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# Grade 6 Learning Experiences: Biodiversity and its impact on our environment








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## Experience 3: The Benefits of Biodiversity




[Long Range Plan: Grade 6 Model 1](#)

Students will develop their knowledge of biodiversity and how to classify biodiversity using a classification system. In addition, they will engage in various scientific processes such as designing and building a bee box, coding an animal classification game, and investigating the impact of the lack of tree cover in cities.

<p>Overview of learning experiences</p>	<p>Students will be engaged in active meaning-making and knowledge construction as they develop an understanding of biodiversity. They will learn about the contributions of Black and Indigenous scientists and how the loss of biodiversity often impacts marginalized communities disproportionately.</p> <p>The learning experiences outlined here can be found in: <a href="#">Long Range Plan: Grade 6 Model 1</a></p>
<p>Prior Knowledge / Prior Skill Set(s)</p>	<p><b>Background Knowledge and Concepts (Teacher)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aware of culturally relevant responsive pedagogy (CRRP)</li> <li>- Understanding of the <a href="#">Learning For All Document</a></li> <li>- Understanding of the Supporting English Language Learners document</li> <li>- Understanding of how to engage in the <a href="#">Engineering Design and Research</a> process</li> <li>- Understanding of safety procedures</li> <li>- Understanding of block-based coding concepts and platforms like Scratch</li> </ul> <p><b>Background Knowledge and Skills (Students)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aware of collaboration norms</li> <li>- Aware of various collaboration strategies</li> <li>- Use of technology and suites (e.g. Google Workspace)</li> <li>- Aware of using the internet for research purposes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aware of safety procedures</li> <li>- Knowledge of habitats and interactions between species</li> <li>- Prior and knowledge of coding concepts (e.g. loops, conditional statements)</li> <li>- Prior knowledge and experience using basic block-coding and the use of Scratch</li> </ul>
<p>Strand A - <a href="#">STEM Investigation and Communication Skills</a></p>	<p><b>STEM Investigation and Communication Skills:</b></p> <p> <b>A1.1</b> use a scientific research process and associated skills to conduct investigations</p> <p> <b>A1.3</b> use an engineering design process and associated skills to design, build, and test devices, models, structures, and/or systems</p> <p> <b>A1.4</b> follow established health and safety procedures during science and technology investigations, including wearing appropriate protective equipment and clothing and safely using tools, instruments, and materials</p> <p>   <b>A1.5</b> communicate their findings, using science and technology vocabulary and formats that are appropriate for specific audiences and purposes</p> <p> <b>A2.1</b> write and execute code in investigations and when modelling concepts, with a focus on producing different types of output for a variety of purposes</p>
<p>Overview / Big Ideas/Fundamental Concepts</p>	<p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>Students will learn about biodiversity through a series of activities that help them see the organization of life on earth. They will use observational and communication skills to identify and classify different living things. Using coding skills, they will create an animal classification game and learn about the importance of bees by designing and building their own bee box. Students will also think critically about how the loss of biodiversity can affect people differently based on their identities.</p> <p><b>Big Ideas</b></p>

	<p>Different natural systems need different species in order to reach biodiversity          Biodiversity provides benefits to all living things.          Not everyone experiences the loss of biodiversity equally.</p> <p><b>Systems and Interactions:</b> A system is a collection of living and/or non-living things and processes that interact to perform some function.</p> <p><b>Sustainability and Stewardship:</b> Sustainability is the concept of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.          Stewardship involves understanding that we need to use and care for the natural environment in a responsible way and making the effort to pass it on to future generations no less than what we have access to ourselves.</p> <p><b>Structure and Function:</b> This concept focuses on the interrelationship between the function or use of a natural or human-made object and the form that the object takes,</p>
<p>Learning Goals / Success Criteria</p>	<p><b>Learning Goal:</b> We are learning about the importance of biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Success Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I can describe why bees are important to the environment</li> <li>● I can use the engineering process to build a bee house</li> <li>● I can follow established safety procedures</li> </ul> <p><b>Ministry of Education Key Points:</b></p> <p><b>STEM Skills and Connections:</b> Perspectives and approaches that provide opportunities for students to investigate and apply concepts and skills from all areas of learning.</p> <p><b>Research and Experimentation Processes:</b> Provides students with the scientific literacy skills needed to approach scientific questions that are becoming a part of everyday life.</p> <p><b>Engineering Design Process:</b> Provides students with support to plan and build solutions to problems or address needs that connect to the curriculum and the world around them.</p>

	<p><b>Hands-on, Experiential Learning:</b> Includes hands-on, experiential learning opportunities to support classroom activities that encourage curiosity.</p> <p><b>Coding:</b> Allows students to explore a wide variety of science and technology concepts and contexts through coding, while also learning valuable skills related to the automation and control of systems.</p> <p><b>Skilled Trades:</b> Students consider the practical application of skills and concepts within the skilled trades and related occupations.</p> <p><b>Contributions to Science and Technology:</b> Showcases the important contributions made to science and technology by people with diverse lived experiences.</p> <p><b>Climate Change:</b> Students will develop the skills and knowledge needed to understand the causes and potential solutions and mitigation strategies related to climate change and other environmental issues, and how they can make the most environmentally responsible decisions possible, given the choices they have.</p>
<p>Learning Experiences</p> <p> A1.1</p> <p> A1.5</p> <p> A1.3</p>	<p><b>The Benefits of Biodiversity</b></p> <p>Students will learn about the importance of bees to the environment and use the Engineering Process to create a bee box. Please follow the steps below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show students the video <a href="#">Bees - All Things Animals</a> on bees and how they help the environment. You can share this video as a whole class, or students can view it individually.</li> <li>2. Think-Walk-Random Pair-Share: Ask students, “Why are bees important to the environment?”. See <a href="#">Appendix A: Instructional Strategies</a>.       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Assessment for Learning Opportunity: (B1.1)</b> Collect observational assessment to see whether students understand how bees are beneficial to the environment (see <a href="#">Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist</a>).</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. After class discussions about the importance of bees, tell students they will design and build a bee box. Review with students the engineering design process. The engineering design process and the design</li> </ol>

 A.1.4

- challenge can be found on the [Bee Box Challenge slide deck](#).
4. After reviewing the engineering design process, co-create the success criteria on the slide deck with the students and discuss a bee box's successful form and function. Please see this example of a [bee box from Let's Talk Science](#).
  5. Provide students with the Bee Box Challenge handout (see [Appendix C: Bee Box Challenge](#)) to students. This handout will guide them through the engineering design process for the bee box. Take time to review the handout and decide with your students when each section needs to be completed. This is called chunking, and it will help your students manage their time.
  6. SAFETY NOTE: Review with students how to safely use tools (e.g. glue guns, scissors).
  7. Students should ideally work in pairs.
    - a. Consider reviewing with students norms for collaboration.
    - b. Have students fill out the roles assigned page on the handout so that students are clear on their responsibilities for the task.
  8. **Assessment for Learning Opportunity (A1.3 and A.1.4):** As students go through the design process, you can collect assessments for learning through a checklist (see [Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist](#)).
  9. You can observe to see if students can understand and apply the engineering design process while being safe. Along with observations, you can also invite students individually to interview them about their plans and design.

### Consolidation

#### The Benefits of Biodiversity

Students can show their completed bee houses using a gallery walk (see [Appendix A: Instructional Strategies](#)). Students can also test their box outside by hanging it on a tree and observing it from a distance with teacher supervision.

**Assessment for Learning Opportunity (B1.1):** As students do the gallery walk, (see [Appendix A: Instructional Strategies](#)) conference with individual students to check (see [Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist](#)) their understanding of the engineering process and the benefits of biodiversity.

<p>Science and Technology Expectations (Beyond Strand A)</p>	<p><b>Strand B: Life Systems</b></p> <p><b>Overall Expectations</b></p> <p>B1 assess the importance of biodiversity, and describe ways of protecting biodiversity</p> <p>B1.1 assess the benefits of biodiversity and the consequences of the diminishing of biodiversity</p> <p>B1.2 analyse a local issue related to biodiversity while considering different perspectives; plan a course of action in response to the issue; and act on their plan</p> <p><b>Overall Expectations</b></p> <p>B2. demonstrate an understanding of biodiversity, its contributions to the stability of natural systems, and its benefits to humans B2.1 describe the distinguishing characteristics of different groups of organisms, and use these characteristics to further classify these organisms using a classification system</p> <p>B2.2 demonstrate an understanding of biodiversity as the diversity of life on Earth, including the diversity of organisms within species, among species in a community, and among communities and the habitats that support them</p> <p>B2.4 describe ways in which biodiversity within and among communities is essential for maintaining the resilience of these communities</p> <p>B2.5 describe interrelationships within species, between species, and between species and their natural environment, and explain how these interrelationships sustain biodiversity</p>
<p>Science and Technology Vocabulary</p>	<p>Biodiversity  Species  Community  Habitat  Ecosystem  Interrelationship  Interaction  Loops  Conditional Statements  Engineering Process  Research Process  Coastal Zone  Intertidal Zone</p>

Equipment and Materials	<p>Laptops w/ internet access  Household items (cardboard, glue, popsicle sticks, rubber bands, straws, scissors)  Pool noodles  iPad w/ Google Lens  Large play area  Pylons  LCD Projector  <a href="#">Scratch</a></p>
Timeline and Preparation	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>Part 1            50 mins  Part 2            20 mins</p> <p><b>Consolidation</b> 20 mins</p>
Safety Considerations	<p>Review with students the appropriate use of technology.</p> <p>Review safety procedures for using a glue gun and scissors for the Bee Box activity.</p> <p>Students should be wearing goggles when creating the Bee Box</p> <p>Students should be under adult supervision when hanging and observing their Bee Box</p> <p>Review with students the appropriate behaviour when going for a neighbourhood walk.</p> <p>Review with students appropriate play guidelines when students are playing the Foxes, Rabbits, and Leaves</p> <p>Refer to these safety resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Safety in Elementary Science and Technology (STAO)</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Safe Activity Foundations in Education Document (SAFEdoc) Science and Technology, Grades 1-8 (OCTE)</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Ontario Curriculum Program Planning – Health and Safety</a></li> </ul>

Opportunities For Assessment

**Assessment for Learning Opportunity (A1.3 and A.1.4):** As students go through the design process, you can collect assessments for learning through a checklist (see [Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist](#)).

**Assessment for Learning Opportunity (B1.1):** As students do the gallery walk, (see [Appendix A: Instructional Strategies](#)) conference with individual students to check (see [Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist](#)) their understanding of the engineering process and the benefits of biodiversity.

According to the Ministry of Education, Growing Success Document (2010) assessment is about improving student learning!

**Assessment FOR Learning:** Occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, while students are still gaining knowledge and practicing skills and is used by teachers to monitor students' progress towards achieving the overall and specific expectations, so that teachers can provide timely and specific descriptive feedback to students, scaffold next steps, and differentiate instruction and assessment in response to student needs.

**Assessment AS Learning:** Occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, with support, modelling, and guidance from the teacher and is used by students to provide feedback to other students (peer assessment), monitor their own progress towards achieving their learning goals (self-assessment), make adjustments in their learning approaches, reflect on their learning, and set individual goals for learning.

**Assessment OF Learning:** Occurs at or near the end of a period of learning, and may be used to inform further instruction and is used by the teacher to summarize learning at a given point in time. This summary is used to make judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, to assign a value to represent that quality, and to support the communication of information about achievement to students themselves, parents, teachers, and others

**NOTE:** The assessment in the learning experiences are intentionally assessment for learning and assessment as learning. The assessment modality is intentionally conversations and observations. This is to help move away from only product based assessment. Throughout the learning



	<p>experiences students will have many opportunities to demonstrate their understanding through doing, talking and engaging in self-assessment. By collecting assessment for/as learning data teachers can be responsive and provide meaningful feedback. Teachers have been provided with assessment tools to collect evidence of student learning. Assessment opportunities are embedded throughout the learning experiences.</p>
<p>Instructional Strategies and Adaptability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers should aim to have a learning environment that is safe, respectful, and inclusive (community building should be ongoing). Please see the <a href="#">ETFO Inclusive Classrooms website</a>.</li> <li>● Students should have an understanding of collaboration norms</li> <li>● There are many collaboration strategies that are employed in the ETFO resource and teachers are encouraged to review them before starting this lesson</li> <li>● Teachers should adapt the lessons based on the needs of the students in their class (Please refer to the <a href="#">Learning for All</a> document)</li> <li>● Movement is important to learning. Students should be given opportunities to get up and move through games and active learning strategies</li> <li>● Teachers should value the lived experiences and stories of their students in the materials they use in the classroom through the use Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP)</li> </ul>
<p>Additional Supporting Resources</p>	<p><a href="#">Ontario Science Centre Curriculum Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">Science North Grade 6 Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">Let's Talk Science Educational Resources</a></p>
<p>Cross-Curricular Opportunities</p>	<p><b>Language</b> - Students can use various reading strategies to help them understand the articles that are provided in this resource. For example, students can use monitoring comprehension strategies to decode information. (Reading Overall 1)</p> <p><b>Writing</b>- Students can write a letter using writing traits and conventions urging their local MPP to make a change. (Writing Overall &amp; 2)</p> <p><b>Math</b> - Students will be applying their knowledge of coding skills to write and execute code. (Coding Overall 1 &amp; 2)</p>

Future Opportunities / Next Steps	Students can code this <a href="#">Invasive Species Game from Science North</a> if they finish the classification activity early.  Students can explore STEM careers from <a href="#">Let's Talk Science</a> .

## **Appendix A: Instructional Strategies**

## Instructional Strategies

**Think-Walk-Random Pair-Share:** Whenever a guiding question is asked all students need at least 20-30 seconds to think of the answer. This wait time helps all students process the response. Then using a visibly random pairing system, pair up the students. Consider randomizing the groups instead of asking students to pick their partners. Research from Peter Lijedenthal, *Building Thinking Classrooms* (2015) shows that randomizing groups/pairs leads to better student cohesion and improved cooperation over time. Instead of having students share with someone at their desk, have them physically get up and move to find their random partner. Movement helps the brain function better. Students should be sharing their ideas while standing up.

**Two On A Crayon** - Have students buddy up using a random pairing and pass out one crayon and one piece of paper for each pair. Tell everyone they both have to hold the crayon the entire time and color until the song is over and that there is no talking about what to draw. Once everyone is situated, turn on a song and begin coloring. When the song ends, get the students' attention, look at the art and talk about how there are leaders and followers and it's okay to be either. This activity is a chance to talk about fighting for dominance, being too passive, and ideally sharing power. It teaches and helps the students understand that we all need to work together to get the right picture. Sometimes we will be leaders, sometimes we should follow, and that is okay either way. (<https://inside.ewu.edu/managementtoolbox/2-on-a-crayon-2/>)

**One Stray One Stay** - One of the group members stays (expert) and explains what they have learned during the activity to others. The other pair joins another pair to see what they have learned. Halfway through the activity, the students switch roles. The student visiting the expert should be actively listening. Here is another version of this ([English/French](#)).

**Gallery Walk** - Gives students an opportunity to walk around the classroom and view what others have created.

**Rally Coach** - With Rally Coach, students fulfill two meaningful roles. Firstly, they are at no point in the learning process able to retreat from a situation. Whether they are the writer, speaker, or coach, that student is considered an essential member of the partner pair or small group. If that student is not writing down a response, he or she is expected to be “coaching” a peer; this coaching might involve searching for textual evidence from a text, revising an error, or simply offering positive encouragement. Palmer (1997) notes that the teacher in a classroom holds a pivotal position in fostering a “safe space and trusting relationship” (p. 20) with students and among students to promote these positive interactions. While this mutual trust may take

time and effort to build, the potential academic yield is tremendous. I have found from personal experience in the classroom that my students not only enjoy Rally Coach, they prefer it to completing worksheets or writing assignments alone. It enables them to socialize with a partner, promoting their social skills, while also seeking help and a second set of eyes for review and support when needed. (Excerpt from <https://ryanarciero.weebly.com/cooperative-teaching-strategies-blog/rally-coach-kagan-strategy>)

**Rally Robin-** Partner A talks about what they have learned and they write it down. They pass it to Partner B, who checks over their work, provides them a compliment and then adds on to the question.

**Stand up-hands up- pair up:** Students stand up, put their hand up and quickly find a partner with whom to share or discuss by giving them a high five. This structure is perfect for classbuilding, processing and reviewing information, energizing the class, forming random pairs or teams, lesson starts or wraps. (Review consent for this activity with students and follow covid protocols)

## **Appendix B: Experience 3 Assessment Checklist**

### Assessment Checklist - Activity #3

Teachers are strongly encouraged to read this page on [Assessment for Learning](#) page and this page on [Assessment and Evaluation](#) before using the checklist below.

#### Assessment for Learning (Observations & Conversations)

The purpose of this checklist is to collect evidence of student learning over time. The assessment data can be used to provide feedback and be responsive to student needs. This data can also be used for the assessment of learning. During the activities, teachers can observe and converse with students and their ability to meet specific expectations. Teachers can include multiple assessment points for each column since there will be multiple opportunities throughout the activity for the students to show their understanding of each expectation. Teachers can use the assessment coding provided below or your own. A sample is provided.

#### Learning Experience: Biodiversity

**Learning Goal (Overall Ex. A1):** We are learning to use the engineering design process to conduct investigations, following appropriate health and safety procedures.

**Learning Goal (Overall Ex. B2):** We are learning to demonstrate an understanding of biodiversity, its contributions to the stability of natural systems, and its benefits to humans.

#### Specific Expectations Addressed:

A1.3 use an engineering design process and associated skills to design, build, and test devices, models, structures, and/or systems

A1.4 follow established health and safety procedures during science and technology investigations, including wearing appropriate protective equipment and clothing and safely using tools, instruments, and materials

B1.1 assess the benefits of biodiversity and the consequences of the diminishing of biodiversity

**Assessment Coding:** N- Not Yet   A - Almost   G - Got It

<b>Student Name</b>	<b>B1.1</b>	<b>A.1.3</b>	<b>A1.4</b>	<b>Anecdotal Notes</b>
Matthews, Auston	G, G, A, N			Auston was able to confidently, design, build and test his bee house, while following safety procedures.
<b>Student Name</b>	<b>B2.2</b>	<b>B2.1</b>	<b>B1.4</b>	<b>Anecdotal Notes</b>



## **Appendix C: Bee Box Challenge**

## Bee Box Challenge

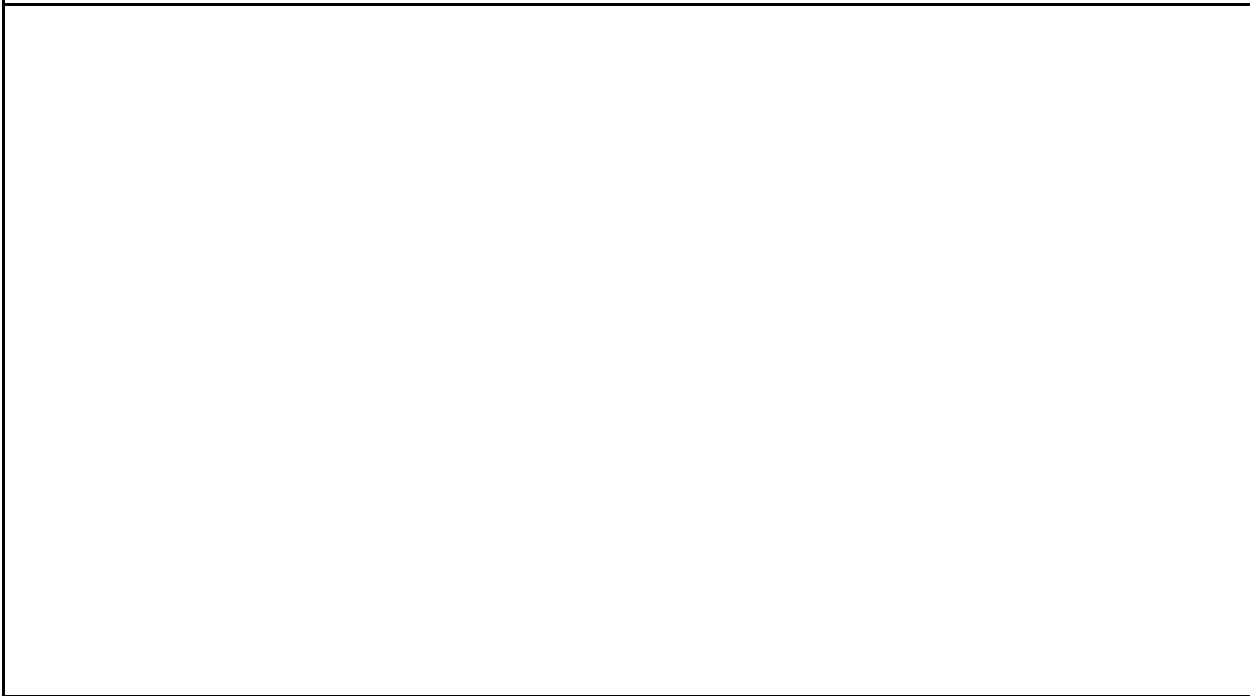
**Problem:** Bees are important pollinators! The ecosystem depends on them. Create a bee box using common household materials that will hold a population of bees.

**Research and Understand:** Using the internet or other resources provided to you by the teacher, research examples of bee houses and hives. What do you notice about their characteristics? Record your ideas below.

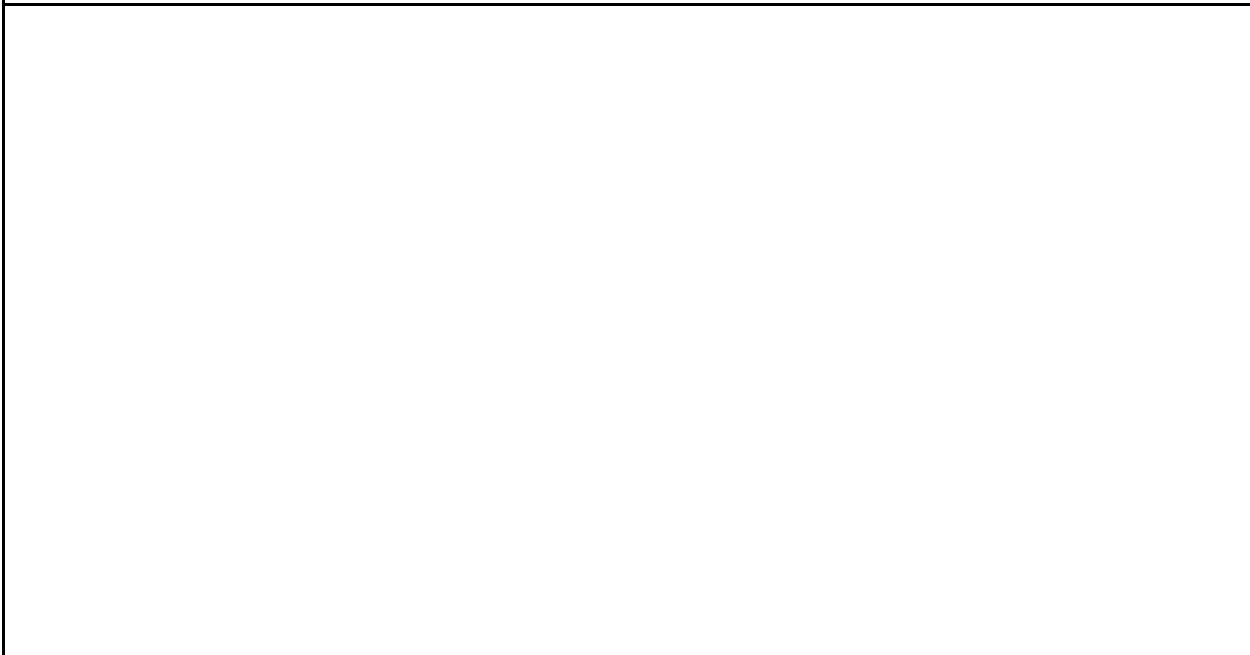
**Success Criteria:** What does a successful bee box need to have? Share and co-construct the success criteria with your class. Write the success criteria below.

**Generate potential solutions:** Using the success criteria, sketch different ideas for your bee box below! Try to come up with a variety of different designs!

Choose one design (prototype) and draw it with more detail. Include the tools and materials that you will need to gather in order to build this design.



Build and test your prototype. Write down your observations when you tested your prototype.



Evaluate and Revise your prototype. Explain or sketch below the changes you made to your design. You can also ask for feedback on your design from other classmates. With adult supervision, hang your bee box to a tree and observe from a safe distance. What did you notice? Did your box attract any bees? Was it able to withstand a variety of forces?

Communicate Your Solution: Share with your classmates your design and explain your thinking behind your design!