

CONTEXT Since piloting our [Culture, Community, and the Classroom \(CCC\)](#) series in 2018, we have engaged traditional artists from diverse communities and connected them with public school teachers and museum educators in learning residencies. CCC uses a three-phase series model, starting with a 12-hour professional development workshop that includes artists, culture bearers, and regional educators learning together. The second phase pairs artists and teachers working together in a classroom. The final phase brings everyone who participated together in a program showcase to reflect on what was learned and to strengthen peer networks and connections. This lesson plan was shared with us by a teacher who participated in the CCC program. It can be adapted for use with a local artist in another region. Or, [Contact Us](#) to learn how to invite the named artist in this lesson to your learning space.

WHAT WE LOVE

Some of the most creative artist residencies come out of unexpected classroom collaborations. Not only does this set of lesson plans create connections between beekeeping and the art room, it also demonstrates how art can be a pathway to social emotional learning. Art teacher Sarah Edwards and guidance counselor Nina Muto worked with the Southern Tier Beekeepers Association to help students discover how they can work toward unity and community while still embodying their individuality.

CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND THE CLASSROOM GUEST ARTIST LESSON PLAN

LESSON TITLE: Bee Yourself

LENGTH: 6 Classes (2 visiting artists sessions, 1 session with counselor, and 3 art project lessons)

AUTHOR AND TEACHER: Sarah Edwards, art teacher at Windsor C.R. Weeks Elementary School in Windsor, NY

ARTIST COLLABORATOR: Southern Tier Beekeepers Association

STANDARD(S) ADDRESSED:

NYS Visual Arts Standards

Create

VA:Cr2.2.5 Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care for and use of materials,

tools, and equipment.

Present

VA: Pr5.1 Anchor Standard 5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Connect

VA: Cn 10.1 Through artmaking, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES:

Artist Interview Note Taking Handout
Popsicle sticks
Paint
Paint brushes
Transparencies
Sharpies
Elmer's Glue

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THE TEACHING POINT:

First, the visiting artists will introduce students to honey bees (European Honey Bees) and the bees' roles in the bee community. Bees have very specific jobs that help contribute to creating a positive community.

Secondly, students will be able to identify three bee roles (drone, queen, and worker) and understand the difference between wasps vs honey bees. As a community, we are dependent upon honey and the making of honey, so the job of each bee is very important. The students will then relate to bees and focus on their own role in their community and school. They will learn how they each can have an impact in a positive way to create a strong family, school, and

community.

Last, students will then create a piece of artwork that displays unity and community while still showing their own individual role.

This art project consists of students building a hexagon sculpture out of popsicle sticks then creating a drawing on a piece of clear transparency that demonstrates the students' own role in their family, school, or community. Then 5 or 6 of the sculptures will be grouped together to create a "hive" hanging sculpture.

The final exhibit for the project will be on display within the community and the school.

PURPOSE/CONNECTION:

Students will be connecting their role in their school, family, or community to the role of a bee completing its job in the hive. They will connect to how important it is to fulfill that job and recognize how they contribute and make an impact.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN—Guest Visit One (one hour)

Engagement: Equipment/Introduction

Beekeepers will give a 35-minute presentation on honey bees starting with the idea that "anyone can be a beekeeper." They will discuss with the students the differences between "mean" bees and honey bees and how relatable honey bees really are to us. Bees are very much like a family of their own. Bees will do anything to protect each other and their home.

Students will see a variety of bees and how other countries have different methods for cultivating honey. They will learn how NY state has played such an important role in creating sustainable and friendly bee colonies.

They will discover how bees all have jobs that help keep their community thriving, from having "nurse bees" to the Queen bee to the undertaker bee. All jobs of the bees are translatable to our everyday lives of parents going to get groceries and bringing back to the house to have children help put them away in different parts of the home.

Beekeepers will also bring in an observation hive for students to view the bees and identify which bees are doing what jobs. Students will be able to ask questions at the end of the class and will use an **Artist Interview Note Taking Handout** to draw or write something that was interesting to them.

In the second session (see the "Beneficial Bees" lesson plan under "Downloads" on the main page of this lesson plan), the art teacher and counselor will work with the students on connecting to what the students' roles are in their family, school, or community and brainstorm a list of what that is and what it looks like. For example, students could pick if they played on a sports team for school then write how their role is important to the team.

In the third and fourth session, students will start to build a sculpture using a hexagon template, popsicle sticks, and Elmer's glue. They need to build at least 6 rows of popsicle sticks that are overlapping each corner with glue to build a sturdy structure. They can continue as many rows as they see fit, some students will want to reach a certain number of rows that is meaningful to their life.

In the fifth session, students will paint their hexagons with a single color that is meaningful to them and start to draw visual representations of their role within their chosen category. Their final drawing will be done on clear transparency colored in with a Sharpie and then hot glued to the inside of their hexagon by an adult. The art teacher will assemble the hexagons together in groups of 5-6 to create a multiple of hanging hive sculptures.

Model/Demonstration

Art project specifically: The teacher will discuss with the students what they learned about the bees and how their own lives are similar to the bees' lives. Students will list what different jobs they do with their family, at school, and in their community. They will then construct a hexagon out of popsicle sticks. Building is one of the jobs of the bees so again, still relating back to the bees jobs.

Inside the hexagon is where they will be asked to visually demonstrate their job that they have chosen to highlight. They can choose which category and then draw an example of how they contribute to their school, family, or community. (For example, a school category might include playing a sport and playing in a certain position and then doing a drawing that shows that). Students will be given a brief demonstration on drawing people and houses. Then they draw on a transparency then color e in with Sharpies.

Share/Closure: Students can share their roles they have chosen with each other and discuss how each are important. They can view the finished exhibited sculpture and discuss how it is impacting the community.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN— Guest Visit Two (one hour)

Engagement: We will break students into 3 small groups to attend stations and rotate around every 10 minutes.

Station 1 Equipment: Students will listen and learn about beekeeping equipment.

- Frames: still have bees and wax on them
- Base box
- Beekeeper gear and smoker
- Tools: discuss what the tools are made from, the history and evolution of the tools

Station 2: Bee Picture Frames: Students will view all the photographs the beekeepers supplied and draw or write about something they learned from the photos.

-Upclose photographs of an education hive

Station 3: Tasting honey: Students will taste 9 flavors of honey and learn about how different honeys are made .

- Bears with different flavors of honey
- Popsicle sticks for tasting
- Feedback form that students MUST put their name to enter into a drawing for large honey

Share/Closure: Students' artwork will be exhibited at the Discovery Center for the first Friday in March. This will further show the importance of their artwork impacting their community just as bees create and impact ours.

Assessment: Students' homeroom teachers will work with the students during their ELA time to create thank-you letters for our guests. Students will be asked to write about 2 specific things that they learned and what they are grateful for learning. By reviewing students' letters, the teacher can assess what most interested students.

