bees are solitary and others are semi-social? Native stingless bees are incredibly important for pollination of flora and crops. We must ensure we are mindful of native bees by giving them appropriate habitats and never spraying insecticides.

As a class, read through the modelled piece of writing and highlight the persuasive language used. Create a list of other words and phrases of persuasive language that could be used in a persuasive text.

Ask students to think about something they are passionate about. This could be a food, a sport, a game, a book. Students will find a partner and attempt to persuade them to try their 'passion'. For example, if one student really enjoys soccer, they would use persuasive language to persuade their partner to play soccer with them.

<https://www.petaa.edu.au>

Evidence of learning

Students:

- *identify and spell words with common letter patterns*
- *identify persuasive language*
- *write a paragraph to persuade*

Discuss how the author uses powerful and persuasive words and phrases throughout the text to inform and provide subtle arguments about the importance of bees.

Key questions:

- How many 'ee' words can you find?
- What other spelling patterns can we use to write the 'ee' sound?
- What are some examples of powerful/persuasive language that the author has used?
- Why do you think the author included this language?
- How does this language make you feel?

Learning intention: We can learn from experts by posing questions to find out more information about a topic

Exploration

Read page 9 and 10 and discuss the role of Groundskeeper Tom.

In their workbooks, students will write a persuasive paragraph to persuade someone to try their 'passion'.

Adjustments

Support: Students can record themselves sharing their persuasive paragraph verbally. Teacher can provide sentence stems for students to adapt. Teacher can work with a group of students to create a group paragraph.

Extension: Students can write a persuasive text using the correct structure i.e. an introduction, three arguments and a conclusion.

Guiding questions:

- Can you find the examples of persuasive language?
- What are some other words we can use to persuade?
- Are some words more powerful/persuasive than others?
- In the book, Willow is passionate about bees. What are you passionate about?
- How can you persuade someone to try your passion? What type of language will you use?

Response

Working with a partner, or in a small group, students are asked to compile a list of questions that they will ask

<https://www.petaa.edu.au>

Evidence of learning

Key questions:

- What is a Groundskeeper?
- What do you think Groundskeeper Tom is doing when he is not looking after the bees?
- How do you think Groundskeeper Tom learnt about bees?

Discuss the concept of an expert and explain that 'An expert is a person who has specialised knowledge based on the person's training, study or experience.' Students think, pair and share any experts that they know.

Key questions:

- What is an expert?
- Do you know any experts? Why do you think they are an expert?
- Do you think Groundskeeper Tom is an expert on bees?

Discuss how the text evidence could help us to infer that Tom is an expert on bees: *"Willow was yet to find a question he could not answer about native bees."*

Learning intention: We can draw conclusions by gathering evidence and recording our observations

Exploration

Read pages 17, 24 and 27 and discuss the types of

their Groundskeeper/General Assistant/Caretaker to find out how their school environment is cared for.

Example questions from students could include:

- How long have you done this job for?
- How did you get started?
- Do different plants and flowers need to be cared for differently?
- Do they need to be placed in different parts of the school?
- Who is in charge of deciding where different things go in the school?
- What types of equipment do you use in your job?
- What can we do to help you look after our school environment?

Guiding questions:

- What are some words to use at the start of a question?
- What makes a good question?
- What does a question need at the end?
- What would you like to find out from our Groundskeeper/General Assistant/Caretaker?

Students:

- *use interaction skills to contribute to discussions*
- *formulate questions to find out more information about the school environment*

Response

After touring the school environment, students will write a paragraph sharing their opinion on the school's

<https://www.petaa.edu.au>

Evidence of learning

environments that native bees live in. Ask students to predict whether they think their school environment is currently appropriate for native bees to live in. Discuss why/why not.

As a class, and if possible, with the Groundskeeper/General Assistant/Caretaker, take a tour of the school environment. Ask students to make observations of the different areas in the school. Students could note things like the types of plants and the temperature of the environments.

Key questions:

- What is the name of the man-made environment native bees live in? Can you name the different sections?
- What is the type of plant Willow and her stepdad put the hive under?
- What are the two habitats that the bees could live in (page 27)?
- What should people avoid spraying?

environment and its suitability for native bees to live in.

Students may like to use the following sentence stems to structure their writing.

I believe our school environment is / is not suitable for native bees because...

I think the native bees would love to live near the ... because ...

I believe we need to add ... to our school environment for the native bees because ...

Adjustments

Support: Students use the sentence stems to formulate their response. Students brainstorm answers with teacher before beginning.

Extension: Students conduct research on the bee species that are native to their area and include specific information in their response.

Guiding questions:

- Is our school environment bee-friendly? Why/why not?
- Are there certain areas of our school that are more suitable for the bees than others?
- What adjustments need to be made to our school environment to make it bee-friendly?

Students:

- *make and record observations*
- *use collected information to make conclusions*
- *write a paragraph sharing an opinion*

Learning intention: We can adjust our school environment to help native bees thrive

Exploration

Response

Evidence of learning

Begin the lesson by asking students to form groups and share their response from the previous task. Ask students to share some of their suggestions for what they feel they need to add to the school environment to make it bee friendly.

As a class, discuss who in the school they think they would need to suggest making the adjustments to. Discuss how they would approach this.

Key questions:

- Did you have the same adjustment ideas as another student?
- To make an adjustment to the school, who do you think we need to talk to?
- What have you learnt during this unit that you can use to make your suggestions more impactful?

Supporting resources

External websites

- [Australian Museum](#)
- [Native Bees Australia](#)

After explaining that any adjustments that we wish to make in the school need to be discussed with the principal, ask students to brainstorm how we could communicate our ideas. Students may like to create a persuasive poster, draw a design for the proposed garden and (or) write a presentation using persuasive language. Students will work in small groups to create a multimodal group presentation for their school principal to persuade them to create a native bee friendly garden in their school environment.

Adjustments

Students can self-select the option best suited to their individual learning needs.

Guiding questions:

- What persuasive language can you include in your presentation?
- What vocabulary can you include from *The Beehive*?
- How can you communicate your message the most effectively?
- How can you make your presentation engaging?

Students:

- *give a short oral presentation*
- *propose action they could take to improve their school environment*

- [Australian Native Bees](#)
- [Tetra Native Bee Blog](#)
- [ABeeC Hives](#)

Classroom templates (referenced in unit above)

1. [Think-pair-share](#)
2. [Story map](#)
3. [Compare informative and imaginative texts Venn diagram](#)
4. [Responding to texts](#)

Related texts and corresponding curriculum units

- [Bowerbird Blues](#) by **Aura Parker**. Year 1: In this unit students will make connections between the text and their personal experience and make relevant comments to demonstrate their understanding of a text. Students will identify key words and the meaning they carry and understand that images add to the meaning of texts. As scientists and geographers students will explore their local school environment and make observations about the things that live there. They will use their observations to create a written text, artwork, or role play, telling the story of a living thing in their school environment. They will combine visuals with written text where appropriate and use vocabulary in their writing adapted from the text.
- [The Trees](#) by **Victor Steffensen and Sandra Steffensen**. Year 1: *The Trees* is a resource for exploring texts created by First Nations Australians and for recognising the First Nations Australians' deep connection to and responsibility for Country. This unit of work will use *The Trees* as a springboard for developing English, Science and Geography knowledge and skills as students listen to and respond to the text, while learning about Aboriginal perspectives and caring for Country. Responding to the text will give students opportunities to practise their oral communication and interaction skills. Students will have opportunities to create short written texts, innovating on mentor texts, using knowledge of adjectives, adverbials and pronouns to craft sentences, drawing on an understanding of the way images add to the meaning of texts. They will create a call to action that demonstrates their understanding of the ways they can care for places to meet the basic needs of plants and animals.