



THE HUMBLE

BUMBLEBEE



The Humble Bumblebee

Tara came out of her reverie when she heard her grandmother calling, “Where is my bumblebee?” Tara asked her grandmother how she (Tara) got this nickname. The answer was that Tara behaved like a bumblebee, which hummed a lot and flew here and there all the time. Of course, Tara, instead of humming, talked a lot. Unlike her mother, who had seen bumblebees around as a child, Tara had never seen one. Grandmother tol

d her that these bees were getting extinct due to climate change.

Tara decided that she had to see the humble bumblebee, an insect that resembles a big, fuzzy honeybee. She picked up *The Nature* magazine and started to read an article about the bumblebee. The article said that most of the bumblebees have yellow, black, and brown bands across their bodies. Bumblebees prefer cooler and slightly wet conditions. However, increasing global temperatures by 1.3 to 1.5 degrees Celsius is driving them to extinction. Bumblebees pollinate plants such as cucumbers, tomatoes,

Hi!
I am Tara





squash, blueberries, and melon, as well as many wildflowers. They are one of the best pollinators, and their extinction would mean that some crops would fail. This will reduce food for humans and other creatures which depend on the failed crops.

According to a survey, the bee population in Europe and North America has declined by a third since the 1970s. Bees have been hardest hit in southern regions such as Spain and Mexico due to more frequent extreme warm years. Their different species live on nearly every continent on Earth but are absent from Antarctica, most of Africa, Australia and some of the surrounding islands, and southern India. Tara found that very sad. She discovered more interesting information about these insects on animals.net:

- a. The largest species of bumblebee is so large that the locals refer to them as “flying mice.” Found in South America, they can grow up to 1.6 inches long! Unfortunately, their populations are declining, and the IUCN considers them endangered.
- b. In order to fly from one flower to another to collect nectar, these insects must flap their wings at 200 beats per second!
- c. Since flapping wings that quickly takes up a lot of energy, they must eat almost continually. In fact, if they do not feed at least every 40 minutes, they will starve!

New Words

1. **Reverie**- daydreaming or lost in thought
2. **Extinct**- when a species of animal or plant no longer exists
3. **Crops**- plants that are grown and harvested for food or other products

Find other new and interesting words for each other, and write their meanings in your notebooks.

Comprehension

1. What has yellow and black bands across its body?
2. Whose pet name is 'bumblebee'?
3. Who talked a lot?
4. What kind of climate do the bumblebees prefer?
5. Which plants depend on these bees for pollination?
6. Across which continents are bees found?
7. What is a 'flying mice' and why is it called so?
8. What flaps its wings 200 beats per second?
9. How often do these bees need to eat?

Take turns to make more questions like these above for each other and answer them.

Prompts Pair up

1. Bumblebee Flower Race:

Materials: Paper, markers or crayons, scissors, straws

Instructions:

- a. With help from your partner draw and color different flowers on paper.
- b. Cut out the flowers and scatter them across the classroom floor or a designated play area.

Take a straw each. You must use your straws to "fly" (blow air through the straw) like bumblebees

from one flower to another, collecting "nectar" (touching each flower) as you go.

- c. The goal is to visit as many flowers as possible within a set time, emphasizing the importance of bumblebees in pollination.

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on the
Bumblebee
using the
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