

Lesson 46: Nature Study & Memory Poem — The Little Busy Bee

PLL PART TWO

Classical Memory Poem • Isaac Watts



*How does the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower!
How skillfully she builds her cell,
How neat she spreads her wax;
And labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.*

Poetic Focus: Rhyme & meter • Diligence vs. idleness • Nature study inquiry.

1 NATURE INQUIRY & BEE OBSERVATION

Think about honeybees in nature. Answer each question on the lines below.

1. **Season & Place:** In what season and place do we see bees buzzing? _____
2. **Daily Work:** What does the bee gather all summer long? _____
3. **Purpose of Honey:** Why do bees make and store so much honey? _____
4. **Caution:** Where do bees live, and why must we never disturb them? _____

2 POETIC CRAFT & VOCABULARY INSIGHT

Examine the rhyme scheme, word meanings, and architectural skill of the honeybee.

A. Meaning of "Improve Each Shining Hour": This phrase means:

- [] Make diligent and good use of time [] Rest and sleep in the sun

B. Rhyme Scheme: Find the rhyming word pairs in the poem:

Stanza 1:**hour**rhymes with _____ | Stanza 2:**cell**rhymes with _____

C. Architecture & Homophones: In the poem, what is a bee's **cell**?

A six-sided room in the _____ to store honey and raise young bees.

3 STANZA TRANSCRIPTION & MEMORY PRACTICE

Copy the first stanza of the poem neatly onto the guidelines below. Include every capital letter and the exclamation mark at the end.

Lines 1–2: _____

Lines 3–4: _____

4 THE VIRTUE OF DILIGENCE

How can a young student "improve each shining hour" during study time at school or at home? Write one complete, inspiring sentence.

My Sentence: _____

1 LITERARY HERITAGE: NATURE STUDY & INDUSTRY

Literary Background: Dr. Isaac Watts published this classic poem in *Divine Songs for Children* (1715). It has remained a cornerstone of English language learning for three centuries, celebrating the honeybee as the quintessential emblem of industry, foresight, and natural geometry.

Standards Addressed: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4 (Rhythm, Rhyme & Word Meanings in Verse), RI.2.1 (Scientific Observation in Nature), L.2.2.A (Capitalization in Poetry), W.2.8 (Personal Reflection & Experience).

✓ COMPLETE ANSWER KEY

Section 1: Nature Inquiry & Bee Observation

- 1. Season & Place: *In spring and summer, in gardens, meadows, orchards, and around flowers.*
- 2. Daily Work: *Sweet nectar and yellow pollen to make honey and bee bread.*
- 3. Purpose of Honey: *To feed the hive, nourish the young, and survive the cold winter when flowers do not bloom.*
- 4. Caution: *In beehives (or hollow trees). We must not disturb them because they will sting to defend their colony.*

Section 2: Poetic Craft & Vocabulary Insight

- A. Meaning: [✓] **Make diligent and good use of time.**
- B. Rhyme Scheme: **hour** rhymes with **flower** | **cell** rhymes with **well**.
- C. Architecture & Homophone: *honeycomb* (or *hive / comb*). Note connection to Lesson 38 homophones (*cell / sell*).

Section 3: Stanza Transcription & Memory Practice

- Expected Student Reproduction:
- How does the little busy bee / Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day / From every opening flower!*
- Check capital letters starting every poetic line (*How, Improve, And, From*).
 - Check comma after *hour* and exclamation mark after *flower!*.

Section 4: The Virtue of Diligence (Sample Student Answers)

- *I will listen attentively to my teacher and finish my reading lessons before playing.*
- *I improve each hour by helping my parents with chores and practicing my handwriting.*

! ORAL RECITATION & NATURE COACHING

- **Recitation Meter:** Guide children to recite with a bright, brisk cadence matching the buzzing energy of the bee. Emphasize the exclamation mark at the end of stanza 1.
- **Nature Geometry:** Point out that bees build hexagons—a six-sided shape that holds the maximum honey using the minimum wax.
- **Homophone Cross-Reference:** Review Lesson 38 where students learned *cells* (honeycomb) versus *sells* (a merchant selling goods).

★ SCORING RUBRIC (20 POINTS TOTAL)

Evaluation Metric	Exemplary (5 Pts)	Proficient (3-4 Pts)	Developing (1-2 Pts)
Nature Inquiry	Demonstrates complete, accurate knowledge of bee season, diet, hive, and winter food.	Answers all 4 inquiry questions correctly; minor brevity in explanations.	Misidentifies seasons or purpose of honey; questions left incomplete.
Poetic Rhyme & Meaning	Identifies rhyming pairs (<i>hour/flower, cell/well</i>); understands 'improve each shining hour'.	Identifies rhymes correctly; understands general moral meaning of diligence.	Struggles to identify rhyme pairs; chooses incorrect phrase definition.
Transcription Accuracy	Transcribes stanza 1 with 100% precision in capitalization, punctuation, and neatness.	Transcribes with 1 minor punctuation error; letter casing beginning lines is preserved.	Multiple omissions, lowercased line beginnings, or missing exclamation mark.
Application & Recitation	Recites verse with expression; writes an eloquent personal reflection on diligence.	Recites with minor hesitation; writes a thoughtful, complete sentence on diligence.	Recitation halting; reflection sentence fragmented or off-topic.