
Are We Killing the Bees?

Videos:

“The Death Of Bees Explained – Parasites, Poison and Humans”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqA42M4RtxE> (6:11 minutes)

“The Bee-pocalypse: Another Scare Story the Media Got Wrong”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiKmEMR_InA (7:11 minutes)

Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

Analysis Questions:

1. What are the opposing ideas in these two videos?
2. Kurzgesagt said: “The dollar value of plants pollinated by [honeybees] each year is around 265 billion.” Did you know honeybees had such a big economic impact? Does it affect how you view this issue? Why/Why not?
3. John Stossel said that while the bee population was once in decline, it has since risen. In your experience, is the increase in bee population as widely known as the decrease? If not, why do you think that is?
4. Kurzgesagt used this quote often attributed to Albert Einstein: “If honeybees die out, humans will follow a few years later.” What does this quote mean?
5. John Stossel said: "No one's going to read [the basic science]. More people are going to watch the video that says 'you might starve!'" What did he mean by this? Do you agree with him? Why/Why not?
6. Kurzgesagt mentioned several natural threats to honeybees, like parasites, viruses, and fungi. According to Kurzgesagt, are these natural threats enough to explain the decline in honeybees?
7. Regarding the media, John Stossel said: "There's always a scare." What did he mean by this? What are some other examples of media scares?
8. According to Kurzgesagt, what chemical family was approved for use as insecticides in the early 1990s?

9. John Stossel said that the ban of neonicotinoids led some farmers to use older pesticides which are more dangerous, including to bees. Based on this, do you think neonicotinoids should have been banned? Why/Why not?
10. Kurzgesagt said: "We know that neonicotinoids are harmful to bees and that we urgently need an alternative to it, but there are billions of dollars to be made in delaying this." What did Kurzgesagt mean by this?
11. John Stossel and Jon Entine explained that even organic farmers must use chemical pesticides. Were you aware of this? Does it affect your opinion of organic produce? Why/Why not?
12. Kurzgesagt questioned studies sponsored by the chemical industry. When judging the truthfulness of a study, should we consider the companies or organizations that funded it? Why/Why not?
13. John Stossel said some environmental activists oppose GMOs. What are GMOs?
14. Kurzgesagt said: "Humanity is deeply interconnected with Earth and the other lifeforms on it, even if we pretend that we're not." Do you think humans pretend that they're not interconnected with nature? Why/Why not?
15. John Stossel said: "GMOs benefit everyone, especially poor people." How do GMOs benefit the poor?
16. Did these two videos share any common ground? Were there any points on which they agreed? If so, what were they?
17. Should one of the arguments we heard carry more weight than the other? If so, which one? Why?
18. Did you have an opinion on this topic before watching these videos? If so, what was it? Has your opinion changed? If so, how? What did you learn from these videos that affects your views on this topic?
19. What else would you like to learn about this topic?
20. For more on the topic of pesticides and organic farming, check out [Both Sides of the Issue: Organic Farming](#).