



You've probably heard of **The BFG** – Roald Dahl's **Big Friendly Giant**. But have you heard of **The GYB** – Scotland's very rare **Great Yellow Bumblebee**?

Great yellow
bumblebees
found here...



The Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT) has teamed up with award-winning poet Anneliese Emmans Dean of theBigBuzz to bring you a creative way of introducing your pupils to the GYB. By learning, embellishing and performing Anneliese's specially written poem, called **The GYB**, your pupils will become Great yellow bumblebee champions, highlighting this bee's plight to their school and wider community, and kickstarting action to protect it.

Pick out the activities and ideas below that suit the age and ability of your pupils, and the amount of time you have available.

Step 1: Introduce the poem

Read Anneliese's The GYB poem out to your class, and/or play them a recording of Anneliese performing the poem.

You'll find the recording at www.bumblebeeconservation.org/bumble-kids/activities

Step 2: Pupils learn the poem

Hand out the text of the poem (on [Pupil Sheet: Page 1](#)) to your pupils.

As you'll see, the Pupil Sheet also includes a picture of the Great yellow bumblebee.

Give your pupils time to read through the poem by themselves. Then read it out loud all together.

Step 3: Learn about the Great yellow bumblebee

Discuss each verse with your class, using the GYB information in [The GYB: Teachers' Key](#).

Listen to Anneliese
performing **The GYB**.

Hear her at:
[www.bumblebeeconservation.org/
bumble-kids/activities](http://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/bumble-kids/activities)

Inspire your pupils by
showing them clips of Anneliese
performing other bumblebee poems.

Find them at:
www.thebigbuzz.biz/bumblebees.html

Step 4: Make the poem your own!

Build the poem up into your class's unique performance piece. (See the [Performance Tips](#) box for some ideas.)

Your pupils can make the poem unique by coming up with their own way of performing it and, if you wish, by embellishing it with extra material that they themselves write. (See the acrostics and haiku boxes overleaf for different creative writing options.)

Or, instead of interspersing each verse with creative writing, your pupils could intersperse the verses with one or more GYB facts. You can find relevant facts in the Teachers' Key and in the BBCT's Great yellow bumblebee factsheet (available from www.bumblebeeconservation.org/ginger-yellow-bumblebees/great-yellow-bumblebee).

Of course you and your pupils may have much better ideas for how you'd like to make it your own. It's your poem. Make it buzzing!



The Teachers' Key suggests other pupil prompts and activities too. Choose which – if any – are suitable for your pupils and the time you have available. The activities don't need to be done straight away.

Get your poem buzzing with acrostics!

Between each verse of **The GYB**, pupils could perform an acrostic poem they've written, using an important word from that verse.

The important words from each verse could be the ones highlighted in the Teachers' Key, e.g. **great**; **yellow**; **clover**; **knapweed**; **rare**; **help**.

Or you could choose completely different words.

The acrostic could consist of adjectives only. Brainstorm 'WOW' words for this, and/or let pupils pick words from the word clouds on Pupil Sheet: Page 2.

Here's an example:

Gorgeous
Rare
Exciting
Astounding
Tantalising

Or the acrostic could form a sentence, like this:

Going
Round
Eating
Appetising
Treats

These two sample acrostics just have one word per line. You might want your pupils to write more than just one word per line. It's up to you.

The acrostics can be written by brainstorming with the whole class, or by the pupils working individually, in pairs or in groups.

In performance, the acrostics are most effective if a child holds up the first letter of their line, so that the audience sees the acrostic word build up before their eyes.

Performance Tips

Discuss with your class how best to perform the poem. Try out different performance options and decide together what works most effectively. Get the children to think about what will make the biggest impact for an audience.

Here are some ideas:

- Contrast words or lines spoken by the whole class with some lines spoken by individuals or pairs. For example, the words in capital letters in the poem could be shouted by the whole class.
- Have children hold up letters that form an important word in each verse, e.g. **great**; **yellow**; **clover**; **knapweed**; **rare**; **help**.
- Try clapping along to the poem/parts of the poem. (And encouraging the audience to clap along too.)
- Add percussion, such as tambourine or drums, or other musical interludes/accompaniments that the children devise.
- Get into character. Have the children practise feeling and sounding '**great**' and '**distinguished**'.
- Decide how the poem will start and finish. For example, do the children want to arrive at and leave the performance space as buzzing bees? Or do they want to walk in looking '**great**' and '**distinguished**'? If the latter, practise walking in a distinguished way.
- If the children are younger, they might like to buzz about as bees between each verse.
- Can the children come up with actions to go with the poem?
- Do the children want to dress up in some way?
- The children could hold up the pictures they've drawn of red clover and knapweed at relevant points during the performance, and then at the end to create a wildflower meadow.

Make it your own... with haikus!

Inbetween each verse of **The GYB**, pupils could perform a haiku they've written. Each haiku could be based on the theme of that verse. (See **The GYB: Teachers' Key**.)

The haikus can be written by brainstorming with the whole class, or by the pupils working individually, in pairs or in groups. Explain how to write haikus using the haiku form itself.

For example:

First 5 syllables
And then 7 syllables
End with 5 again.

Give instructions in haiku form too:

Write me a haiku
What's it like to be a bee?
Describe it to us.

If your pupils need to get the hang of syllables, have them clap the syllables in their name.

- Who has the most/fewest syllables in their first and/or surname? (How many?)

- Are there any syllable twins in the class, i.e. two people with exactly the same numbers of syllables in their first and surnames?
- How many syllables are there in: 'Great yellow bumblebee'?

And finally, give praise in haiku form too:

Congratulations!
You've just written a haiku
Un**be**lievable!

Step 5: Perform your poem

Once you've personalised and practised your The GYB poem, perform it to the rest of the school.

Think about where else your pupils could perform their poem. For example, to parents, at a school fair, at a local community centre...

Perform the poem in as many different locations as you can!

Step 6: Publicise your performance

Contact your local media outlets (radio, tv, newspapers), and see if they'd like you to perform for them too.

Step 7: Record your performance

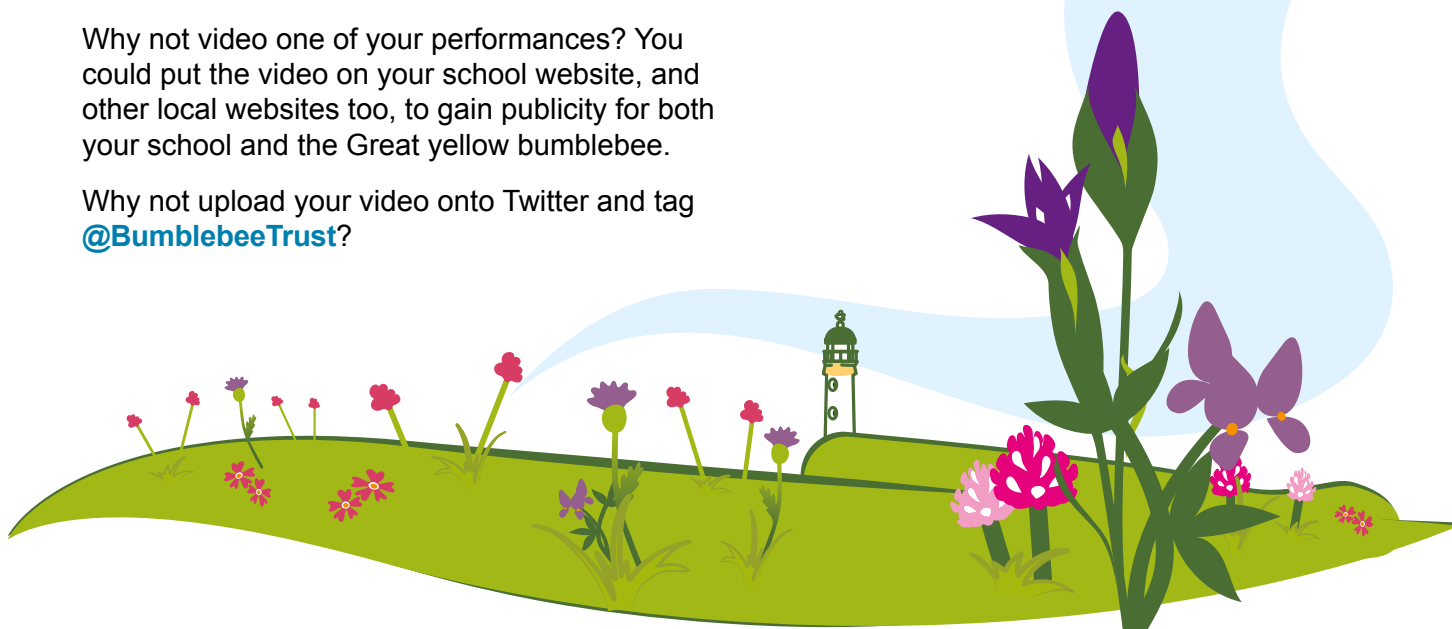
Why not video one of your performances? You could put the video on your school website, and other local websites too, to gain publicity for both your school and the Great yellow bumblebee.

Why not upload your video onto Twitter and tag [@BumblebeeTrust](https://twitter.com/BumblebeeTrust)?

Find out more about the Great yellow bumblebee from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust's Great yellow bumblebee factsheet.

Download it at:

www.bumblebeeconservation.org/ginger-yellow-bumblebees/great-yellow-bumblebee



You might also like to create a written version of your poem as a wall display, illustrated with the pictures pupils have drawn of, for example, GYBs, clover and knapweed (as suggested in the Teachers' Key).

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Bringing poetry to life



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The GYB: Teachers' Key

Teachers learning points

Pupil prompts and activities

Refers to the name **Great** yellow bumblebee.
 'Great' because it's a big bumblebee!
 There are 20 different bumblebee species in Scotland. The Great yellow is the largest, and the smallest bumblebee is the Early bumblebee.

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I am **great**, mate!
 I am great, mate!

Refers to the name Great **yellow** bumblebee.
 Different bumblebees have different colour combinations. The Great yellow bumblebee is all yellow, with one band of black (between its wings).

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I'm a **yellow** fellow!
 I'm a yellow fellow!

Draw a picture of the Great yellow bumblebee.

Find out (and draw?) the colour combinations of some other Scottish bumblebees.

Different bumblebees feed (i.e. get nectar and pollen) from different flowers.
 The main flowers the Great yellow bumblebee feeds from are red **clover**, vetches and, as mentioned in the next verse, knapweed.
 The more red clover, vetches and knapweed there are available, the better for the Great yellow bumblebee. These wildflowers grow in flower-rich meadows. This habitat has declined dramatically over the last century, as farming practices have changed.

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I'm a **clover** rover!
 I'm a clover rover!

What does red clover look like?

Draw a picture of red clover.

Does red clover grow near where you are?

Where is your nearest flower-rich meadow?

Could you plant some red clover where you are?



Red clover



Knapweed

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I must feed – FEED!
 On fresh **knapweed** – WEED!

What does knapweed look like?

Draw a picture of knapweed.

Does knapweed grow near where you are?

Where is your nearest flower-rich meadow?

Could you plant some knapweed where you are?

The Great yellow bumblebee is one of the **rarest** bumblebees in the UK. In 1900 it was found all over the UK. Since then its distribution has reduced by 80%. This bee is now only found in the north Highlands and the Islands of Scotland.
 The last mainland populations are in Caithness and Sutherland.

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I'm real **rare** – RARE!
 It's not fair! – FAIR!

Look at the maps on the Trust's Great yellow bumblebee factsheet to see how the distribution of this bee has changed since 1900.

Where are you on the maps?

Do you live somewhere where there are GYBs?

The scientific name for the Great yellow bumblebee is ***Bombus distinguendus***. All animals have a scientific name. The scientific name is in Latin. It consists of two words. The first word is the genus to which the animal belongs. The second word is its species name. All bumblebees belong to the *Bombus* genus.

You may be
 A bumblebee
 But I'm **distinguished**!
 Don't want to be extinguished!

Find out the scientific names of other Scottish bumblebees.

You won't often
 Get to see
 A bumblebee
 Like me

So hear my plea
 People
 Hear my plea:
 HELP!

What will you do to help the Great yellow bumblebee?

You could spread the word about it, including by performing this poem to different audiences.

You could help protect existing wildflower meadow habitats.

You could create new habitats that include the wildflowers the Great yellow bumblebee needs.

The GYB

(aka the Great yellow bumblebee)

by Anneliese Emmans Dean

You may be
A bumblebee
But I am great, mate!
I am great, mate!

You may be
A bumblebee
But I'm a yellow fellow!
I'm a yellow fellow!

You may be
A bumblebee
But I'm a clover rover!
I'm a clover rover!

You may be
A bumblebee
But I must feed – **FEED!**
On fresh knapweed – **WEED!**

You may be
A bumblebee
But I'm real rare – **RARE!**
It's not fair – **FAIR!**

You may be
A bumblebee
But I'm distinguished!
Don't want to be extinguished!

You won't often
Get to see
A bumblebee
Like me

So hear my plea
People
Hear my plea:
HELP!



Photo credit: Sara Botterell



The GYB



Word Clouds

thrilling
huge
great
splendid
delicate
terrific
dazzling
beautiful
glowing
outstanding
great
grand
vivid
sunny
keen
eye-catching
delightful
majestic
illustrious

magnetic
joyful
happy
amazing
astonishing
mesmerising
splendid
very

wonderful
enchanted
rare
exciting
magnificent
grand
noticeable
adorable
hugely
cool
velvety
amazing
stupendous
compelling
flying
terrific
charming
busy

exceptional
happy
one-off
celebrated
regal
perfect
delightful
pretty
eminent
knowledgeable
velvety
great
excellent
remarkable
stunning
matchless
enigmatic
cool
valuable
amazing

unique
gorgeous
pop
frothy
beguiling
glad
superb
astounding
inspirational

amazing
outgoing
extraordinary
appealing
enigmatic
lovely
distinguished
exquisite
unusual
lady
compelling
virtuous
splendid
youthful
yellow