



Nectarworks



Sleeping bumblebees

Timing: 15 minutes + depending on how many games you play

Organisation: whole class

Learning Outcomes:

- Bumblebees hibernate in the winter months and wake in spring
- Maintaining attention, concentrating and sitting quietly
- Responding to simple instructions
- Using listening skills
- Working together

Resources

Long feathers

Setting the Scene

Ask the children to think about winter and what winter weather is like; how do they keep warm and dry in winter? How do animals keep warm and dry in winter? (some go to warmer countries, some grow thick fur, some go to sleep/hibernate). Queen bumblebees hibernate. They hibernate because there is nothing for them to eat in winter. Queen bumblebees eat lots of pollen in the autumn and get really fat. They hunt for place to hibernate, usually an old mouse hole in a sheltered spot like a hedge. They crawl in and go to sleep all winter until the spring, when flowers start making the nectar and pollen that they like to eat. If they are woken too early in the year, by some warm winter sunshine (a false spring) they may be tempted to wake up (emerge) before there is food for them to eat and they may die.

Bumblebees may also be dug up and eaten by hungry badgers, foxes, stoats and weasels.

Activity

All the children lie down, curled up, in a space on the floor, eyes closed, as if they were a hibernating bumblebee. Explain what happens to a bumblebee whilst they are hibernating.

- they do not make a sound
- they do not move

This project is co-ordinated by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and is funded by:



- they breathe more slowly
- they let their bodies cool right down
- they do not eat or drink

The “warm winter sunshine” or “false spring ” moves about the room attempting to encourage the bumblebees to move. The hunter can't touch the bumblebees, but may move close to them, tickle them with a feather, tell them jokes.

Any child who moves is out as they have woken up too early during the winter. They can help to try and wake the other sleeping bumblebees

Those that don't move after a few minutes, survive the winter and can buzz off.....

Conclusion

Bumblebee hibernate in the winter. Would the children like to hibernate? Where would they hibernate? If the children had gone to sleep from September to March and not eaten or drunk anything, what would be the first thing they would need to do when they woke up?