Where are the Bees?

(January 2019)

If you think that there are not so many bees buzzing around you lately, you are right! Bee numbers have gone down quite a lot, and the possible impact this may have on our environment is huge. Bees are contending with a lot to keep their numbers up.

One thing impacting bees is climate change. While they are rarely directly affected by climate change, when it comes to hive success, the impact is real. As temperatures change globally, many common bee habitats experience drought, which causes plant loss, or a loss of food for bees. To survive this, bees must move and end up traveling to areas where new and unexpected predators and illnesses exist.

Also working against our bees is the Varroa mite. This parasitic pest specifically attaches to honeybees because it reproduces in their hives. Varroa mites are a huge source of illness for the honeybee and can

completely decimate a hive. They not only carry and spread illness, but also feed off the fat of drone bees. Then they will move to worker bees, killing off much of the population and often destroying the hive.

Even with all this, we may make the biggest impact on bees. On farms, we use artificial fertilizers and weed killers, and set aside lots of land for a single crop. Natural fertilizers and weeds are part of a bee's diet. Planting only one kind of crop often limits a bee's food, and pesticides can harm and kill bees. Some researchers even think that the Wi-Fi we use everywhere makes it difficult for bees to find their homes.

This decline in bees means more difficulty with the production of crops. Our food may have to change, and we may have to develop more ways to pollinate plants without bees. This may not seem so bad, but each time we think we fix a problem, we run the risk of creating another one. Whatever steps we take to

correct the bee problem should be done with extreme care. Otherwise, we may feel the sting of more than just bee loss.

Teacher Resources

Please note: this non-controlled readable text passage features a ***cause and effect text structure***. As such, it is written to be ***at least 80% decodable at Substep 7.2***. A specific decodability score is listed below.

- This text passage is 83% decodable at Substep 7.2.

Text Easability Scores

If you would like to measure the text easability scores of this passage, please follow the directions below.

1. Visit the Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor website at *http://tea.cohmetrix.com/*. If you do not already have a login and password, create one. It is free and easy to sign up for access to the website.
2. Once you have created an account and sign in, you will be taken to a page with an empty, white text box. Copy and paste the text from this passage into the empty, white text box. Make sure you are only copying and pasting the body of the passage. Do not include the title, date, or any of the resources present in the passage.
3. When you have pasted the passage into the text box, click on the red button beneath the text box that says "Analyze." There will be a short delay and after a few seconds, you will see a bar graph appear to the right of the screen.
4. The bar graph will give you the percentages for several text characteristics including: narrativity, syntactic simplicity, word concreteness, referential cohesion, and deep cohesion.
5. Below the bar graph, the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level is also included for your benefit.
6. Lastly, a paragraph is provided that explains the meaning of the measurements of the text characteristics for your particular passage.
7. Once you have completed measuring your passage, you can click on the "Clear" button below the text box and measure another passage, if you wish.

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