

## Grade 3 Opinion Performance Task – Honey Bees

### Task:

The local newspaper will be publishing special sections in the paper to show student writing. The first special section will be third grade writing. They want students to write an opinion letter. You have decided to send your writing to the paper and hope it will be published.

The topic for your opinion letter is:

***There have been problems with honey bees living near people. What is your view on how this should be solved?***

You have found three sources about honey bees. After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the articles and the three questions that follow. Then you will watch a video and read the articles carefully so you will have the information you will need to answer the questions and complete your research. You may use scratch paper to take notes.

- You will write an opinion letter using information you have read and viewed.

### Directions for Beginning:

You will now review three sources. Your teacher will first show you a video and then you will read two articles. You can look at the articles and your notes as often as you like.

## Part 1

### Sources for Performance Task:

#### Source #1 – [YouTube Video – Why Are Honey Bees Important?](#)

Your teacher will show you this video by the University of Florida that was aired in March 2013.

#### Source #2

This is an article about backyard beekeeping adapted from the Miami Herald newspaper dated September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.



Photo: [Pixaby](#)

## Backyard Beekeeping

*Adapted from Miami Herald, 9/15/2014*

Honey bees have been dying at a fast rate in the United States. This has been happening for many years. It is causing problems for farmers.

### There are Laws

Marcie Davis read about the declining number of honey bees. She decided to build a bee hive in her back yard in Florida to help the bee population grow.

Marcie lives in a county that limits the number of backyard beehives. The state has different rules. Marcie had to go to court if she wanted to keep her backyard beehives.

The county and state argued about whether beehives in backyards should be allowed. This went on for about a year. Finally, in September 2014 the county decided to drop the case. Marcie and others were glad. She and other backyard beekeepers could keep their hives.

## **The Problem**

Honey bees are very important to crops grown around our country. Honey bees pollinate almost all of the crops grown in the United States. One in three honey bees die each year in the United States. Fewer honey bees could mean less food.

There are many reasons why the honey bees are disappearing. Some die because of poisons used on crops. Some die from disease or other insects. Others die because of fewer blooming plants.

The weather in Florida is great for honey bees because different plants are blooming 11 months out of the year. Honey bees collect pollen and nectar from the blooming plants to make honey. Honey is the food that honey bees eat. It is also an important crop for the state.

Florida beekeepers rent their beehives to farmers in other states. The Florida beekeepers make money renting their bees. Farmers in other places get their crops pollinated. When bees pollinate, they help plants reproduce and grow. Honey bees are needed to grow fruits, and vegetables, and nuts. Beekeepers ship the hives to pollinate crops in about 27 states. Hundreds of thousands of bees are moved on semi-trucks all over our country. Most people don't know that they may have passed a truck on the highway that was carrying bees.

## Help is on the Way

With the honey bees dying, many people in Florida were worried. They worried about jobs and food. Florida passes a law to help the bee population grow. The law allows people to keep beehives in their backyards. Many people like Marcie Davis started beekeeping. More people are keeping hives and the honey bee population is growing. Some people call the backyard beekeepers “wannabees”.

Kai and Nina are ten-year-old twins that have been keeping bees for over two years. They don't mind getting stung and do like telling others about their bees. Their father, Ross Toyne, is the lawyer that helped Marcie Davis with her court case.

With Florida's new law, more people are raising honey bees. There are now 41 beekeeping clubs in Florida.

Staletovich, J. (2014, September 15). Florida fights to save dwindling honeybees. *Miami Herald*.  
<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/environment/article2119231.html>. *Permission granted to use and modify.*

## Source #3

This is an article about honey bee infestation adapted from OrganicFacts.net. retrieved on November 13, 2014.

# Honey Bee Infestation

*Adapted from Organic Facts*

Seeing a few honey bees buzzing around a garden is natural. Where there are flowers, there are honey bees. But, honey bees can be a problem. They can be trouble for humans and animals if they “infest” an area. Infest means to live in a place in such huge numbers that it is a threat to other species. Bees build hives

in many places. They build hives in walls, attics, boxes, and trees. They can “infest” an area in only a few days.



Honey bees do much good. They provide us with honey. But if they “infest” a place they can be a problem. Bees can swarm and attack. Bees are tiny, but their sting is very painful. Anyone stung by a bee knows how much it hurts. When thousands of bees attack it happens so fast there is no place to hide. Many people are allergic to bee stings and bee venom. They can have a major reaction like choking. Some people have even died from honey bee attacks.

One way to get rid of the honey bees is to destroy their hives. People try not to kill the bees when they need to destroy the hives. They just want to prevent bees from building in places where people live.

Organic Facts. *Honey Bee Infestation*. Retrieved 2014, from Organic Facts: <https://www.organicfacts.net/organic-animal-products/honey-bee-infestation.html>. *Permission granted to use and modify.*

## **Directions for writing your opinion letter:**

You will review your notes and sources, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your writing. You may use your notes and go back to the articles. Now read your assignment and the information about how your writing will be scored, then begin your work.

## **Your Assignment:**

The local newspaper will be publishing special sections in the paper to show student writing. The first special section will be third grade writing. They want students to write an opinion letter. You have decided to send your writing to the paper and hope it will be published.

The topic for your opinion letter is:

***There have been problems with honey bees living near people. What is your view on how this should be solved?***

Using more than one source, develop an opinion about honey bees living near people. Choose the most important information from the sources to support your opinion. Then, write an opinion letter that is several paragraphs long. Clearly organize your letter and support your opinion with details from the sources. Use your own words except when quoting directly from the sources. Be sure to give the source title or number when using details from the sources.

**REMEMBER: A well-written opinion letter:**

- has a clear opinion
- is well-organized and stays on the topic
- has an introduction and a conclusion
- uses transitions
- uses details from the sources to support your opinion
- puts the information from the sources in your own words, except when using direct quotations from the sources
- gives the title or number of the source for the details or facts you included
- develops ideas clearly
- uses clear language
- follows rules of writing (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage)

There is a scoring guide on the last pages of this packet for your reference.

**Now begin work on your opinion letter.** Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your opinion letter
- write your opinion letter
- revise and edit the final draft of your opinion letter